

Read Galatians 4:21-31. This is the final in a series of seven arguments on why the false teachers are wrong in trying to make Gentiles return to the law of Moses and man-made traditions to earn salvation. Paul now presents the allegory of two women, two sons, and two covenants. Ishmael, born “according to the flesh,” represents humanity’s attempt to accomplish God’s purposes through its own effort. Isaac, born through promise, represents what only God can do. The contrast is between what is merely human and what is divinely empowered. It is the contrast between a “do-it-yourself” attitude and a “do-it-through-faith” attitude. The first is inadequate; the other is sufficient because it rests entirely on God. Hagar and Mt. Sinai correspond to the covenant of law made with Moses. This was a system that inevitably produced bondage because it depended on human performance. Even the actual city of Jerusalem, the center of religious life in Paul’s day, had come to symbolize this mindset of striving to measure up. But in contrast stands “the Jerusalem above.” This heavenly city was what Abraham longed for through faith - a spiritual reality built by God Himself (*Hebrews 11:10; 12:22*). This spiritual Jerusalem is marked by freedom, not fear; by promise, not pressure. It is the home of all who recognize they cannot earn salvation, but must receive it as a gift of grace through faith, brought to life in us by the power of Holy Spirit.

This means that our identity as God’s people is not rooted in what we achieve, but in what God has promised and fulfilled in Christ. We are not children of performance, but children of promise and power. And that changes everything. Bondage to the law and spiritual freedom cannot coexist. When we try to earn what God freely gives, we place ourselves back under a yoke that was never meant to save us. At the same time, the freedom Christ gives us is not a license for careless living. It is the freedom to finally live as we were designed: holy, righteous, and deeply connected to the Father. Not out of fear or obligation, but out of love, gratitude, and joy in a restored relationship.

So Paul’s call is both liberating and urgent: “Cast out the bondswoman!” (v.30). Do not return to a system that enslaves, whether it be legalism or the old life of sin. Stand firm in the freedom Christ has given. Live as children of the promise, trusting not in your own strength, but in the faithfulness and power of God. And remember that this promise creates a unified body, where all who come by faith belong, equally and fully, in the family of God.

Prayerfully consider the following this week: In what ways am I tempted to rely on my own effort to “earn” God’s favor rather than resting in His promise? How can I more fully embrace and live out the freedom Christ has given as loving obedience? What would it look like for me to encourage others in my church family to live as children of promise, secure in God’s grace rather than burdened by performance?

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### Weekly Memory Verse:

“For all of you who were baptized into Christ  
have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

Galatians 2:20

### Weekly Affirmation:

**I’M NO LONGER A SLAVE,  
I’M A CHILD OF GOD!**

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### APRIL 2026 GROWTH GOALS

- Read the Book of Galatians
- Watch the Bible Project video on Galatians  
(available on the website).
- Memorize one of the weekly memory verses.
- Invite at least one person to Sunday assembly.