

Galatians 4:21-31

Main Idea: A religion of works leads to slavery and death; a religion of grace brings freedom and life.

World Religions

Anyone who tells you that all religions are basically the same has never studied world religions. The vast array of religious beliefs is overwhelming. The fact is, no two world religions have much in common. Each religion differs from every other in practically every fundamental belief. Except in one area...All religions, with the exception of Christianity, teach that **salvation involves human achievement**. Christianity stands apart from all other world religions, proclaiming that God alone saves (by grace – through faith – in Christ). Period.

Summary – Galatians 4

In Galatians 4 Paul explains that before God, no one has any rights. We cannot earn anything. Whatever rights humanity once had have been forfeited as a result of sin. God is holy. He is righteous. I am not. To bring this situation home to his readers, Paul uses the metaphor of a slave. By the end of ch.4 Paul has completely won the argument, proving salvation is by grace, through faith, in Christ. He does so using two women from the OT – Hagar and Sarah.

Background

God promised Abraham and Sarah that He would give them a son. But after ten years of waiting, Sarah presented Hagar to her husband so that he could father a child with her. This was the custom of the day. Ishmael’s birth represents a lack of faith, human efforts (the OT Law). Isaac’s birth represents faith, God’s intervention (grace).

I am Free in Christ

To the Christ-followers in Galatia Paul says, “You are like Isaac! You are children of promise!” You don't have to earn God's favor. You are a full heir to His estate. That means...

- ❑ **I can do nothing that can expel me from the family.** When my simple belief in Christ becomes authentic faith with the intention to follow him, the Holy Spirit enters my body and seals my eternal destiny.
- ❑ **I will likely be persecuted by my half-brother (the legalist).** These are overly religious people, usually quite proud of their own religious endeavors and quick to point out my failures.
- ❑ **I must recognize the absolute incompatibility of legalism and grace.** You must ask yourself, what motivates my behavior: love and respect for my King or personal pride and community standing?
- ❑ **I am free to choose – legalism or grace?** Remember v.21. The people had chosen freely. They had voluntarily chosen bondage over freedom.

Family Night Big idea – Read Galatians 4:21-31

You want to emphasize to your children that salvation is God’s greatest grace gift. We cannot work our way to heaven. We simply respond to His gift and follow Jesus.

- **Elementary School** – Ask, “How many sons did Abraham have? What was different about the two sons (v.23)? What kind of children are followers of Jesus (v.28)? What is good about freedom?”
- **Middle/ High School** – Ask, “Why is the OT Law likened to slavery? What is free and liberating about faith in Jesus Christ? What should motivate us to do good deeds? How should we respond to the freedom we have in Christ?”

Prayer: "Heavenly Father we are free. Thank You. Help us live like it. Amen."

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: Meet at the church this Wednesday at 6:30.

Gravity: Today in both services in Velocity Theater.

Today’s Songs

I Believe.....Phil Wickham

Holy Forever.....Chris Tomlin

Praise.....Brandon Lake

Today is Promotion Sunday

All kids starting Pre-K will move up to KidsJAM today. All kids starting 6th grade will move up to Velocity today and can attend the Gravity Service on Sundays.

Church is Getting a New Well

Our well is 20 years old, and the galvanized piping is leaving rust deposits in our tank. Toilet water and tap water looks dirty. There is no danger to us, but we want the problem fixed. We will be digging a new well but will have to wait to get a permit and then it will take 3-4 weeks for the well company to get started. Thank you for your patience!

KidsJAM Science Night

Kids are invited to the church on Wednesday, August 21st, for Science Night. This event is from 6-7:30. A light supper is included. Sign up at the KidsJAM Check-in Desk.