

of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸ For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 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. ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Chapter 3

By Faith, or by Works of the Law?

GALATIANS

⁸ Before you Gentiles knew God, you were slaves to so-called gods that do not even exist. ⁹ So now that you know God (or should I say, now that God knows you), why do you want to go back again and become slaves once more to the weak and useless spiritual principles of this world? ¹⁰ You are trying to earn favor with God by observing certain days or months or seasons or years. ¹¹ I fear for you. Perhaps all my hard work with you was for nothing. ¹² Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to live as I do in freedom from these things, for I have become like you Gentiles—free from those laws.

You did not mistreat me when I first preached to you. ¹³ Surely you remember that I was sick when I first brought you the Good News. ¹⁴ But even though my condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself. ¹⁵ Where is that joyful and grateful spirit you felt then? I am sure you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible. ¹⁶ Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?

GALATIANS

¹⁷ Those false teachers are so eager to win your favor, but their intentions are not good. They are trying to shut you off from me so that you will pay attention only to them. ¹⁸ If someone is eager to do good things for you, that's all right; but let them do it all the time, not just when I'm with you.

¹⁹ Oh, my dear children! I feel as if I'm going through labor pains for you again, and they will continue until Christ is fully developed in your lives. ²⁰ I wish I were with you right now so I could change my tone. But at this distance I don't know how else to help you.

GALATIANS

Looking Deeper

GALATIANS

Before you Gentiles knew God, you were slaves to so-called gods that do not even exist.

GALATIANS

our false gods

**what/who it is that we believe in
what/who it is that we worship
what/who that we trust in**

SELF

GALATIANS

SELF

**what defines you / what identifies you
occupation / marital status /
income bracket / gender /
hobbies / skills / temperament /
introvert/extrovert / race / geography /
education / history / health / body**

GALATIANS

Here in the west, the biggest false god that we trust, worship, and believe in is our self. it is that construct which defines atheism - but at the same time pervades our societies thinking. if you have a background in another faith, you can see how the relationship with our God far surpasses anything else previous. But for us, with Western influence, they are often driven not by Christ, but by the self - and the love of self above all other. It is also the reason why for many of us as believers, we struggle to live in a victorious life with Christ.

occupation / marital status /
income bracket / gender /
hobbies / skills / temperament /
introvert/extrovert / race / geography /
education / history / health / body

God will you accept me now?

GALATIANS

An Analogy

Why do you want to go back again and become slaves once more to the weak and useless spiritual principles of this world? ¹⁰ You are trying to earn favor with God by observing certain days or months or seasons or years. ¹¹ I fear for you. Perhaps all my hard work with you was for nothing. ¹² Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to live as I do in freedom from these things, for I have become like you Gentiles— free from those laws.

GALATIANS

Why! Why do you want to go back to that life? Why do you think those things define you, make you who you are. You are free from those things - free from that. Instead TRUST God with you life. Take that plunge into Him and say, God, YOU are the way, the truth and the life. YOU DEFINE ME.

CHILD OF GOD

GALATIANS

Replace the Self with the understanding that you are a Child of God
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.

You did not mistreat me when I first preached to you.
¹³ Surely you remember that I was sick when I first brought you the Good News. ¹⁴ But even though my condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself. ¹⁵ Where is that joyful and grateful spirit you felt then? I am sure you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible. ¹⁶ Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?

GALATIANS

Paul was ill there, and in a condition that should have been a deterrent to his ministry, or to the preaching of the gospel. But what we see in this is that Paul persisted - he didn't even let his physical situation define who he was. And that faithfulness in God, bore fruit in Galatians. It's the understanding that everywhere, in all circumstances, at all times, he is God's Child - in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, he belongs and is defined by God.

¹⁹ Oh, my dear children! I feel as if I'm going through labor pains for you again, and they will continue until Christ is fully developed in your lives. ²⁰ I wish I were with you right now so I could change my tone. But at this distance I don't know how else to help you.

GALATIANS

Is there a false god that defines you at the moment?

Have you turned away from your true identity in Christ?

BE DEFINED BY CHRIST

LET JESUS FULLY DEVELOP IN YOU

ASK HIM TO LEAD YOU TO MATURITY

GALATIANS

We see something here - Paul is writing a letter, but he wishes he could be closer to them. To be in more frequent contact, to share and answer questions more fully. His heart aches and yearns to bless them. This is a call to mature believers - will you stand up to the task? will you be willing to help the young and hungry to engage with Him?

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.

GALATIANS