

ABRAHAM'S TWO SONS

Starting point:

If you have not heard the sermon, please take the time to go to our website www.vcfj.org and listen to it BEFORE you start this small group lesson. It will allow you to take notes along the way and be ready for the questions at hand. Remember this is not an exercise but rather a group discussion to help you on your Journey to Greatness. May the Lord bless your faithfulness.

OVERVIEW

- Pastor said Paul is proclaiming that there are really only two religions in the world. Discuss the two religions.

It's all about HOW TO INTERPRET THE BIBLE

Gal. 4:21

- What was Paul really asking the Galatians with his question in *verse 21*?
- Pastor said there are two major tendencies of reading and interpreting the bible: Literal and Allegorical. Discuss each way of thinking. Why would allegorical interpreters want to make the bible more relevant for our contemporary life?
- Were the Galatians actually listening to what the law said?

Choose between THE BONDWOMAN OR THE FREE WOMAN

Gal. 4:22-27

- What do we learn about the Jew and their beliefs about who they descended from when we read *John 8:33*?
- What is Paul's argument about where "true freedom" comes from?
- Are we "born into" true freedom because we were "raised up in the church?"

- Paul tells the story of Abraham and the son's he had through Hagar and Sarah.
Re-read *Gen. 15:1-6, Gen. 16:1-6 and Gen. 17:15-21.*
- What was Paul telling the Galatians by telling them this story?
- What makes this such a powerful message for the Galatians?
- What was Paul saying about decisions both Abraham and Sarah made?
- What parallel did Paul draw between Abraham's two sons and two covenants between God and man?
- How did this message illustrate a theological truth to the Galatians?
- Why is this important to understand?
- How does *verse 27* help Paul communicate that we are free in God's promise?
- Paul ends this part by his words in *verse 28*. What should the Galatians and all of us learn from this verse?

Ishmael and Isaac cannot live together

Gal. 29-31

- What is Paul telling us that the children of freedom should expect until Jesus Christ come back to this earth? (*v.29*)
- Paul helps the Galatians understand the problem when he quotes *Gen. 21:10-12* in *Gal. 4:30*.
- How did Sarah tell Abraham to solve the problem he created?
- What was Paul's point in making this statement?
- Pastor used a C.S. Lewis quote, "There are two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.'"
- What does this tell us to back up what Paul is teaching?

APPLICATION

- What does the story of Abraham's two sons teach us about relying on Divine initiative verses relying on human initiative?
- What do we give up when we take matters into our own hands?
- What do we gain when we trust God's promise?
- What are some ways that you put too much trust in your own works (slavery) instead of fully trusting God with your life?
- As you grow in your "Journey to Greatness," how has Paul in Galatians been molding and challenging you're the past couple of weeks?