

## Gospel Illustration

### Galatians 4:21-31

*So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free . . . Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:31-37 [ESV](#))*

Definition: Christian freedom is the liberty to look to Jesus for direction, approval and accountability. Freedom means we are no longer enslaved by our sin's power nor condemned by our sin's penalty. Freedom means that we do not carry the burden to fulfill the Law in order to be wholly loved by God. Freedom means that if Jesus is happy with us, we are happy regardless of who else is unhappy.

**Main Idea: For freedom Jesus shed His blood to set us free. Let us stand firm in our freedom! Let us resist all influences that would take us back into slavery.**

#### The Attractiveness of Legalism

Legalism makes us feel safe . . . builds our self-confidence . . . honors our efforts . . . erases complexity . . . appeals to our natural negativity . . . gives us a good reputation . . . looks respectable and righteous . . . seems doable . . . removes the need for humility.

*"which things are symbolic." (Galatians 4:24 [NKJV](#)).*

*"These things may be taken figuratively," (Galatians 4:24 [NIV](#))*

*"These things are illustrations," (Galatians 4:24 [HCSB](#))*

Sarah illustrates the grace of God in His covenantal promises.

Hagar illustrates the law of God with its limitations.

Sarah illustrates the heavenly Jerusalem where all are free to enjoy God.

Hagar illustrates the present-day Jerusalem where the legalistic Pharisees keep people in slavery to the Law.

Isaac illustrates the son born after the Spirit of God . . . a miracle child.

Ishmael illustrates the son born by human designs/efforts . . . a natural child.

Isaac illustrates the son who inherits his father's estate.

Ishmael illustrates the son who has no part in his father's inheritance.

**Our experience of freedom in Christ . . .**

**1. Begins with God's grace.**

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 [ESV](#))*

Legalism fears grace; the Gospel depends upon grace.

**2. Requires a supernatural birth.**

*“Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”” (John 3:3, 7-8 [ESV](#))*

**3. Brings joy to the heart of God.**

*Free from the law—oh, happy condition!  
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;  
Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,  
Christ hath redeemed us once for all.  
Once for all—oh, sinner, receive it;  
Once for all—oh, doubter, believe it;  
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall,  
Christ hath redeemed us once for all. Philip Bliss*

**4. Creates opposition from those enslaved.**

**5. Grasps hold of God's promise.**

**6. Inherits God's eternal blessing.**

Legalism offers bonuses for working overtime. Grace provides an inheritance that will never fade, diminish or spoil.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power** are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5 [ESV](#))*