

Galatians 4:20 – 5:1

Christian Standard Bible (CSB)

1 **²⁰ I would like to be with you right now and change**
 2 **my tone of voice, because I don't know what to do**
 3 **about you. ²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under the**
 4 **law, don't you hear the law? ²² For it is written that**
 5 **Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and the other**
 6 **by a free woman. ²³ But the one by the slave was**
 7 **born as a result of the flesh, while the one by the free**
 8 **woman was born through promise. ²⁴ These things**
 9 **are being taken figuratively, for the women**
 10 **represent two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai**
 11 **and bears children into slavery—this is Hagar.**
 12 **²⁵ Now Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia and**
 13 **corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in**
 14 **slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem**
 15 **above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is**
 16 **written,**

17 **REJOICE, CHILDLESS WOMAN,**
 18 **UNABLE TO GIVE BIRTH.**
 19 **BURST INTO SONG AND SHOUT,**
 20 **YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR,**
 21 **FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE WOMAN WILL BE MANY,**
 22 **MORE NUMEROUS THAN THOSE**
 23 **OF THE WOMAN WHO HAS A HUSBAND.**

24 **²⁸ Now you too, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are**
 25 **children of promise. ²⁹ But just as then the child born**
 26 **as a result of the flesh persecuted the one born as a**
 27 **result of the Spirit, so also now. ³⁰ But what does the**
 28 **Scripture say? “DRIVE OUT THE SLAVE AND HER SON, FOR**
 29 **THE SON OF THE SLAVE WILL NEVER BE A COHEIR WITH THE**
 30 **SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.” ³¹ Therefore, brothers and**
 31 **sisters, we are not children of a slave but of the free**
 32 **woman. ^{5:1} For freedom, Christ set us free. Stand**
 33 **firm then and don't submit again to a yoke of**
 34 **slavery.**

Observation (What does it say?):

What do you notice in this passage?

- Repeated words or ideas?
- Comparisons or contrasts?
- Purpose or explanation?
- Unusual or symbolic language?
- Commands or instructions?
- Conditional (if–then) statements?
- Other observations?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- What connection might there be between “Christ formed in you” (4:19) and “For freedom Christ set us free” (5:1)? How does this passage fit in between those two weighty phrases?
- What do you think of Paul's use of the story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar (Genesis 16-21) in making his point? How does allegorical interpretation (“figuratively” v. 24) relate to our approach of methodical inductive study?
- What other questions come to mind as you read?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- Where are you in the process of “Christ formed in you”?
- What areas of your life could be described as the struggle between slavery and freedom?
- How might this passage affect your understanding of who God is and what He is doing?
- What would be different (attitudes, behavior) if God used this passage to change you?

Additional questions for thought and discussion:

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures,
but draw everything from them,
and suffer nothing to remain
hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)**