

## Study: Galatians 4: 8-20

### Galatians 4:8-10

<sup>8</sup> Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. <sup>9</sup> But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? <sup>10</sup> You observe days and months and seasons and years! <sup>11</sup> I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

<sup>12</sup> Brothers,<sup>[a]</sup> I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. <sup>13</sup> You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, <sup>14</sup> and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. <sup>16</sup> Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>17</sup> They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.

<sup>18</sup> It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you,<sup>19</sup> my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! <sup>20</sup> I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What do you think is our cultural baseline philosophy for being right with God or being “spiritually okay”?

#### Slavery

Key themes – “slavery.” Before believers knew God – i.e. before they were converted – were enslaved to false gods. 3:22 Believers imprisoned under sin, 3:22 held captive under the law, 4:3 enslaved to elements of the world. 4:5 now freed from bondage, 4:7 no longer slaves. Rom 6:6, 17, 19-20; Eph 2:1-3.

If anything but Jesus is a requirement for being happy or worthy, that thing will become our slave master.

- What does it mean to have God “know you” in the Bible?
- What implication does this have for the Galatians?
  - What does it mean for you?
- Turn back to” in many areas of the Bible refers to conversion. What kind of religion are the Galatians in danger of converting to now?
  - What are the implications of this?

- Do you consider yourself closer to the Lord by observing certain holidays (Christmas, Easter)?
  - What do you think is a right view of these days
- Is there any significance to the fact that the Galatians' temptation is toward weak and worthless things? Why would anyone be tempted by something that is weak and worthless?
  - How do you see your own temptations?
- What is it that the Galatians are doing that makes Paul say that his teaching may have been all in vain? V.11
- Reread vs. 12. Are there people you would like to be like? What about them would you like to emulate?
  - Why is Paul (a Jew) telling Galatians (Gentiles) to live as he does?
  - Are we able to say, "be like me"?
- How is Paul's Christ-like character seen in this section?
  - What are the characteristics of healthy gospel relationships seen in the passage? Vv.12-14, 19-20
- What is the contrast between how Paul approached the Galatians verses how the false teachers approached the Galatians?
  - What is the ultimate motivation or desired outcome for Paul and for the false teachers?
- What does it mean for Christ to be formed in you? V.19
- What is our community application of this passage?