

**Series: God Sent His Son #1070**

**Title: Galatians 4.4-5**

***The Fullness of the Time Came***

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. You are listening at a very good time because we have just begun our walk to Christmas through Galatians chapter 4, and verses 4 and 5. In Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4 the Apostle Paul writes this to the early Christians in the churches in the region called Galatia. He writes, **“God sent forth His Son...”** Yes! God sure did. God sent us Jesus Christ!

Jesus Christ was born. And it is His birth that we celebrate not only at Christmas, but most poignantly at Christmas, which is coming. May it be that Christ elicits our attention. There is *much* to distract us from Him, but for these minutes each weekday I want to give you biblical reasons for making worship of the Christ *the* consuming passion of your life. And this is my prayer for myself, as well. No matter what else we have going on, what is consistent day to day is that we worship Christ, born of the woman, truly man and at the same time truly *God!*

As we end this week together, I want to draw us now into our text. For the past two broadcasts and podcasts we have had an introduction to the Book of Galatians. That will help us to locate in what section of the Book Galatians chapter 4, verses 4 and 5 is located, and last time we learned it is in the doctrinal section or the teaching section. So that what we will learn is foundational truth in knowing what we believe about God, specifically God the Son – who is Jesus Christ.

So, let me read Galatians 4.4-5 and then we will dig in. And, as always, I want to encourage you to see this in your Bible so when you have opportunity to do so, please read this text. **“<sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, <sup>5</sup> so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”**

We begin with this phrase, “When the fullness of the time came...” And this is loaded with truth! To begin with we should understand this word “time.” The Greek word is *chronos* and it means time as a succession of moments. It refers to the lapse of time. (The sequence or duration of time.) The meaning here is when the exact moment came. When the exact moment came, what happened? Let me keep reading Galatians 4.4, “When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son...” So, within the mind of God He had the perfect time for Christ to be born. And when that exact moment came, God sent forth His Son.

Jesus arrives on this earth right on schedule, that is, on God’s schedule. God does have a schedule. God does have a plan. And God keeps a calendar. He knows exactly, with precision, when He will act according to His will and His promises. And I want to share with you some reasons why that time, of which Paul writes, was the exact right time for Jesus to be born to Mary and His earthly father Joseph. We will get into these reasons, but first consider with me that God sometimes (actually, I want to say, God *most times* takes His time)! God takes His time.

*From the human perspective*, and what other perspective are we supposed to have (because we are human), from our point of view, God moves slowly. When you are busy, really hustling to get your Christmas dinner ready and suddenly you realize you forgot to buy a necessary ingredient you yell up to your teenager, who is now driving, and you order him, “Honey, go to the store and get me (whatever ingredient you need).” He (slowly) grabs his keys and license and heads out.

And when he *finally* returns home and hands you the shopping bag you say, “Well you sure did *take your time* getting this!” And what you mean is “What took so long? You were too slow! You should have been there and back in less time!” Some of you get so frustrated with your teenager that you actually articulate these thoughts out loud. ☺

Well, have you ever articulated to God that, “Lord, You sure are taking your time! Hurry it up, God.” If you have not formed words like these into a prayer, you will at least *feel* like it at some point as you relate to the Living God. Because we all reach that point where we wonder what is taking God so long. The Psalmist, in the Old Testament, puts it this way, “How long, O LORD? How long, O LORD?”

It is hard for us, impatient as we are, to wait on the Lord. Well, Paul writes, “When the fullness of the time came...” So let us combine a little history and math and talk about how long it took for this time to come. To do this, we have to drop down in our text and highlight a word, and that is the word “Law.” Listen as I (again) read all of Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5, “**4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law...**” I will end the reading there.

Did you hear the key word “Law”? Paul says Jesus was born under the Law so that Jesus might redeem those who were under the Law. And what kind of Law is the Apostle talking about? This is *God’s Law*. Let’s think of it in terms of the Mosaic Law, given by God to Moses. Now let’s take the time when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and I will take the date as approximately 1,450BC. (1,450BC.) If you disagree with me on this specific date, we can discuss that in a separate correspondence. For today, we will take 1,450BC as when God originally gave the Law to Moses.

And when was Jesus born? I am going to say 5BC. Now you might say, “More like 6BC, Swallow,” and others will argue for later – closer to AD, but I will take 5BC as the date of Christ’s birth. Do the math. In 1,450BC God gave Moses the Law. In 5BC Jesus Christ was born. 1,450 minus 5 equals how many years? Oh, you are good with numbers. That’s correct: that’s 1,445 years.

When the fullness of the time came, that is when Jesus came to redeem those under the Law, that time was approximately 1,445 *years*. That’s rights, *years*.

I do not know about you, but I think about that and I want to ask God, “What took You so long?” I am not asking irreverently, but I am asking honestly. Why did it take so many centuries for God to send forth His Son to redeem from sin those who lived under the Law, originally given to Moses all the way back in the Book of Exodus? Friends, there is a *long history* between the Book of Exodus and the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that describe the birth of Christ at the opening of the New Testament!

I mean we have to read all the way through the rest of our Old Testament, and we have to take into account the time of the Intertestamental Period (that is those 400 *years* between Malachi [the last Book of the Old Testament] and Matthew [the first Book of the New Testament]) and then still read a little into the New Testament before we come to the birth of Christ. Talk about time! That is a long time.

But when we circle back to Galatians 4 Paul says, “When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son...” Fullness of time, I’ll say! That was at least a full 1,400 years. That seems like a long time to us, but again God’s timing is always perfect. He does not operate according to our time. He operates sovereignly and providentially according to *His* own time. And 5BC was the exact, the precise time God the Father chose for God the Son to be born truly *man*.

And remember, my dates are approximate. Still, even making dates approximate, the birth of Christ comes at a time we would not necessarily have chosen, but when we gather again on Monday after the weekend, I will lay out for you several developments in the world that made the time when God sent His Son the *best* time. We will see why the wisdom of God is always the best! He does all things well in His time.

This phrase, “When the fullness of the time came” is very interesting and we continue with it on Monday. As we end, let me ask: are you waiting on God for His time to come in your life? I hope that today’s discussion will be an encouragement to you. God is never late. This weekend go to Him in prayer and cry out with the Psalmist, “How long, O LORD?” Make your petition to Him, and then by faith, believe in Him to answer your prayer. Do not waste the time while you wait – *redeem* that time in prayer!

I will be praying for you this weekend, and I look forward as always to be back together on Monday as we prepare for Christmas and continue to discover who God Is!

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