



## 24-7-365

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024

GALATIANS 4:21-31

We live in a fix-it world. We want to fix everything and everyone. We want to fix the problems we see. We want fix people in our lives too. And we've never been better equipped to fix everything – or so we think.

Today, Paul shows us through an Old Testament allegory, why our fix-it approach to everything fails, **by our efforts**. He then reminds us of who we are and what we have according to the promises of God, **by His grace**.

1 Paul sets the scene for our minds in verse 21,

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

You who want rules and standards; who want to receive applause and recognition for your efforts; the fix-it kings and queens - can you not hear the law?

It is loud!

When the law was given the mountain was surrounded thunder, lightning, thick cloud, smoke, and the deafening blast of a trumpet as the mountain violently shook.

The law did not come to befriend us nor to provide a system of effort to get ourselves back to God Almighty. It was come to bring judgement to the deadness of our efforts and with all **this violence and drama God made sure His people experienced the deafening weight of the law**.

3 And so the allegory begins in verse 22,

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

4 Isaac was the son of promise that would be born to Abraham and Sarah. **All they had to do was trust and wait on God's promises**. Our faith should be identical – trusting and waiting on God's promises 24-7-365.

5 What happens next is what happens to us all in verse 23,

But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise

No sooner have we received the word from God than our minds are working overtime to make it happen. Our fix-it mentality takes over from faith because as Paul says in Romans 7:15,

6

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do

And that is how each of us experiences the human condition as a believer – struggling to do the right thing!

7

And if **any of you thinks you can outsmart this issue and do better than the Apostle Paul, you are kidding yourself to believe you can fix you.**

8

No Paul describes what our ‘fixing’ leads to verse 24,

which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—

9

Sticking with Paul’s allegory, Hagar, the mother of the ‘I’ll fix this’ baby represents the bondage (**unbreakable ties**) that wraps itself around us when **we neglect the promises of God.**

10

And this is what neglecting God’s promises leads to verse 25,

for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children

11

Hagar represent the law given on Sinai, and it also, Paul says, represents the efforts of the Jewish people (centred in Jerusalem) and what you see for **all the religious efforts to fix the problems of sin is actually a vicious form of slavery.**

12

But the promises of God have come from heaven or as Paul describes in verse 26,

but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

13

You as believers **have been born again of the Spirit of God. Not by works of the flesh, but of grace.** Not by the law but by the Spirit, because the law kills but the Spirit gives life eternal.

14

For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren,  
*You* who do not bear!  
Break forth and shout,

You who are not in labor!  
For the desolate has many more children  
Than she who has a husband.”

Christian, can you do your faith a massive favour? When you see the words, ‘it is written’ that you find out what those words mean and then believe them.

15 **Much damage can be undone today if we stop questioning everything, stop finding out what everyone else thinks and come to a point of conviction of believing, without questions, that what God has written, He has written.**

These words remind us the number of those redeemed through the promises of God far outweigh those who fix their own righteousness.

16 Now Paul draws the conclusion of this allegory (v28),

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

Brothers and sister you have been born again of the Spirit of God, by the grace of God, through the sacrificial blood of Jesus, to the glory of God!

17 A child of God is never exempt from the sufferings of Christ (v29),

But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

If you are suffering as a Christian, it is not a sign that God has abandoned you or forsaken. Oftentimes this occurs because those who want to live the fix-it lifestyle are deeply offended by God’s grace. **Because nothing shouts “your efforts are pointless and futile” than does the grace of God.**

17

The grace of God silences the thunderous judgement of Sinai!

So how should we deal with the issues that are rooted in the ‘fix-it’ child of Hagar? Look at verse 30,

18

Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”

That’s it, throw out all forms of legalism.

19

Throw out your certificates of achievement.

Throw out all your efforts and trust in Christ alone!

20 Because, (verse 31),

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.  
Christian you are free!

21 Free to believe, free to trust, free to abandon the trappings of this world, free to place all your hope in God's promises, free to **live a faith that is not just polished up for its weekly presentation on a Sunday but stands relentlessly on the Rock of your Salvation – Jesus Christ 24-7-365.**

22 How shall we live in the power of God's promises?

- Start believing God's promises
- Remember God's promises are bigger than the promises of Satan
- What promise of God are you struggling to believe today?
- Put all your 'fix-its' on the altar and sacrifice them before God
- Show up everywhere this week with God's promises in your heart not your fix-its in your hand