Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – July 21, 2019

 The Transforming Power of the Cross

*Galatians: How the Gospel Sets Us Free*

Live Free!

“You are children of the Promise, not slaves of the Law.”

Galatians 4:21–31

 God created Adam a free man with the mandate to be a steward of an earth full of free men and women. Sin, however, enslaved the human race, and the Law of Moses was given in order to rein in Israel’s rebellion and sin.

 Jesus has succeeded where Adam failed, and is the head of a new race of free men and women, no longer slaves of sin and therefore no longer under the restrictions of the Law of Moses. Now, through the Spirit, the Law is in hearts.

 All of this comes by faith, through promises, by the New Covenant, and not by the keeping of the Law. The Law was about working, which is the opposite of gratefully receiving a gift. The story in Genesis (16, 17, 21) to which Paul refers is a real-life illustration of how the promise works and how the inheritance is received by faith, not passed through genes or earned by our own efforts.

 While God made promises to both of Abraham’s sons, it was Isaac alone through whom the inheritance was passed and Messiah, the Seed, would come. New Covenant liberty in Christ replaces Old Covenant slavery to a Law which is no longer in force for either Jew or Gentile. Jesus changed everything.

***The Story:*** *Abraham is promised an heir, but as his wife is past child-bearing age, and an heir looks increasingly unlikely, Sarah suggests that she have a surrogate child via her handmaid, Hagar, a common practice in the culture. A son, Ishmael, is born. Years later, when the promised son, Isaac, arrives, it creates family conflict and a reason for God to restate the differences between the two sons. Isaac will be heir to the promise.*

***The Application:*** *Paul sees a parallel in this story, an allegory in which the Law and Jerusalem are contrasted to the New Covenant and the New Jerusalem to come. Let’s think through the key points, as they are rich with meaning and insight into the wonder of our salvation:*

*“You who want to be under the Law. . .” Galatians 2:4*

 *They are a minority who deliberately are choosing works, not grace.*

*“Do you not hear the Law?” 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11*

 *While the Torah contains laws, it actually taught grace salvation.*

*“It is written. . .” Matthew 5:17-20*

 *We are bound by the intent of God’s Word, not man’s traditions.*

*“Abraham had two sons. . . allegory”* *1 Corinthians 9:8-11*

 *New Covenant principles are foreshadowed in the Torah’s patterns.*

*“One by a slave woman. . .”* *1 Samuel 24:1-7*

 *In spite of the Promise, we are tempted to “help God” by our own efforts.*

*“Mt. Sinai. . . Law. . . Jerusalem. . . in slavery”* *Revelation 11:7, 8*

 *All of this together is passing away as part of the Old Creation.*

*“Jerusalem above. . . free. . . our mother”* *Hebrews 12:22-24*

 *In the Cross, the New Creation has broken into the present.*

*“You, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.”* *Romans 4:13, 14*

 *Believers will inherit the New Creation in Christ. All of the New Creation.*

*“He born of the flesh persecuted him born of the Spirit.”* Acts 21:27, 28

 *Would-be law keepers ridicule grace and see themselves as superior.*

*“The slave’s son shall not co-inherit with the free.”* *Galatians 3:10-14*

 *Would-be law keepers put themselves under a curse, not a blessing.*

*“We are not children of the slave, but of the free.”* *Ephesians 2:13-16*

 *No one, Jew or Gentile, is under the divisive, “kosher” laws of the Torah.*

Freedom Principle #8: The Good News of Jesus Christ frees

us by declaring us rightful heirs to the promises of Abraham.

***Applying the Principle:***

*Are you a child of God by faith in Jesus, or are you still trying to appease God by working your way to Him? Where is your inheritance?*