

ARE YOU STILL A SLAVE-CHILD? Galatians 4:21-31

Faggot services New Years resolutions

=> we go back to old ways? Why?

Trying harder *never* gives us ability to live godly lives!

Our best efforts are never good enough

–they don't produce godliness

Gal 4 contrasts law & faith

=> faith is superior to law.

God's promise was given 400 yrs before the law.

It couldn't be replaced, nor amended,
by law.

Faith makes us adult sons
with privileges of adult heirs.

We no longer need supervision
of a guardian

Law *enslaves* us;

Faith *frees* us from slavery.

*Why would we want to go back
to slavery?*

Doctrinal argument concludes with O.T. illustration.

Judaizers believe *they're* the children of Abraham.

They think *they* will receive blessing God promised.

"People who want God's blessing should imitate *them*

=> live by their rules; keep the law"

Paul: Abraham has

2 kinds of children:

* **Free, born**

according to God's promise

* **Slaves, born**

according to the flesh,

–*Acc. to Abraham's plan*

–*rather than God's.*

Result of HIS effort to make something happen!

Legalists must choose which kind of children they want to be!

STORY WITHIN OLD TESTAMENT

[Gen:]

Moses explains origin of conditions in Israel's history.

Gen shows how God chose Israel & origin of enemies:

Ishmael's children are Israel's enemies

Why?

Ishmaelites are enemies because they're children of Abraham thrown out of the house.

They lost their inheritance 16:1-16; 21:1-21

They try to destroy heirs of God's promises

Judaizers are sons of Abraham;

but Abraham had 2 kinds of sons!

Rest of children became

enemies of the heir

PAUL'S USE OF STORY

Intro. to story 21 *"Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says?"*

If we think we can live by rules,

we'd better listen to what the law says!

Have we heard what it says?

The law itself proves his point!

Contrast between 2 sons 22-23 *"It is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman & the other by the free woman. ²³His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise."*

Compares law & grace to difference between Ishmael, son of slave, & Isaac, son of free woman.

Judaizers don't represent Isaac's descendants, they represent the descendants of Ishmael, the slave-child.

1) Both sons of Abraham:

Same father

2) Different mothers

–One slave;
other free.

3) Difference between sons:

kind of birth

Ishmael born

"according to flesh"

–true in 2 ways:

1. Ishmael= Son in ***physical*** sense–born *natural* son.

But it's also true in another significant sense:

2. Son result of ***carnal*** effort:

Abraham follows his plan

–*thought he'd help God out!*

–his effort doesn't produce what he wants!

Ishmael is fruit

of Abraham's effort.

Isaac is fruit

of God's promise.

Birth not possible

without *supernatural* intervention.

Focus on *kind* of birth

– natural, acc. to man's effort,

or supernatural, acc. to God's promise.

Contrast of 2 covenants 24-27

Ishmael represents law covenant;
 Isaac represents faith

2 covenants represented by 2 mothers.

Law covenant

=> slave-children

=> Judaizers

Faith produces free children
 who enjoy liberty as heirs

Faith covenant

=> free children

=> true heirs

Enslaving covenant 24-25 *“These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. ²⁵Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children.”*

–comes from Mt. Sinai

=> produces slavery

–fulfillment in earthly city of Jerusalem.

Liberating covenant 26-27 *“But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷For it is written: “Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.”*

–fulfillment is heavenly

=> produces liberty

–promises more children

than enslaving covenant.

Liberating covenant=>blessing for people without hope

Great nation comes from

"the sterile one"

Free woman ends up with more children than slave.

"Her who has a husband"

=>Israel counts on God's favor

***Ishmael represents
enslaving law;***

***Isaac represents
liberating faith***

Application to Galatians 28-31

5 principles guide us,

as children of the free woman:

1. People who *trust Jesus*

are children of promise;

NOT Jews 28 "Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise."

Heirs of promise:

Aren't natural-born children,

–*not* those born from human efforts,

People of faith are true heirs.

We're like Isaac 2 ways:

We're free, not slaves.

We become sons

as a result of God's promise.

We were dead in sin

& without God in the world.

We're born by God's work

=>heirs of God's promise

People born of flesh [by our effort]

are *slaves* to law.

while people born *by faith*

are free from law.

2nd principle derived from this story:

True children are persecuted by people who follow the flesh 29

“At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now.”

People who try to establish their own righteousness attack people who don't join their effort [try to do it!]

**Legalists persecute
people who are free!**

Attack in our day = criticism & belittling more than persecution. However, the day may not be far off when the persecution becomes literal and physical!

3rd principle Paul points to:

As Abraham had to throw out
Hagar & Ishmael,

People who enter the family by faith ought to put out people who walk by the flesh 30 *“What does the Scripture say? “Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.”*

2 can't exist side by side in peace.

Slave represents legalists' system

–our effort to obey

Children of faith ought to oppose people who try to add *human* effort to God's provision for blessing.

Children of flesh

persecute children of promise

Children of promise

must oppose children of flesh

4th principle: People who follow way of law won't share the inheritance with children of liberty. 30

It's *impossible* for law & promise
to co-exist side by side.

**5. Enjoy your liberty; don't let anything make you
slaves!**

31-5:1 *"We are not children of the slave
woman, but of the free woman. ^{5:1}It is for freedom that Christ has
set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be
burdened again by a yoke of slavery."*

APPLICATION TODAY

Preceding principles are still in effect
If blessing comes by my efforts,
by us doing good,
it can't be by faith.

I can't do all that's required *all* the time.

Therefore, I'm sunk!

We're in serious trouble!

If blessing comes by God's promise, by faith,
then we're free,
like Isaac we can enjoy
fullness of inheritance.

Let's think about it . . .

Who are children according to the flesh?

–in our context? Judaizers? Who then?

Who are children according to the promise?

How should WE live in the light of this teaching?

**We trust Jesus—work He already completed for us on the
cross. Jesus paid it ALL! We add nothing!**

Therefore, we inherit

all that God has promised.

God sees us dressed in Jesus' righteousness!

WHAT ARE WE TRUSTING?