

SERMON STUDY GUIDE — September 6, 2026

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY: SONS & DAUGHTERS | LIVE LIKE AN HEIR

Based on the message by Pastor Chad Everett

OVERVIEW

Is it possible to be an heir and still live like a slave?

In *Spiritual Authority: Sons & Daughters | Live Like an Heir*, Pastor Chad Everett continues through Galatians 4:1–7 and builds on what we have already learned about our identity as sons and daughters of God. Through faith in Jesus, we are born again into the family of God. Because we are sons and daughters, we are also heirs.

Yet Galatians 4:1 reveals something important: an heir, while still a child, “does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all.” The inheritance belongs to the child, but immaturity keeps the child from understanding and living in what is already his.

The same can happen in our spiritual lives. We can belong to Christ and still live beneath what He has made available to us. We can remain in bondage to fear, anxiety, sin, offense, bitterness, or other things Jesus came to free us from, not because freedom is unavailable, but because we do not yet understand or walk in our inheritance.

Spiritual maturity is not determined by our physical age or even by how many years we have attended church. We grow through the Word of God and by putting what God shows us into practice. We do not read Scripture so God will reward us with greater access. We read so the Holy Spirit can reveal what God has already given us in Christ.

Luke 15 shows us two sons who both misunderstood their relationship with their father. The younger son believed his failure made him unworthy to live as a son. The older son faithfully served but described himself as working like a slave. Neither understood the fullness of what was available to him.

The father’s answer to the older son reveals the heart of this message: “Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.”

God is calling His sons and daughters to grow in their understanding of what Jesus has made available, stop measuring His gifts by their own merit, and live like heirs instead of slaves.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Read → Respond → Reflect

Read each passage carefully before answering the Respond questions. Keep your Bible open and allow Scripture itself to provide the answers.

Then use the Reflect questions to examine your own life. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where you may have access to freedom through Christ but are still thinking, responding, or living as though you are in bondage.

The goal is not simply to learn more about your inheritance. The invitation is to mature as a son or daughter, discover through the Word what the Father has made available, put His truth into practice, and live differently because you know who you are and what you have received through Christ.

This guide is designed for individual study, family discipleship, and Roads Groups.

SECTION 1 — YOU ARE BORN INTO YOUR INHERITANCE

Focus

An heir does not earn a place in the family. An heir is born into it.

In the same way, we do not become sons and daughters of God through our performance. Galatians 3:26 says we are sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ. When we are born again, we are brought into God's family and become heirs.

Our inheritance is not based on what we have earned. It comes from belonging to Christ.

Read

Galatians 3:26–29; Galatians 4:1–7; John 3:3–6

Respond

1. According to Galatians 3:26, how do we become sons of God?
2. According to Galatians 3:29, what becomes true of those who belong to Christ?
3. According to Galatians 4:7, what are we no longer, and what have we become?
4. What does Galatians 4:7 say becomes true of us because we are sons?
5. According to John 3:3, what did Jesus tell Nicodemus must happen for someone to see the kingdom of God?

Reflect

- Do I think of my relationship with God primarily in terms of what I have earned, or what Jesus has made available to me?
- Are there areas where I still believe I must become “good enough” before I can receive from my Father?
- How would my relationship with God change if I consistently approached Him knowing I am His son or daughter through faith in Christ?

Further Scripture Reading

Galatians 3:26–29; Galatians 4:1–7; John 3:1–8

SECTION 2 — GROW UP INTO WHAT IS ALREADY YOURS

Focus

Galatians 4:1 says an heir who remains a child lives no differently from a slave, even though he is “master of all.” The inheritance is already his, but immaturity affects how he lives.

Spiritual maturity is not measured by age or years in church. Hebrews 5 shows that maturity comes as we learn God’s Word and put it into practice. God wants us to grow from simply receiving truth to using what He has given us.

Read

Galatians 4:1; Hebrews 5:12–14

Respond

1. According to Galatians 4:1, how does an heir who remains a child live in comparison with a slave?
2. What does Galatians 4:1 say is already true of the heir even while he is still a child?
3. According to Hebrews 5:12, what should these believers have been able to do by this time?
4. How does Hebrews 5:13 describe someone who is still partaking only of milk?
5. According to Hebrews 5:14, how do mature believers exercise their senses to discern good and evil?

Reflect

- Where in my spiritual life have I confused longevity with maturity?
- Is there something God has taught me that I know intellectually but have not begun putting into practice?
- Am I primarily consuming what others teach me, or am I also using what God has put in me to strengthen, teach, pray for, or minister to someone else?

