

STUDENT STUDY GUIDE — September 6, 2026

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY: SONS & DAUGHTERS — LIVE LIKE AN HEIR

Based on the message by Pastor Chad Everett

OVERVIEW

What if you belong to God as His son or daughter but are still living beneath what He has made available to you?

Galatians 4:1 describes an heir who, while still a child, “does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all.” The inheritance already belongs to him. His problem is not a lack of access. His problem is that he has not matured into understanding and living in what is his.

That is the challenge of *Spiritual Authority: Sons & Daughters | Live Like an Heir*.

Through faith in Jesus, you are born again into God’s family. You do not become an heir because you have been a Christian long enough, know enough Scripture, serve enough, or behave well enough. Your inheritance comes through Christ.

But being an heir does not mean you automatically live like one.

You can know you are a Christian while still allowing fear to control your decisions. You can attend church while remaining spiritually dependent on other people to feed you. You can know what Scripture says but never put it into practice. You can allow failure to convince you that you are unworthy to approach God, or you can do all the “right” Christian things while secretly believing your faithfulness should earn something from Him.

God is calling His sons and daughters to mature.

Spiritual maturity is not about your age or how long you have been around church. It happens as you grow in the Word, recognize what God has made available through Christ, and actually use what you are learning.

Jesus’ story in Luke 15 shows two sons who both failed to understand this. One ran away and thought his failure disqualified him from being a son. The other stayed home, obeyed, and worked, yet lived with the mindset of a slave.

The father told him, **“Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.”**

This study will challenge you to ask whether you are simply an heir by identity or whether you are maturing into someone who actually **lives like an heir**.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read → Respond → Reflect → Pray → Live It

Read each passage carefully. Do not rush through Scripture to get to the questions. Pay attention to what God actually says.

Respond from the Bible. Let Scripture establish truth instead of allowing your feelings, experiences, culture, friends, or assumptions to define what is true.

Reflect honestly. Ask where your actual choices, habits, reactions, relationships, fears, and priorities reveal maturity and where they reveal that you still need to grow.

Pray about what the Holy Spirit shows you. Ask Him for revelation and be willing to repent where your life does not line up with God's Word.

Then **live it**. Spiritual maturity requires more than knowing truth. Put what God shows you into practice.

SECTION 1 — YOU ARE BORN INTO YOUR INHERITANCE

FOCUS

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

Through faith in Jesus, you become a son or daughter of God and an heir. Your standing with God does not increase when you perform well or disappear when you fail.

Your starting point is not what you can accomplish for God. It is what Jesus has already done and who you have become through Him.

READ

Galatians 3:26–29; Galatians 4:4–7; 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. What does Galatians 4:6 say God has sent into our hearts?
4. According to Galatians 4:7, what are we no longer, and what are we now?
5. What did Jesus tell Nicodemus must happen in John 3:3?

REFLECT

- What tends to make you feel like you are doing “good” or “bad” with God: your behavior, church attendance, Bible reading, worship, serving, temptation, failure, or something else? How much does that affect the way you approach Him?

- When you fail spiritually, what is your instinct: repent and run toward your Father, hide from Him, try to fix yourself first, or pretend nothing happened?
- Where are you still trying to **prove** something about yourself that God says you receive through Christ?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to expose any place where you are building your relationship with God on your performance rather than what Jesus has done.

LIVE IT

Pay attention this week to what happens inside you when you succeed or fail. When your performance starts defining your standing with God, stop and remind yourself what Galatians 4:7 says is true.

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 describes an heir who owns everything but still lives like a slave because he remains a child.

Spiritual maturity is not measured by age or years spent in church. Hebrews 5 challenges believers who had heard enough truth that they should have been helping teach others, yet they still needed someone else to feed them.

God wants you to move from simply hearing truth to **using it**.

READ

Galatians 4:1–2; Hebrews 5:12–14

RESPOND

1. According to Galatians 4:1, how does an heir who remains a child live?
2. What does Galatians 4:1 say is already true of that heir?
3. According to Hebrews 5:12, what should these believers have been able to do by this point?
4. How does Hebrews 5:13 describe someone who still lives only on milk?
5. According to Hebrews 5:14, how are the senses of mature believers trained?

REFLECT

- Think about who you want to become as you get older. Beyond a career, college, relationships, money, or your plans for the future, **who are you intentionally becoming in the Lord?**
- If someone looked only at your choices, reactions, conversations, relationships, use of your time, and response to pressure, where would they see spiritual maturity? Where would they see areas that still need to grow?
- Are you mostly a **consumer** of Christianity—services, messages, worship, youth group, podcasts, social media—or are you becoming someone who can pray for, encourage, teach, serve, and strengthen other people?
- What truth do you already know but have not consistently put into practice?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one area where He is calling you out of spiritual immaturity and into greater maturity.

LIVE IT

Choose one truth you already know and deliberately **use it** this week. Obey it, pray it, share it, or use it to help someone else.

Further Scripture Reading

Galatians 4:1–2; Hebrews 5:12–14

SECTION 3 — KNOW YOUR INHERITANCE THROUGH THE WORD

FOCUS

We do not read the Bible to earn more from God. We read it so we can see what He has already made available through Christ.

