

GALATIANS 4:8-20

November 10, 2019

**TODAY'S TEXT**—open your Bible, use a Bible app on your phone, or follow along below

**Text: GALATIANS 4:8-20**

*Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.<sup>9</sup> 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[a]? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?<sup>10</sup> You are observing special days and months and seasons and years!<sup>11</sup> I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.<sup>12</sup> I plead with you, brothers and sisters, become like me, for I became like you. You did me no wrong.<sup>13</sup> As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you,<sup>14</sup> and even though my illness was a trial to you, you did not treat me with contempt or scorn. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself.<sup>15</sup> Where, then, is your blessing of me now? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.<sup>16</sup> Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?<sup>17</sup> Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may have zeal for them.<sup>18</sup> It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always, not just when I am with you.<sup>19</sup> My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you,<sup>20</sup> how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!*

## FIRST THOUGHTS

◦ One of the hardest parts about relationships is when we have to share a hard truth with a person we care about. How have you reacted when someone did this to you? How did you prepare yourself when you had to do this for someone else?

## EXPLORE THE TEXT

### THE PROBLEM

> Read Galatians 4:8-10

- How were you like a slave before you knew God?
- What freedoms have you received from following Christ?
- What was the point of Paul qualifying his statement in verse 9 with the phrase “or rather have become known by God”?

### THE PLEA

> Read Galatians 4:11-16

- How would you describe Paul’s tone in these verses? Why do you think he is bringing up so much of their personal history in his appeal to them?
- How did Paul become like the Galatians, and in what way does he want them to become like him?
- How did God work through Paul’s illness for the salvation of the Galatians? What did he learn about the Galatians by the way they treated him during his illness?
- Can you relate to Paul’s statement in verse 16? Have you ever told someone the truth only for them to treat you like an enemy? What can we learn from Paul in this letter about how to tell hard truths to someone you love deeply?

## THE PASSION

> Read Galatians 4:17-20

- “Zeal” is not a word we commonly use anymore. What does it mean to you? Describe someone who is “zealous”. How can zeal be a good thing? How can it be a bad thing?
- What do you think the false teachers (Judaizers) were zealous for? What was Paul zealous for?
- In verses 19-20 Paul uses very emotional and personal language to describe the situation in Galatians. What do these verses reveal about Paul’s heart? Why does he feel so strongly?

## SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

**Paul loved the Galatians like his own children. Imagine how you would feel as a parent (for some of you this is something you have even experienced) to see your children making bad choices. Now think just beyond your family to those in your LifeGroup, your circle of friends—how can you pray for and support them?**

**Personal Challenge:** Consider those you know who are younger in their faith than you. Pray for them this week. How can you encourage them in their spiritual growth?

**Pray:** There are believers in our lives who may look like they are enslaved more than they are free. What the Lord calls us to do as a body of believers is to go to them with pure hearts and motives and to seek to restore them gently to the fellowship of believers. Pray for an opportunity this week to speak the truth in love to someone and help that person to grow in Christ.

## PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- Read Galatians 5:13-26.
- This passage about the fruits of the Spirit is probably the most famous in Galatians. How is the Holy Spirit producing these fruits in your life?

## READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

**10th** – Job 35, 36; 1 Corinthians 7-8 | **11th** – Psalm 122; 1 Corinthians 9-11 | **12th** – Job 37-38; 1 Corinthians 12 | **13th** – Job 39-40; 1 Corinthians 13-14 | **14th** – Psalm 149; 1 Corinthians 15-16 | **15th** – Job 41-42; 2 Corinthians 1-2 | **16th** – 2 Corinthians 3-6

### Our Mission:

TO KNOW GOD AND BE  
CHANGED BY HIM IN A  
WAY THAT WILL CHANGE  
THE WORLD.

### Our Vision:

TO BE A CHURCH FOR  
THE UNCHURCHED,  
HERE AND AROUND  
THE WORLD.

### Adult LifeGroups:

INVITE AND INVEST IN  
THOSE WITHOUT CHRIST.  
CREATE COMMUNITY.  
MAKE DISCIPLES.