

Believers Together

Discovering the Word Series – May 30, 2023

Hagar and Sarah—Galatians 4:21–31

Open It

1. In your family, how were you and your siblings each treated differently?

Galatians 4:21–31 (ESV)

²¹Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law?

²²For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman.

²³But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.

²⁴Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar.

²⁵Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

²⁶But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

²⁷For it is written, “Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband.”

²⁸Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.

²⁹But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now.

³⁰But what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.”

³¹So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

Explore It

2. Before the Galatians truly gave themselves over to the Law, what did Paul ask them to consider? (4:21)
3. Why did Paul appeal to the example of Abraham? (4:22)
4. What was the difference in status between Abraham’s two sons? (4:22)
5. How were Abraham’s sons conceived? (4:23)
6. How did Paul refer to the birth of Abraham’s sons? (4:24–27)
7. How was Sarah an example of the “Jerusalem that is above”? (4:26–27)
8. Based on his illustration, how did Paul expect the Galatians to deal with the legalists? (4:28–30)
9. How did Paul align himself with the Galatians and Sarah? (4:31)

Get It

10. Why was Paul’s allegory helpful in explaining Law and grace?
11. How should you treat people who try to impose their standards on you?

Apply It

12. What will help you avoid unfairly imposing your own standards on others?