

THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

"Paul's Passion for Galatians"

Gal. 4:12-20

Introduction

1. That Paul considered the defection of the Galatians a major matter is beyond question. Let us not minimize legalism any whit more than the Bible does!

2. The matter really cut Paul to the quick of his heart. He felt that a vital cord in the affectionate relation between himself and Galatian believers had been severed. His approach in these verses carries us to the base of his great heart of love for the Word and those who believe it!

3. Check out the activities of the three major movers in the text:

I. PAUL.

a. His preaching. v. 13.

Whatever can be stated, it must be noted that Paul originally preached the Gospel to them. He did not preach the law of Moses, hence, the law of Moses is excluded from the Gospel!

Moreover, he did this in weakness. Being compulsory with him, they felt it was wonderful. His disease may have been some opthalmic sort. How blessed to see those who in the flesh are weak, but verile in the spirit!

b. His praying. v. 19.

The thought here is that of Spiritual maturity. Christ was already theirs; now it was needed that they might be in full sature with Him (Eph. 4:13). The pastoral heart of Paul is nowhere seen more clearly than here!

c. His purposing. v. 20.

If only he could be with them in person, he would change his voice and appeal to them resolutely and with great earnestness!

II. GALATIANS.

a. Their position. v. 14.

When he first came among them, they had a temptation over his unsightly disease. They did not despise him (cf. Luke 23:11) nor spit him out (verb for "reject"), but actually received him as an angel of God, in fact, like Christ Himself (II Cor. 5:20).

b. Their attention. v. 15.

So great was their love for him that they would fain have exchanged their own eyes for his.

Whether this is a real notation of his physical problem is not the point, the thrust of Paul's argument is: you really expressed an affection toward me which was more than ordinary!

III. JUDAIZERS. vv. 17, 18.

Into the situation set forth in the previous verses, this enemy of the truth moved. What was their line?

The sense of these verses is this: these Judaizers payed court with the Galatians. In so doing, it was expected that the Galatians would turn about and do the same to them. But this would end in shutting the Galatians out from Christ!

Paul argues that he too courted them, but not for himself, but for Christ. He desired that they be courted even in his absence, but for good ends! It is tragic when people are blind to the evil ends of certain who oppose the Word and His servants.

Conclusion: From this forthright evaluation of the situation, Paul moves with great emotional fervor and notes: 1. Vital questions. vv. 15, 16. a. What happened to the thrilled spirit you had when you first heard me? b. Am I your enemy because I still tell you the truth? These same questions could be asked in many similar situations today! 2. Vigorous appeal. v. 12. Be as I am (free from the law) for I am as you are (though a native Jew, I have become as a Gentile like you). Amen.

NOTES: