

Grace Bible Church
Adult Elective Fall 2016
Topic: Galatians
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Chapter 4

- vv. 1-3
 - Gk word is *stoicheia* ("elemental things") which refers to the philosophy and deception of man's traditions (cf. the same usage in Col. chapter 2) or of spiritual forces which deceive the world (cf. this usage in Ephesians 2 and John 12, 14).
 - KEY: Before Christ, the Law kept us in bondage to both man's lies and demonic influences. Both result in despair and a loss of truth.
- vv. 4-11
 - Jesus was born under the Law, but only He could perfectly keep the Law (and also fulfill it!!!).
 - Jesus' perfect life and sacrificial death purchased us from the Law (our slave-master).
 - Jesus sacrifice for us put us in right standing before God (justification), but also put us in right relationship with God!!!
 - We can call God the Father "Abba" [Aramaic for "Daddy"].
 - Christ calls the Father Abba, and we can too (because of our adoption as sons and daughters through Christ).
 - Judaizers were calling for an adherence to many points of the Law, including circumcision and keeping festivals (which the Jews kept in order to keep their focus on God - NOT for salvation!!!).
 - **Application Point:** How do we maintain a strong and loving relationship with God?
- v. 12
 - Paul is a defender of truth with righteous anger and zeal. He is also an encouraging pastor. He shows genuine care and love for the Galatians who were probably somewhat hostile toward him (given the passage and the surely smooth tongues of the Judaizers).
 - cf. 1 Peter 3:15
 - Paul wanted the Galatians to emulate his freedom in Christ.
 - When they were first together, both Paul and the Galatians were showing brotherly love and kindness.

- vv. 13-16
 - The Galatians were originally open to the Gospel and were changed by it (as evidenced by their outflow of goodness and kindness).
 - This changed, and as Paul is writing the Galatians, they are likely hostile toward him and treating him as an enemy.
- vv. 17-20
 - The Judaizers were clearly trying to destroy Paul's reputation. They were showing disingenuous flattery.
 - Paul reminds the Galatians that his motives were always service (so that they might become more and more like Christ).
 - **Application Point:** How do we respond to others pointing out truth (and where/when we have transgressed)?
- vv.21-31 overview
 - Works vs. Grace (it is one or the other)
 - Paul uses the Judaizer's methods of argumentation and exegesis against them.
 - Paul uses the allegorical method of interpretation
 - Two major types of interpretation:
 - Literal (concrete hx realities using literary and hx context)
 - Allegorical (spiritual meaning behind the hx reality)
 - Allegorical interpretation was popular with Jewish interpreters (make OT relevant to contemporary life and to explain away potentially embarrassing passages or books)
- v. 21
 - If you want to live by the Law, then know what the Law says!
 - Paul gives the Judaizer's (for the purposes of debate) the point that we are obligated to live according to the Law. He then uses it against them in what follows.
- vv. 22-27
 - The Jews assumed that their pedigree (physical descendants of Abraham) gave them superior/preferential standing before God.
 - Paul argues that standing before God (true descendants of Abraham) comes from our relationship to Jesus alone (cf. John 8:31-47)
 - Paul retells the story of Sarah and Hagar using allegory to compare the Law and grace. - Swindoll
 - LAW: Hagar (bondswoman), Ishmael (born according to flesh), Moses' covenant (old covenant), earthly Jerusalem, slavery to Law, Judaism

- GRACE: Sarah (free), Isaac (born according to the Spirit), Christ (new covenant), heavenly Jerusalem [heaven or the body of Christ], freedom in Christ, Christianity
 - The Jews never succeeded under the Law. They failed, moved away from God, and were exiled (due to unfaithfulness to the covenant of Moses).
 - Isaiah 54 shows the superiority of Grace over Law. This originally referred to exiled Jews and encouraged them that God would not forget them. Paul uses it to show that God actually blesses those outside of the “expected” circle of blessing (barren, forsaken, unprivileged, etc.).
- vv. 28-31
 - Paul warns the Galatians that just like Ishmael scorned Isaac, the Judaizers (and legalists) will similarly scorn true believers.
 - Paul interprets the passage totally opposite how the Jews would have interpreted it (the gentiles are related to the true heirs of Abraham).