

SERMON OUTLINE

The Jerusalem Above Is Free

Galatians 4:21-31

There are several layers to Paul's argument in the example of Hagar and Sarah.

Historical: The story of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac...

(Galatians 4:21-23)

Allegorical: What the allegory points out... *(Galatians 4:24-27)*

Personal: How it all applies to them/us... *(Galatians 4:28-31)*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS *(taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)*

- Where were you born: In a hospital? At home? What city? What "story" do your parents tell about your birth?
- How would you like to be married to two men? Two women?
- Read Genesis 16:1-4; 18:10-14; 21:1-10. What were the differences in the births of these two sons of Abraham? How does this story relate to Paul's argument in Galatians 3:7 and 4:7?
- Normally, the Jews would regard Sarah as their spiritual mother and Hagar as the spiritual mother of Gentiles: Why does Paul reverse the picture?
- How are the spiritual descendants of Sarah distinguished from the other line of descent?
- Has your experience as a Christian been more of a growing into freedom or coming under rules? Why?
- Has your joy in Christ ever been crushed by someone's sense that you were breaking traditions or rules? How have you imposed standards on others limiting their freedom?
- How do you feel knowing that God's promises of justification and the fullness of the Spirit are yours? What difference will these promises make in your life and witness this week?