



Daily Reflections

October 10, 2016

Scripture

Galatians 4: 22-5: 2

Brothers and sisters:

It is written that Abraham had two sons,
one by the slave woman and the other by the freeborn woman.

The son of the slave woman was born naturally,
the son of the freeborn through a promise.

Now this is an allegory.

These women represent two covenants.

One was from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery;
this is Hagar.

But the Jerusalem above is freeborn, and she is our mother.

For it is written:

Rejoice, you barren one who bore no children;
break forth and shout, you who were not in labor;
for more numerous are the children of the deserted one
than of her who has a husband.

Therefore, brothers and sisters,
we are children not of the slave woman
but of the freeborn woman.

For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm
and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery.

Our Scripture Reflection

The newly converted Galatians were very weak and nervous about their new found faith in Jesus Christ. Leaving their roots in Judaism was very difficult, often putting them at odds with their own family members who refused to convert. In today's text, Paul digs deep to give them a reason to look forward and not backwards. His method: Calling upon the promise made to Abraham. Abraham had fathered a child with a slave woman, Hagar, and the child born, Ishmael, was born subject to Jewish Law. However, Abraham also fathered a child with his wife Sarah, who conceived miraculously even though she was barren and advanced in age. In Paul's thinking, Isaac was a pure gift from God, and therefore, a sign of freedom from the Law. The ultimate sign, greater than any other, was the death of Jesus, who although crucified under the Law, defeated the power of sin, death and the Law on God's people once and for all. It's all about freedom, freedom to give up the past in order to fully embrace Jesus Christ.

Food for your Journey

Folks, you ought to be amazed that God would use us. It is like what Michael Horton said in his book, what ever happened to "amazing" in Amazing Grace? We have ceased to be amazed [at] the Grace of God enabling us and strengthening us to do service for God, and thereby we have misplaced the praise for God to ourselves.

Folks, it's a joy, it's a privilege, it's an honor, it's an unspeakable joy to serve the one true and living God. Because a minute portion of 1 percent of the world has ever had that privilege of even singing in a choir, of teaching a Sunday School, of evangelizing for his name sake, of giving honor and glory to God. It is a privilege, an honor, it is something that is praiseworthy to

serve God. And yet we have the impression that if we serve God, we ought to have a monument to our name.

Yes, we get tired. Yes, we get weary in well doing. But we ought to say with Livingston, "Away with such a word!" That's every time someone mentioned to him how he had sacrificed in going to Africa, he said, "Away with such a word!" He said it is utterly no sacrifice. And there was a man who sacrificed greatly in comparison to us.

--Michael Harding, "God's Pleasure in Our Obedience."

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You gave everything to free me from the power of sin and death forever. Help me to live my freedom in Christ by living a life in service to others. Amen.