Further Scripture Reading

Galatians 4:1–2; Hebrews 5:12–14

SECTION 3 — KNOW YOUR INHERITANCE THROUGH THE WORD

Focus

First Peter 2:2 tells us to desire the pure milk of the Word so that we may grow.

We do not read the Bible to earn more from God. We read it to see more clearly what He has already made available through Christ. We do not grow in access; we grow in our revelation and awareness of that access.

God's Word reveals our inheritance and teaches us how to live in what He has provided.

Read

1 Peter 2:2; Galatians 4:1–7; Philippians 4:6–7

Respond

1. According to 1 Peter 2:2, what should newborn babes desire?
2. What does 1 Peter 2:2 say happens through the pure milk of the Word?
3. According to Galatians 4:6, whom has God sent into the hearts of His sons and daughters?
4. According to Philippians 4:6, what should we do instead of remaining anxious?
5. What does Philippians 4:7 say the peace of God will guard?

Reflect

- Do I read Scripture primarily as a religious obligation, or am I looking for God to reveal Himself and what He has made available through Christ?
- Is there an area where my experience has become more authoritative to me than what God's Word says?
- What truth from Scripture do I need to know more deeply so I can respond differently when bondage tries to return?

Further Scripture Reading

1 Peter 2:1–3; Galatians 4:4–7; Philippians 4:6–9

SECTION 4 — LIVE LIKE AN HEIR, NOT A SLAVE

Focus

An immature heir may have a different identity from a slave while still carrying himself like one.

God wants His sons and daughters to carry themselves differently because they know who they are and what is available through Christ. When fear, anxiety, temptation, or bondage comes, we do not have to simply accept it. We can answer it with the truth of God's Word and live from our identity as heirs.

Read

Galatians 4:1, 6–7; Philippians 4:6–7; 2 Timothy 1:7

Respond

1. According to Galatians 4:1, who does an immature heir resemble in the way he lives?
2. According to Galatians 4:6, what does the Spirit of God's Son cry from our hearts?
3. According to Galatians 4:7, what is our identity now instead of being slaves?
4. According to 2 Timothy 1:7, what has God not given us?
5. What has God given us according to 2 Timothy 1:7?

Reflect

- In what area of my life am I a son or daughter of God but still thinking or responding like a slave?
- When fear, anxiety, offense, bitterness, temptation, or another form of bondage comes, do I simply accept it, or do I answer it with God's truth?
- What would it practically look like for me to "carry myself differently" this week because I know who I am in Christ?

Further Scripture Reading

Galatians 4:1–7; Philippians 4:4–9; 2 Timothy 1:7

SECTION 5 — RECEIVE WHAT THE FATHER HAS ALREADY GIVEN YOU

Focus

Luke 15 shows two sons who both misunderstood what it meant to be sons. The younger son believed his failure made him unworthy. The older son obeyed and served but lived with the mindset of a slave.

The father's words reveal what both sons were missing: "Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours."

We do not measure what we receive from God by our failures or our accomplishments. We receive from Him according to His generosity and what He has made available to us as His children.

Read

Luke 15:17–24, 28–32; Galatians 4:6–7

Respond

1. According to Luke 15:17, what happened to the younger son before he decided to return to his father?
2. What did the younger son believe he was no longer worthy to be called?
3. How did the father respond when his younger son returned?
4. According to Luke 15:29, how did the older son describe his years of service to his father?

5. What did the father tell the older son in Luke 15:31?

Reflect

- Which “ditch” am I more likely to fall into: believing my failures disqualify me from receiving as a son or daughter, or believing my faithfulness should earn what God gives?
- Am I serving my Father from the security of being His child, or am I working like a slave trying to prove myself?
- What have I been “leaving on the table” because I did not know, believe, ask for, or receive what Scripture says the Father has made available through Christ?

Further Scripture Reading

Luke 15:11–32; Galatians 4:4–7

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Through faith in Jesus, you are not a slave. You are a son or daughter, and because you are a son or daughter, you are an heir.

God is inviting you to grow in your understanding of what He has made available through Christ. Hunger for His Word. Put what He teaches you into practice. When fear, anxiety, sin, offense, bitterness, or another form of bondage tries to control you, remember who you are and respond with the truth of God’s Word.

Do not live like the younger son who believed his failures disqualified him, or the older son who faithfully served while thinking like a slave. Hear the Father’s heart: **“Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.”**

Stop measuring what you can receive by your merit. Know what is yours in Christ, grow in it, receive what the Father has provided, and **live like an heir.**