

Hello! This is Dorothy -

I just want to share a little word of testimony of when, as a young lady, I first came to know Christ. I remember the tremendous relief I felt from all of my efforts of trying to reach God and keep up by my standards of serving Him and what my goals were going to be for the future. I was born-again actually by the Spirit of God and Jesus Christ became my personal Saviour. As you are listening today, I urge that that is the most important thing in your life. You can know that you have personally had your sins forgiven, that you have been literally lifted out, wrenched from the powers of darkness and put into the glorious position of being in Christ. No longer a child of Satan, but a child of the living God. A load went from my life; I want that load to go from your life. Suddenly, when this was all happening, I understood His grace. The Word of God was very alive. I was so grateful that I had been made one of His own, a child of God, a believer.

Then, well-meaning friends, Christians, came and they started to add what they felt would be correct for me. My appearance had to change and certain habits and certain ideas and all this I willingly followed, because I wanted to follow the Lord with all my heart. But, as I did so, I found I took on more and lost something. I somehow lost my position

of having this liberty in Christ and, before I knew it, I felt I was back as I was before - copying, trying to be and to do what I was expected to do for Christ. I want to make this very, very clear: I cannot think of a more heinous lie from Satan than to be deceived to think I could copy Christ! This idea that by my standards and by the things I am trying to do and the expectation God has upon me that I could copy Him is arrogant! Only Jesus can be Jesus. Therefore, although I might have the outward appearance, as I did, of being this wonderful, good Christian, somehow my testimony sounded very repetitious. God would plan in my day that I would meet people, but there was not the overflow of the love and the natural communication that always pointed to Christ Jesus. You see, I had fallen into the trap of . . . **having a form of godliness . . . - oh, so wonderful on the outside - . . . but denying the power thereof.** . . How grateful I am when I consider what God did for me.

I can only think of the Apostle Paul. He had the burden of a mother as it were to have a child the second time if it were possible, because he agonized when he said, . . . **until Christ be formed in you.** He was speaking to the Christians in Galatia. He wanted them to understand the dangers of the corrupt teaching that they had to have a legalistic bondage around them that they had to perform and to do. It was not a level of obeying those about us as we work and communicate with people in a daily routine, but it was putting something which was

adding to the Gospel. Oh, how easily those young Christians were falling into that trap. Paul, using an allegory of a well-known story in the Old Testament to try to show this, spoke about the Law and the freedom of living by grace. This allegory was not spiritualizing, but it was literally taking a deeper meaning in the text.

Paul used the story of Abraham's two sons. The first son, Ishmael, was born by Hagar, a bondwoman. Isaac was born by his wife, Sarah, a free woman. Hagar was a slave and therefore, her son, Ishmael, also was a slave. But because Sarah was a free woman, her son, Isaac, was also free. Sarah belonged to Abraham as his wife. **Cast out this bondwoman and her son**, she said. **For the son of this bond woman shall not be heir with my son, Isaac.** This is what Paul used in his allegory. In **Galatians 4:30** he says, **But what does the Scripture say? Cast out the slave woman and her son, for never shall the son of the slave woman be heir and share the inheritance with the son of the free woman.**

31 So, brethren, we [who are born-again] are not the children of a slave woman [the natural], but of the free [the supernatural].

In **Galatians 4:24-25**, we read that Hagar represents the Jewish dispensation, which was in bondage to the ceremonial law, but Sarah represents the true Church of Christ, free from this bondage by Christ's Blood on the Cross. Sarah's son, Isaac, stood for the heavenly Jerusalem, free from the Law and fleshly works of righteousness, the

dwelling place of God and departed spirits. Are you free? Out of your bondage, sorrow and night, into the freedom of Christ? Do you understand? You are not copying something. You are not bound as a slave, but in Christ Jesus, you have been set free! It is Jesus you obey with your heart. It is Jesus, whose spirit you receive by His Holy Spirit and it is His life expressed through you to reach others.

For His glory. Amen.