



Galatians 4:8–31

Pray

- To be strengthened in our faith and doctrine, unmovable by flattery or pressure or pretense.

Discuss

- What do you think it meant that they had begun to “observe days and months and seasons and years?” Do you think there is anything wrong with marking holidays or events? What was Paul likely concerned about?
- What sort of people were the Galatians? Were they reckless heretics callously turning from the gospel? What warning should we take from this?
- Paul continues to reference Abraham’s story in this letter, this time discussing the children he had with Hagar and Sarah. What happened in that portion of the story? (See Genesis 16 & 21:1-21 for more info.)
- What is Paul’s point in using the example of the two mothers? How does Paul tie this in to Mt. Sinai (where Moses received the law) and Jerusalem? What does “Jerusalem above” mean?

Reflect

- Being wrong about doctrine does not require sin or purposeful straying from God. We can sincerely and passionately add or detract from the simplicity of grace.



Galatians 3:25 – 4:7

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years! 11 I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

12 Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. 13 You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, 14 and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. 15 What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. 16 Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? 17 They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them. 18 It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, 19 my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! 20 I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. 24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For 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.”

28 Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But 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. 30 But 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.” 31 So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.