

TODAY'S VERSES:

- Galatians 4:21-31
- Galatians 4:19-20
- Isaiah 54
- Romans 1:16

THIS WEEK, I WANT TO FOCUS ON THIS TRUTH OF WHAT JESUS HAS DONE, IS DOING, WILL DO...

MY NOTES:

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TWO SONS. TWO COVENANTS.
GALATIANS 4:21-31

Galatians

TO THE CHURCHES IN GALATIA

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TWO SONS. TWO COVENANTS. GALATIANS 4:21-31

Galatians is a book written to churches where false teachers came in and began to contradict Paul's original Christian message.

- The false teachers were saying: "Believe in Jesus, obey the law, and as a result, you'll be saved."
- Paul said: "Believe in Jesus, be saved, and as a result, you will want to obey God."

There is a huge difference between belief + obedience = salvation and belief + salvation = obedience.

- **Do you see obedience leading to salvation or stemming from salvation? How does your life reflect this?**
- **How do people use the law as a means for justification?**
- **In what ways do you find yourself trying to be under the law?**

Paul is concerned because the Galatians have left the true meaning of God's salvation. To help lead them back to the truth, Paul tries to show them "his heart." He is not trying to bludgeon them, but heal them. Paul brings the truth to bear through friendship and genuine love for his brothers and sisters.

- **How have you seen friendship go places that mere rules never could?**
- **What methods/stories do you use to try to connect people to the heart of the Gospel?**

Paul will use a historical story to also point out an allegorical truth: we are saved by grace and not our works. We are meant to apply the truth of Gospel to our lives. We acknowledge a literal, historical event happened, and take the implications into the deeper parts of how we live. Using figurative language to relate the story of the Gospel—the resurrection—doesn't mean it is *only* figurative. We see that God brings dead things to life in Christ—figuratively and literally.

- **Are there any metaphors that people have used to help you understand the Gospel?**
- **Are there any metaphors that you use to relate God's goodness to others?**

WEEK EIGHTEEN

Paul has continually talked about the children of Abraham, because to be a child of Abraham was a metaphor for being in God's family. Paul also tells us that *anyone* can become a child of Abraham, and therefore an heir of God's promise, by trusting in what Jesus has done for us.

- **How does faith in the Gospel result in us being adopted into God's family?**

Abraham had a choice; he could either get a family through his own human ability, or he could wait and get a family through God's miraculous ability. Abraham and Sarah decide to use their own human ability and they get a child through Hagar—that child is Ishmael. Later, God did visit Abraham and Sarah and bring about a miracle—that child through Sarah is Isaac. Paul says these two sons and two mothers represent two ways of relating to God.

- Do I earn my relationship with God on my own ability? – or
- Do I wait for God and let my life be completely dependent on His ability?

Paul says when we go the human way, we become a slave even while thinking we are free.

- **Do you attempt to earn your relationship with God on your own ability?**
- **Who, other than Jesus, have you looked to for salvation or fulfillment?**

If we, or the Galatians, listen to what those teachers were saying, we would attempt to deal with all of our shame by being moral and religious...and end up nothing but slaves. However, if we understand what *Jesus* has done as being sufficient, when we trust Him in faith, we are truly free.

- **How does our work, when not a response to God's rescue of us, lead to slavery?**
- **How does grace speak into that slavery, hiding, and shame?**

If we are able to say, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling," that results in freedom.

- **What does it mean, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling"?**
- **How does it offer life free from slavery/shame?**

