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Freedom To Live For Christ Galatians 4:21-31 By Kirk Gambrell

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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week we will finish chapter 4 of Galatians in our series “Freedom to Live for Christ”. Galatians spends a great deal of time explaining the place of the law and its balance with freedom in Christ. This week we will study the allegory that Paul presents in an effort to explain the law. He reminds the reader of the story in Genesis about Sara and Hagar. Hagar is the slave woman that gives birth to Abraham’s first child, and Sara is his wife that gives birth to Isaac, the child of the promise. In this story, we will understand the difficulty of taking things into our own hands, and how that equates to the law.



Read Galatians 4:21-31 (NET)

²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under the law, do you not understand the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. ²³ But one, the son by the slave woman, was born by natural descent, while the other, the son by the free woman, was born through the promise. ²⁴ These things may be treated as an allegory, for these women represent two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai bearing children for slavery; this is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia and 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 woman who does not bear children; break forth and shout, you who have no birth pains, because the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than those of the woman who has a husband.”

²⁸ But you, brothers and sisters, are children of the promise like Isaac. ²⁹ But just as at that time the one born by natural descent persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, so it is now.

³⁰ But what does the scripture say? “Throw out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman will not share the inheritance with the son” of the free woman. ³¹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free woman.

EXAMINE His Word (Observation) (For personal preparation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passages.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?

5. What is emphasized?

6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?

7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

2 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation) (For Community Group discussion)
What does God MEAN?

8. Who are the two women referred to in the allegory? (Genesis 16)

9. Hagar is Abraham's slave that bore him his first son. Looking at verse 23, why was Hagar's child, Ishmael, rejected as the child of the promise? (Genesis 17:19-21)

10. When it says in verse 28 that you are children of the promise, what promise is it referring to?

11. How can we describe the differences between being a child of the slave woman and a child of the promise?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application) (For Community Group discussion)

Why does this MATTER to me?

12. The child of the slave woman represents man's attempt to take matters into his own hands. In what areas of your life do you find yourself trying to take matters into your own hands?

13. How does patience play a role in being dependent on God versus being dependent on our self?

14. In regards to the law, there are two extremes to avoid: first, being legalistic in trying to keep the law as a means to righteousness, and, second, disregarding the law entirely as out of date and unimportant. How do we find the balance between these two extremes?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to **KNOW**, to **FEEL**, and to **DO**...

SERMON NOTES