

Children of Promise

Now you brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. Galatians 4:28

Now. Paul calls the believers in Galatia 'brothers' but even more importantly Jesus called his followers 'brothers' and now he calls us 'brothers':

Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is [not was: is] not ashamed to call them brothers. Hebrews 2:11

At that time the son [Ishmael] born in the ordinary way persecuted the son [Isaac] born by the power of the Spirit. Galatians 4:29

In the ordinary way we were born of our parents. We were born again by the power of the Spirit. The natural (carnal, flesh, sinful nature) still wars against the supernatural (spiritual, new creation, born again).

For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. Galatians 5:17

It is the same now. What is the same now? The Ishmael persecutes the Isaac. The old identity as a natural son and daughter of our parents (what we inherited, what was part of our upbringing, our life experiences, our habits, traits, preferences, traditions, talents, character, desires) wars against our new identity as a son or daughter of promise, a son or daughter of God. The persecution against us is not just an external thing: our own sinful nature persecutes our born-again identity. But what does the scripture say we should do?

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. Genesis 21:10

The old, the natural, has no part with the new. Jesus taught that you can't patch up an old wineskin with new materials. The old has gone. We have not been patched up; the old has not been repaired. We are not being made into better versions of the old selves. Paul says:

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Galatians 6:24

Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free woman. Galatians 4:31

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up. Do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43:18-19

Jesus declared: "I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again. John 3:3 and see 5:8.

Paul taught: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old is gone, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17. (all scriptures NIV)

A new creation: someone completely new. Is this why Jesus called Simon 'Peter' and Saul 'Paul', new names for new creations?