

Galatians Chapter 4

Verse 15

1. Paul asks, *"Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?"*
 - The joy of their salvation was gone. Their ardent love for Paul had waned.
 - At one time, they were so full of the joy and love of Christ they would have plucked their eyes out and given them to Paul, if possible.
2. This is one of the saddest and most heart-wrenching things for a minister of Christ to witness, yet it happens so frequently.
 - Christians who were once filled with the joy and love of Christ, growing in His grace and knowledge, enjoying the fellowship of the saints - now miserable, critical, complaining, finding fault.
3. The blessedness is gone. How does this happen?
 - It happens the same way it did with the Galatians. Rather than walking by faith with Jesus Christ, we begin to live our lives in our own fleshly power and strength. **Galatians 3:1-3**
 - Just as the Jewish legalists stole the hearts of the Galatians, other people (who are walking after the flesh) steal our hearts and influence us away from a walk of faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Rather than walking by faith in Christ, we walk by sight. We set our sights on:
 - The rules of religion
 - The faults and failures of others
 - The counsel (or gossip) of fleshly people
5. Before you know it, the blessedness of our salvation and the grace of Christ are no longer evident in our lives. We stop growing, we have no desire for the things of God, we become bitter and cynical, yet we are blind to our own wretched condition.

Verse 16-17

1. With a broken heart, Paul asks, *"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"*
2. Paul loved them and told them the truth; the Judaizers were telling them lies in order to use them for their own selfish gain.
 - The Galatians were too blind to see this and now counted Paul as their enemy, and the Judaizers as their friends.
 - This brings to mind **Proverbs 27:6**, *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."*
3. Verse 17 simply means that they were trying to get close to the Galatians, but not for good and honest purposes. They were seeking to exclude them (shut them out) from their close relationship with Paul in order to obtain their allegiance.
 - In other words, the Judaizers had kissed up to the Galatians, but they were kisses of deceit that were leading them away from Paul and into spiritual bondage.

Verse 18

1. *"It is good to be zealously affected"* (to have warmth of feeling) towards that which is good and virtuous.
 2. But Paul adds, *"... and not only when I am present with you."*
 3. They loved Paul and walked in the grace of Christ when he was with them, but now that he was gone; they had wavered and allowed false teachers to corrupt them.
 - Paul commended the Philippians for obeying much more in his absence.
- Philippians 2:12**
4. What a blessing when believers are able to stand in the grace of Christ without the constant watch care of their spiritual leaders.

Verse 19

1. Paul calls the Galatians *"my little children."*
 - This phrase literally means "infant."
2. The Galatians were Paul's converts. He labored and travailed in order to bring them to Christ. Do we labor intensely to bring people to Christ? Paul likened it to a mother travailing in birth to bring forth a baby. They were Paul's spiritual babies.
3. But the Galatians had gotten entrapped in the legalism of the law. They were not magnifying Christ and His grace. They were not walking by faith in Christ.
4. It broke Paul's heart, and Paul said he felt as if he was travailing in birth all over again as he wrote this letter to them. This time it was a different kind of travail.
 - The first time it was that they might place their faith in Christ.
 - The second time it was that Christ might be **formed** in them.
5. In other words, Paul desired that they might grow in Christ and that Christ might show forth His life through them. **Galatians 2:20**
 - Paul wasn't concerned about religion or a denominational creed forming in them. It was Christ he wanted to see formed in them.
6. What a lesson for the church.
 - Our job is not done when we work and travail and lead people to Christ.
 - We must work just as hard to teach new converts the truths of grace and see them not only rooted in Christ (this happens at salvation), but built up in Christ (this is continual). It is not enough to simply see them trust Christ for salvation. We want to see Christ being formed in them.
 - We must evangelize **and** teach. **Acts 14:21, 18:8, 11, 23**

Verse 20

1. Paul could not physically be with them, but he longed to be with them.
 - What disappointment and anxiety the Galatians had caused Paul.
 - When believers err from a walk of grace and get off track, it causes great distress and disappointment in their spiritual leaders. **Hebrews 13:17**
2. As their spiritual father, he would have to change his voice from one of gentleness to one of rebuke and sternness.

3. Why did Paul want to be there and address them personally? Because they had caused him to doubt them.
 - The phrase, "*I stand in doubt*" is also translated "perplexed."
4. Paul stood in absolute perplexity as to why these Galatians would abandon a life of grace for a life of legalism under the law.