

## **Christ Formed in You**

### **Galatians 4:8-20**

Paul established churches in Galatia & soon after, false teacher came in convincing converts they must keep the teachings of Moses and the laws he laid out. Paul's gospel; grace alone, thru faith alone, in Christ alone nothing else. These Judaizers said that's not enough, you must keep rules & regulations of Moses in order to please God. [Mix grace/law-legal faith](#) [Heb 11:1](#)

Paul argued that they began their walk in faith & be perfected in Christ by faith. He appeals for them to come back to faiths beginnings. He reminds them *'you were slaves in the old life & did not know God but now are free in Christ, why would you go back to elemental worldly things that Jesus rescued you from & be enslaved all over again?'*

Similarly people today try to get to God by what the world offers-laws, rituals, systems of religion-yoga-aestheticism-mantras-feelings-imaginings-

Paul said *Col 2:20-23 If you have died w/ Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" 22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? 23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. EVS These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism & severe treatment of the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.*

*8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods.*

They were idol worshipers—more honest than us-Bacchus god of drink, Ashtoreth god of sex, Athena/Thoth goddess/god of intellect, Hermaphroditus the nonbinary Greek god? Nemo god of sea/surfer—we all have a god we serve—the master passion of your life is your god. *Dylan You're gonna have to serve somebody well it may be the devil or it may be the Lord but your gonna have to serve somebody*

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Those who make/serve them will be like them every one who trusts in them....you wear your god on your face & in your life-you are a slave to it

John Newton *Amazing Grace* was an only child-at 7 yrs old his mother died. He went to sea at age eleven & later was involved, 'according to his biographers, *'in the unspeakable atrocities of the African slave trade'*. He plumbed the depths of human sin & degradation. When he was 23, on March 10 1748, his ship was in imminent danger of sinking in a terrific storm, he cried to God for mercy, & he found it. He was truly converted, & he never forgot how God had mercy upon him, a former blasphemer. He made it a point to remember what he had previously been, & what God had done for him. In order to imprint it on his memory, he had written in bold letters & fastened across the wall over the mantelpiece of his study the words of [Deuteronomy 15:15](#): 'Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman (a slave) in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee.'

**Spurgeon** - knowledge of God creates an abhorrence of idols, especially of those that have enslaved our own hearts. It seems most monstrous that the ancient Greeks and Romans could have worshiped the deities that their poets invented for them, and yet at this very time men imagine for themselves a god such as they would choose, and then they worship this god of their own fabrication.

*9 But now that you have come to **know** God, or rather to be **known by God**, how is it that you **turn back again** to the **weak and worthless elemental things**, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.*

*Ginosko* by experience not simply head knowledge-facts about God-*book of surfing or surfing*. Personal vs academic. More important: *we known of God*--He initiates we respond not the other way around as in old life. *1Jn 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.f*

*Turning* force in coming to God is **His doing**--outside ourselves, we simply respond. But now they are in the process of turning back to the old. The *turning* initiated by worldly attractions which are *weak & worthless--- elemental things*. **Weak** because they have no power to bring to God & forgive. **Worthless**-beggarly-because they have no promise of reward or future—the word means to cower, hide in fear which is the result=**slavery**.

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*Observing* special days-Sabbath days, months-new moons, seasons-festivals-Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, years-Sabbatical year, year of Jubilee—it becomes wrong as a means of attaining favor w/ God—good for outreach to attract & lead to Christ—Christmas, NY, Easter, How to Walk

*Observe* is to stand beside, watch carefully, meticulous about often w/ evil intent—making it morally right **or wrong if you don't do**---putting you out of favor w/ God—it becomes a mark of legalism & replaces. & reverse if do

*11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. 12 I beg of you, brethren, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong;*

**J Vernon McGee** Paul is saying, in a nice way, that he thinks he has wasted his time among them. Since they have been saved by grace, their returning to the Law is the same as returning to their former idolatry. He reminded them that they had not known God by means of the Mosaic Law but by faith in Jesus Christ.

