

Galatians: Christ Has Set Us Free  
Lesson 9 “Two Covenants”

I. Introduction and Review - Paul wrote this book to give an revelation of grace and what the true gospel is. He wrote in a very emphatic and dogmatic and sort of in your face style.

A. Paul was writing to churches in Galatia that he founded on his first missionary journey (*Acts 13-14*). These churches were founded in approximately 48 A.D.

1. Paul wrote Galatians about 3 years after he founded these churches to counter the teaching of the Judaizers. The Judaizers had come in and begin to say that these Christians had to continue to believe in Jesus but also live by the Mosaic law to be right with God. Watered down the gospel. Paul called their teaching of mixture a different gospel and said that those that taught it were accursed.
2. The main point of the letter is we are saved by putting faith in God’s grace. We cannot add to what Jesus did for us to get saved, maintain our salvation, and/ or to receive any of the blessings of God like healing, prosperity, etc.

B. Last week we looked at *verses 8-20* and Paul’s concerns for the church. These concerns were about them going back into bondage after they had been set free. Tonight we are going to look further at this by examining the two covenants Paul talks about in this letter: one covenant led to freedom while the other led to bondage.

II. Two Covenants

A. Paul was in the deserts of Arabia for three years - **Galatians 1:16**. While Paul was there he saw Mt. Sinai and had an epiphany about Abraham’s struggle to have a child and the struggle between law (self-effort) and grace (God’s ability). **Probably related this with his own struggle to fulfill the law.**

1. One leads to bondage and the others leads to freedom.
2. Here’s the rub, both can lead to children so it can be hard to discern the difference without the word of God. Mt. Sinai Deliverance story when I was interviewed on local TCT affiliate.

**B. Galatians 4:21-25 The Covenant at Sinai**

1. Paul uses an Old Testament metaphor to illustrate the difference between the two covenants. He compares the law to Hagar (mom of Ismael) who was born according to Abraham’s great effort and grace to Isaac (laughter), which came through God’s grace (child of promise).
2. God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations and through his seed all nations would be blessed. Unfortunately, the promise was

delayed so Abraham tried to help God out and at the suggestion of his wife Sarah, he slept with her handmaiden Hagar and gave birth to Ismael. **Genesis 16.**

3. Hagar is symbolic of the old covenant born of the flesh (our effort) that leads to bondage (Ismael story). Hagar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia.

4. Trying to earn or maintain God's favor through our efforts is bondage.

### C. Galatians 4:26-31 Jerusalem above that is Free

1. **Verses 26-27** reference **Isaiah 54. Context of Isaiah 54** - prophecy given for the nation of Israel when they were coming out of Babylonian captivity. The Jews returned to Israel after they had been carried into captivity for 70 years and the city was desolate and barren. Circumstances didn't look good and it appeared hopeless. **It's kinda like God telling you to buy a bigger house in 2022 with inflation and high interest rates. Paul quotes this applies it to the miraculous birth of the new covenant.**

a. **Verse 1** Tells her to sing because her children would be more than the children of a married woman. Singing proceeds the breakthrough.

b. **Verses 2-3** Enlarge your tent - lengthen you cords, strengthen your stakes - context - you need a bigger home if you are about to have a bunch of kids. God wants us to expect increase. This is why he says to expand to the right and left.

c. **Verses 4-8** God compares Israel to a widow forsaken because of their sin, but God would ultimately gather them together again.

d. **Verses 9-10** This passage is why I tell people that God isn't mad at them. Why is this in here? If mountains depart and hills are removed, a lot of people would assume God is mad at them.

e. **Verses 11-13** our foundations laid with precious stones, valuables, wealth. **Catch the heart of God for you.**

f. **Verses 14-17** These verses apply to us today because our enemy isn't assembling against us when we get to heaven. No weapon will be formed against us there.

2. **Verses 28-29** We are of Isaac (the church) and we are the children of promise. We will receive persecution from the children of Hagar (the legalist).

3. **Verse 30** - Quotes **Genesis 21:9-10** We are commanded to put away self effort (the law) like Abraham put away Ismael. The son (Jesus) will not be coheir with self-effort. Ironically, we are joint heirs through Christ, but we only get to rule and reign through his free gift not our striving.

4. **Verse 31** We are children of the free. So where do we go from here? **Hebrews 4:11-12** We labor to enter it to rest.

## III. Conclusion

### A. Pray Closing Prayer and Call Up Prayer Team