

Galatians 4:21-31

Study Guide

Big Idea: Cast out any notion of self-reliance.

1. Read Galatians 4:21-23.

Whoa! Abraham had two sons. The Jews prided themselves in being the sons of Abraham. Paul is challenging those who rely on the Law (Leviticus), to go back to Genesis and the story of Abraham. Discuss what you know about Abraham and Sarah and what they did when they couldn't conceive a child. Who is Ishmael? What does he represent? Discuss.

2. Read Galatians 4:24-27.

Biblical allegories are characters or symbols in the Bible that represent deeper spiritual realities. Discuss the following contrasts and what they imply:

a. Hagar (slave) vs. Sarah (free)

What does it mean to be free in Christ?

b. Ishmael (conceived in flesh) vs. Isaac (conceived miraculously)

What does it mean to be self-reliant vs relying on God?

c. Mosaic Covenant (Law/Sinai) vs. Abrahamic Promise (Grace)

Contrast 'law-language' (you shall) and 'promise language' (I will)?

d. Present Jerusalem (bondage) vs. Jerusalem above (freedom)

What is the implication of Jerusalem from above?

e. Faith in good deeds (rejected) vs. Faith in Christ (accepted)

Why do you think God rejects works-based salvation?

3. Read Galatians 4:28-31.

In Christ you are a child of promise. Notice that the Isaac/Ishmael conflict is between self-reliant people and those who rely on God. We are told to "cast out" self-reliance. *Take a few minutes to pray quietly, and identify self-reliant ways you seek to solve problems:*

Control, perfection, manipulation, anger, escape...

Confess these things to God. Tell Him how you have made these things your refuge.

Next pray and remind yourself of God's character and how He is your true refuge.

Adonai- sovereign Lord

Hesed- unconditional love

Elohim- Supreme

El Shaddai- God Almighty

Emmanuel- God with us

Galatians 4:21-31

Message Outline

Baptism- Nov. 11/12

Prayer for Hutton's

Galatians- Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

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A. Two Sons (v. 21-23)

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had **two sons**, one by a **slave woman** and one by a **free woman**. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to the **flesh**, while the son of the free woman was born through **promise**.

B. Abraham's Story

Age 75- Genesis 12:2-3

And I will make of you a **great nation**, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 15:5-6

And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and **number the stars**, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "**So shall your offspring be.**" 6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Age 85- Genesis 16- Sarai tells Abram to marry Hagar.

"I will surely multiply your offspring...cannot be numbered..." (v.10)

"Ishmael...'God has listened to your affliction.'" (v.11)

"...wild donkey...his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him..." (v.12)

Gen. 17:20 "As for Ishmael...I have blessed him and will make him fruitful...I will make him into a great nation."

Age 100- Genesis 21- Isaac is born.

C. The Allegory (v. 24-27)

24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically:

Biblical Allegory- a story or characters or symbols that represent spiritual realities.

C. The Allegory (v. 24-27 cont.)

...these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband."

Abraham

Hagar (slave)

Ishmael (conceived after the flesh)

Mosaic Covenant (Law/Sinai)

Present Jerusalem (bondage)

Self-reliance (rejected)

Sarah (free)

Isaac (conceived miraculously)

Abrahamic Promise (Grace)

Jerusalem Above (freedom)

Faith in Christ (accepted)

1. Hagar (slave) vs. Sarah (free)

2. Ishmael (conceived in flesh) vs. Isaac (conceived miraculously)

John 3:5

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

3. Mosaic Covenant (Law/Sinai) vs. Abrahamic Promise (Grace)

"Law-language (you shall) demands our obedience, but promise language (I will) demands our faith." John R.W. Stott

4. Present Jerusalem (bondage) vs. Jerusalem above (freedom)

Matthew 23:37

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

Colossians 2:17

"These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."

Revelation 21:2

"And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

5. Faith in good deeds (rejected) vs. Faith in Christ (accepted)

27 For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband."

D. Cast Out (v. 28-31)

28 Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." 31 So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

Big Idea: Cast out any notion of self-reliance!

Self-reliant ways we seek to solve or escape from problems:

Control, perfection, manipulation, anger and escaping.

God's Unchanging Character

Adonai- Sovereign Lord

Hesed- Unconditional love

Elohim- Supreme

El Shaddai- God Almighty

Emmanuel- God with us

YHWH- I AM