

**Title:** Until Christ is Formed in You

**Passage:** Galatians 4:12-20

### **Context of Passage**

- Paul was looking back at a time when ministry in Galatia was flourishing, intimate, and healthy.
- here, Paul gives most personal writings in New Testament (where shed his own tears in pleading them, like a heart of a parent)
- "Brothers, I entreat you...my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth..."

**Passage:** Galatians 4:12-20

Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, 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. 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. Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them. It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

**Focus:** Galatians 4:19

my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!

### **Observations**

Praise and approval of men

- what hinders us from trusting Christ.
- what our hearts naturally gravitate towards in an unregenerate state.
- only by faith in Christ and God's grace does He become such a dominant place in our lives

John 5:44

How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

Gospel: Christ accomplished our redemption *without* our help

- saving faith is resting in God's sovereign work and plan (both easiest and hardest thing to do)
- hardest thing to do because we want to have some level of credit for our own salvation
- reality: all credit and work is done by Christ alone.

1 Corinthians 1:28-31

God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, *so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.* And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, *so that no one may boast.*

Psalms 115:1 (consider as a life verse)

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

Judaizers: one needs to do more than faith in Christ (follow Jewish laws) to be well.

- appealing to one's sense of self and where God is used to accomplish one's own purposes - result: to look good to others, gaining their praise or approval.

- analogy: one wanting to work the clay instead of trusting the clay into the hands of the sovereign God.

Galatians 3:1-4 (Paul's rebuke to such thinking)

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

### **I. Paul's Appeal (v.12a)**

"Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are."

- Paul is pleading them to do as he did: to set aside the temptation to do things under the Jewish law in order to please God and stay saved.

1 Corinthians 9:22

To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

- instead: live in the freedom that is found in faith in Christ alone by grace alone.

Galatians 5:1

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

### **II. Paul's Reminder (v.12b-15)**

"You did me no wrong. You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, 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. 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."

- Paul reminding audience of the past

- though Paul was in severe physical deformation, those in Galatia warmly received the Gospel

- their hearts were based and focused on the Gospel alone.

- but they drifted from the beauty and power of the Gospel and were instead attracted by the false messages of the Judaizers

Revelation 2:4-5

But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

- *application*: remember, repent, return

- remember what the truth is, what God has done

- repent of having drifted in coldness or complacency in faith compared to what once had, allowing circumstantial forces to influence sense of security, loss of joy

- return to Christ.

### **III. Paul's Motive**

"Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them."

- the real motive of false teachings is not to please Christ but rather to make much of self.

Galatians 6:13

For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

Contrast: correct motive is to elevate and keep focus on Christ.

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

- Question: "Christ is formed in you" - is this true of you?

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- "Christ lives in me": important fact

Ezekiel 36:26 (change of the heart)

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

1 Corinthians 6:19

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,

"50 Reasons Christ Came to Die" - John Piper

- see Reason 34