*Brethren* Paul in pain but has empathy---term of kindness, peace-making. Later 'my children' teknon-endeoring term :19

*Become as I am*—follow me even as I follow Christ—Paul said **2:19-20** *For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

*13 but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time; 14 and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself.*

Paul reminds them of first time w/ them preaching the gospel. Powerful first encounters--circumstance surrounding when we first heard....maybe a few times...significant because God was there in those situations :9 *known by God*...me 11 yr old on beach alone 10<sup>th</sup> st MB **wordless book**-beach evangelist--Waikiki Randy—NS C of C Glen, Ewa Beach Butch-Frank

When God works our **prejudices** are suspended & it's all about God. The Galatians weren't turned off by Paul's appearance, saw beyond the outer to the work of the spirit. When hungry don't care if eat/drink from paper cup or plate or fine china what is served more important than what it's served on.

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Experiencing God not looking at the vessel but to Lord. We try to appeal outward more than inward. If Chuck in skinny jeans, tats & piercings trying to be cool—we'd miss the power of the word which he was all about.

*15 Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness, that if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes & given them to me. 16 Have I therefore become your enemy by telling you the truth? 17 They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out, in order that you may seek them*

Where is the grace & love you had at 1<sup>st</sup> ? You were on fire for the Lord but now you're cold, academic, liturgical, judgmental-it's what legalism does.

*Pluck eyes*--Paul's thorn-*Ophthalmia*. Once empathetic, now judgmental. From friend & mentor/teacher to *enemy*-antagonist because he told them they following false teachers-w/ false gospel. Told the truth but it's not what they want to hear—*Truth reveals who we are*.

*Pr 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy. Ps 141:5 Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; It is oil upon the head; Do not let my head refuse it....*

Paul knew false teachers motives—can judge a person by the **doctrine**—word/faith doctrine-*heart full of greed 2Pet 2:14 ....that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;*

They want a following—it's more about them than the Lord. Build upon Paul's foundation w/ perverse doctrine—isolate & convince-cultic method

**Love bombing**--an attempt to influence a person by demonstrations of attention & affection. It can be used for positive or negative purposes. Psychologists have identified love bombing as a part of a cycle of abuse and have warned against it. It has also been described as psychological manipulation in order to create a feeling of unity w/in a group against a society that isolates people.

*18 But it is good always to be **eagerly sought** in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you. 19 My children, with whom I am again in **labor** until Christ is formed in you— 20 but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am **perplexed** about you.*

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Although cults use it in an abusive way the bible says *the greatest of all is love-genuine **agape** love*. We are to love the Lord our God w/ all our heart mind and soul & love our neighbor as ourselves. **Cults target lonely people**

**Loneliness & isolation are at epidemic levels & very damaging. Close to 1/2 of US adults experience loneliness researchers say. 2021 study by **Cigna Healthcare** reported 79% of people 18-24 tell of feeling lonely. Almost twice as high as seniors 66 and older. The rate of loneliness among young adults increased every year from 1976 to 2019 Surgeon General Vivek Murthy stated.**

Paul agonizes over their spiritual lives. Illustrates by child birth--for Paul it was emotional, mental, internal torture w/ physical affects for their spiritual maturity so they not easily be led astray. Often people get doctrine on the internet because it's easy & they don't want to study--yet there are some strange ideas & teaching, which is concerning to a pastor.

Paul says *I want to be there* to teach correct doctrine instead of pointing out the error of these charlatans, who lead you astray & I want to convince you face to face—Paul knew importance of face to face dialogue--**We project moods to others & they toward us. We call it **vibes**. **Communication** is 7% verbal, 35% tone of voice, 58% non-verbal -- body language, facial expression, the look.**

*Perplexed by you--I can't figure you out* why you'd go back to a religion of slavery. Like *Stockholm syndrome*-those oppressed & abused have a positive attitude toward those taken them captive-- sticking w/ them & defending them.

Term comes from 1973 bank robbery incident in Stockholm Sweden where bank employees were taken captive in a 6 day standoff by criminals w/ police where many captive bank employees became sympathetic toward the bank robbers.

Paul's heart full of love-though perplexed, calls them *my children* a tender, endearing term—remembering *it's the love of God that leads to repentance*