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Part 4: A New Identity

INTRODUCTION: Galatians 3:26-29

GALATIANS 4:1-31 – Three Realities of our Freedom Walk

1. Fortunately, we have been given a new _____ (4:1-7)

***4** But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.*

2. Unfortunately, many Christians live in _____ (4:8-20)

***9** But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?*

3. Ultimately, in Christ we receive the promise of _____ (4:21-31)

***28** Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise. **29** At that time the son born according to the flesh persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. **30** But what does the Scripture say? “Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.”*

THE BIG IDEA:

“Take your son, your only son...” (Genesis 22:2)

“Struggle to enter into that rest...” (Hebrews 4:11)

By God’s grace, we are to cast out Hagar and Ishmael (figurative of the Law and the efforts of the flesh) – and instead, rest in our “Sarah” relationship with God based on His promises rather than our performance. This is true freedom – including freedom from life-dominating sin that once controlled us...

SMALL GROUP Q'S

Personal Life:

1. As you have been moving through this series – have you identified any areas of legalism in your life that God would want you to surrender to His grace? (Even subtle areas?)

Ponderings:

2. The first point in the weekend message was that we have been given a new identity in Christ. As a group, re-read Galatians 3:26 – 4:7 and try to identify specific statements which reflect this...
3. The second point highlighted is that many Christians live in ignorance of their new identity. How does the way we view ourselves in Christ impact the way we live? If possible, give specific examples of what you mean...
4. The final point of the message was that we – like Isaac – are children of promise. In what specific way(s) is Isaac a good picture of a New Covenant believer in Christ? Discuss the parallels as you see them...
5. As honestly as possible, try to answer the following questions:
 - Do you ever worry that if you rest “too much” in God's grace, you'll get lazy or be tempted to abuse grace as a license to sin? Explain...
 - In what sense do you need to “cast out” Hagar and Ishmael (the Old System and the flesh) from your life?
 - How is a deeper understanding and appreciation of God's New Covenant grace causing you to reconsider your approach to “living the Christian life?”
6. Have you ever felt “persecuted” or “taunted” by a religious person or group for enjoying and celebrating your freedom in Christ? If so, explain how you handle such situations...

Promptings:

7. Do you have any stories to share about opportunities you had this past week to be a “conduit” of God's grace in the life of someone else? If so, please share and give thanks together as a group.