

Title: Slavery or Freedom

Text: Galatians 4:21-31

Main Idea: We must give over all self-reliance and believe, if we want to receive God's promise.

Division Statements:

1. Self-reliance leads to rejection by God (vv. 21-25, 30).

Abraham and Sarah weakened in their faith for a time and sought to help God fulfill His promise of a son through Hagar. They trusted in their own devices and simply ended up producing a son who would never be the heir of God's promise. In the same way, Israel could never inherit the promise of salvation through legalism. The law was not met with faith, but with self-reliance (e.g. Rom. 9:32) and therefore the "Jerusalem which now is" was rejected by God.

2. Faith leads to freedom and joy (vv. 26-27, 5:1).

Faith, however, not in what man can do, but in what God can do leads to an entirely different result. When Sarah stopped trusting in what she could produce and began believing in the promise of God (Heb. 11:11), she gave birth to a son who would be the heir of God's promise.

3. Faith leads to persecution by men but acceptance by God (vv. 28-31).

These verses are very clear. We are free and children of promise as Isaac was, when we give over self-reliance and works to obtain God's promise and simply believe. We become accepted by God. However, this inevitably leads to persecution by the world, even as Ishmael persecuted Isaac.

Bridging From Text To Sermon

Textual Idea: Paul shows how Isaac & Ishmael are symbolic of faith vs. works, grace vs. law, freedom vs. slavery, and Christianity vs. Judaism.

Sermon Proposition: We must give over all self-reliance and believe, if we want to receive God's promise.

Interrogative: Why should we give over self-reliance and believe in God's promise?

Transition: The text gives us three results to consider in answering this question.

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