



Series: Thriving in Grace

Passage: Galatians 4:8-31

Title: Freedom in Jesus, Divine Grace vs Legalism

Speaker: Pastor JC Cooper 3/23/2025

Discussion Starter – What is the most extravagant gift you have ever received? Do you treat it or use it differently than something that earned through your own efforts?

Read Galatians 4:8-11

1. How does Paul characterize the Galatians behavior before they came to know God?
2. What is Paul's fear for the Galatians? Restate verse 11 in our own words.
3. What are three undesirable yet unavoidable outcomes of having a transactional or legalistic relationship with God?
 - a. What is the difference between living a life of faithful obedience compared to one of legalism?

Read Galatians 4:12-20

4. How did Paul become like the Galatians? How were they to be like him?
5. What were the circumstances of Paul's initial visit to the region, (Acts 13-14)? How do those circumstances reflect the close bond between Paul and the people of the Galatian region?
6. What are the motives of the Judaizers, (v 17)? Recall Galatians 1:8-9. What is Paul trying to achieve with his argument?
 - b. What is at stake in the health of the Galatian churches in Paul's mind? What ungodly behaviors can result from legalism in our lives? Do you fear the encroachment of legalism into your thinking?

Read Galatians 4:21-31

7. How does Paul relate the story of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac, (concepts of bond and free, flesh and promise, and two different sons to two different covenants originating from Mt Sinai and Jerusalem above) to the battle being fought against the Galatian churches? What conclusions does he draw?
8. Who are we to identify with in this story? (v 28)
 - c. What does it mean in your life that "the children of the desolate are more than she who has a husband"? (v 27)
 - d. How are we to apply the command, "cast out the bondwoman and her son"? (v 30)
9. What did this portion of scripture teach you about interpreting and understanding passages from the bible?
 - e. How can you improve at understanding and meditating on the inter-relatedness of the entire bible and grow in your knowledge of and relationship with God?