

WEEKLY WORSHIP GUIDE

Galatians 4:21-5:1--April 7th, 2024



Sermon Recap:

Two Sons

I. Slave or Free (v.21-27)

Paul ask a question, "Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law?" (V.21). You want obedience to the law, but do you even know what the law says? He takes them back to the law, using a metaphor (allegory). Using Abraham's two sons, Paul illustrates the difference between law and grace.

a. Ishmael

- "Born according to the flesh"- not the promised son, but the result of Abraham's own efforts to fulfill God's promise.
- Represents the flesh, slavery to the old covenant.
- Represents Mount Sinai, earthly Jerusalem, bondage to the law.

b. Isaac

- "Child of promise," "born of the Spirit"- the son promised in the Abrahamic covenant.
- Represents freedom, faith, and promise.
- Represents Mount Zion, a heavenly Jerusalem, freedom in grace.

These two sons are a metaphor of law and grace, salvation by works that leads to slavery and salvation by faith that leads to freedom. Isaiah 54 is quoted to illustrate that the Suffering Servant has made the barren fruitful and redeemed the exile, setting them free.

II. Taking a Stand (v.28-5:1)

- Like Ishmael's mocking and ridicule of Isaac, false teachers, today, persecute those who trust in Christ alone for salvation. The "religious" crowd pressures the faithful to trust themselves with a false gospel.
- Scripture calls false teachers: snakes and vipers, hypocrites, waterless clouds, wandering clouds, fruitless trees; they sheep in wolves clothing, hidden reefs ready to crash the ship.
- They are dangerous for believers and churches. Paul charges the Galatians to cast false teachers out in the same way Hagar and Ishmael were cast out.

Exhortation:

- **4:31**- We are no longer slaves to the law. We are heirs to the promise of God.
- **5:1**- We have been set free by Christ on the cross where he gave his blood in order to redeem us. He has bought us from the former slave master, giving us freedom, making us heirs.
- Do turn back to slavery! Stand firm in Christ alone.

Discussion Questions:

- What question does Paul ask the Galatians? Why does he ask this?
- Why is Ishmael described as “born according to the flesh?”
- What do Hagar and Ishmael represent?
- Why is Isaac describe as a “child of promise,” “born by the Spirit?”
- What do Sarai and Isaac represent?
- Compare and contrast the two sons. What can learn about salvation from this metaphor?
- Why was Paul’s allegory helpful in explaining Law and grace?
- What point is Paul making by quoting Isaiah 54:1?
- What is the danger of false teachers? How should we respond to them?
- How has Christ set us free and how should we respond to Him?

Application:

- List some of the rules and regulations (laws) which Christians imagine will make them acceptable to God.
- Do you impose these on your self? How does that leave you feeling afterwards?
- This passage speaks of heaven (that is, “the Jerusalem above”). How does the hope of heaven change the way you live now?
- Galatians 5:1 reminds us to stand fast in the liberty we have in Christ. What are some ways you can enjoy the freedom you have in Christ as an heir of the promise?