As Chad taught, **“We don’t grow in access. We grow in revelation of access.”**

God’s Word trains us to recognize what is true even when our feelings and circumstances tell us something different.

READ

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

RESPOND

1. According to 1 Peter 2:2, what should believers desire, and why?
2. According to Galatians 4:6, who lives within God’s sons and daughters?
3. What does Philippians 4:6 tell us to do instead of being anxious?
4. What does Philippians 4:7 say God’s peace will guard?

5. According to Philippians 4:8, what kinds of things should fill our thoughts?

REFLECT

- What has the strongest influence over what you believe is true: Scripture, your feelings, friends, social media, culture, what other people think of you, or your circumstances?
- Think about something you regularly struggle with. Do you actually know what Scripture says about it, or have you mostly been responding according to how you feel?
- When you read the Bible, are you trying to know God and allow His truth to change you, or are you mainly completing something you think a “good Christian” should do?
- What could be available to you in Christ that you are living without simply because you have never taken the time to discover what God’s Word says?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a hunger for Scripture and reveal places where you have accepted something as normal that His Word says does not have to control you.

LIVE IT

Identify one area where you need truth. Find what Scripture says about it, write down a verse, and intentionally use that truth when the situation comes up this week.

Further Scripture Reading

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

SECTION 4 — LIVE LIKE AN HEIR, NOT A SLAVE

FOCUS

It is possible to have the identity of an heir while still carrying yourself like a slave.

God wants His sons and daughters to live differently because they know who is in them and what is available through Christ. Fear, anxiety, temptation, offense, bitterness, insecurity, and pressure may come, but they do not have to determine how you live.

Knowing who you are should eventually change how you carry yourself.

READ

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

RESPOND

1. According to Galatians 4:1, how can an immature heir live?
2. According to Galatians 4:6, whose Spirit has God sent into our hearts?
3. According to Galatians 4:7, what identity has replaced slavery?
4. According to 2 Timothy 1:7, what has God not given us?

5. What has God given us instead?

REFLECT

- Where are you most tempted to let fear control you—what people think, fitting in, rejection, your future, relationships, failure, speaking about Jesus, or something else?
- Is there a pattern in your life—fear, anxiety, anger, lust, jealousy, bitterness, unforgiveness, insecurity, people-pleasing, comparison—that you have begun treating as simply “who I am”? What does God's Word say about letting it rule you?
- When pressure comes from friends, dating relationships, school, sports, work, or social media, do you carry yourself like someone who knows who they are in Christ?
- If you truly believed you were a son or daughter with access to what the Father has provided through Jesus, what would you stop tolerating as normal in your life?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to identify an area where you have been living beneath what God has made available to you.

LIVE IT

When that area surfaces this week, do not automatically respond the way you always have. Stop, identify what God's Word says, and make a response that agrees with His truth.

Further Scripture Reading

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

SECTION 5 — RECEIVE WHAT THE FATHER HAS ALREADY GIVEN YOU

FOCUS

Luke 15 gives us two sons who both lived with the wrong understanding of their father.

The younger son believed his failure meant he no longer deserved to be a son. The older son stayed, obeyed, and worked but thought like a slave.

One tried to disqualify himself because of his failures. The other measured what he should receive by his accomplishments.

The father answered, **“Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.”**

READ

Luke 15:17–24, 28–32; Galatians 4:6–7

RESPOND

1. What realization did the younger son come to in Luke 15:17–19?

2. What position in his father's house was he willing to settle for?
3. How did his father respond when he returned?
4. What did the older son point to when explaining why he believed he deserved something from his father?
5. What did the father tell him in Luke 15:31?

REFLECT

- Which son do you relate to more? When you fail, are you likely to think you no longer deserve to come to God? Or when you are doing well, are you likely to think God should respond because you have been faithful?
- Have you ever compared what God seems to be doing in someone else's life with what He is doing in yours and thought, **"What about me?"** What might that reveal about how you see your Father?
- Are you obeying God because you know and love your Father, or can your relationship with Him sometimes become a system of "I did this, so God should do that"?
- Chad said we can measure what we receive by our **merit instead of God's generosity**. Where might you be doing that?
- What might you be "leaving on the table" because shame, ignorance, fear, false humility, or a works mentality keeps you from believing and receiving what God says?

PRAY

Ask the Father to reveal whether failure, performance, comparison, or false humility has distorted the way you see Him. Ask Him to teach you to receive from Him as His son or daughter.

LIVE IT

Read Luke 15:31 again this week: **"Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours."** Ask God what He wants you to understand about His character and your relationship with Him, then respond to what He shows you.

Further Scripture Reading

Luke 15:11–32; Galatians 4:4–7

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

You can spend years around Christianity and still remain immature in areas of your life. God is calling you to more than knowing the right answers or attending church. He wants you to grow in His Word, put truth into practice, strengthen other people, and learn to live from what Jesus has already made available to you.

Do not let your failures turn you into the younger son or your faithfulness turn you into the older one. You do not have to earn your place or prove your worth. You are being called to mature into the life of a son or daughter who knows the Father, knows what He has given, and actually lives from it. **Grow up in the Lord. Know your inheritance. Live like an heir.**