

OUTLINE & NOTES—GALATIANS 4:8-20

TURNING BACK ... WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

- 8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. 9 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? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years! 11 I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

How can this happen? They were not determined to live by faith.

1) A PERSON MUST BE DETERMINED TO LIVE BY FAITH BECAUSE LIVING BY FAITH IS HARD AND THE WAY OF PRETEND FAITH SEEMS EASIER AND MAKES MORE SENSE, 4:8-11.

- (Matthew 7:13–14 ESV) Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. (14) For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

WHY?

Why would someone who knows God and is known by God want to turn back to their old way of the living?

Paul speaks of their previous enslavement to so-called gods. The implication is that they have been freed from that way of life, and they have come to know God and to be known by God. So he is perplexed as to how they would turn back to the weak and worthless spiritual principles of this world. He asked: “Do you want to

be slaves again?” And he wonders if he has wasted his time with them.

How? How COULD THIS BE?

1. The way of faith is difficult.
 2. The way of pretend faith seems easier and makes more sense.
 3. There is no shortage of “Bible teachers” offering the pretend way as God’s way. (See 2 Timothy 4:3-4.)
 4. Those offering the pretend way “make much of you.”
- (2 Timothy 4:3–4 GW) A time will come when people will not listen to accurate teachings. Instead, they will follow their own desires and surround themselves with teachers who tell them what they want to hear. People will refuse to listen to the truth and turn to myths.

KEY PHRASE? “TURN BACK AGAIN”

The false teacher turns you back to slavery—a fearful lifestyle, and you will always be looking over your shoulder, always maneuvering the slippery slope.

- (Colossians 2:8 ESV) See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.
- (Colossians 2:20–23 ESV) 20 If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23 These have indeed

an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

THE RESULT? FEAR

- (Romans 8:15 ESV) For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”

A fearful lifestyle is in direct conflict with the security and assurance God provides in the biblical concept of our adoption as sons.

- (Matthew 16:23 NIV) Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”
- (Matthew 16:23 GW) But Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get out of my way, Satan! You are tempting me to sin. You aren’t thinking the way God thinks but the way humans think.”

****MUST KNOW INFORMATION:* The religious manipulator does not have to lie to lie. Just change the emphasis. As the Bible teacher ... you get to choose ... Pretenders, not God, decide what is most important. The Pharisees tithed their spices but were heartless and far from God.

- (Matthew 23:23 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

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

You did me no wrong. 13 You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, 14 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. 15 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. 16 Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

2) IF A PERSON IS NOT DETERMINED TO LIVE BY FAITH, THEN THE PEOPLE WHO TEACH LIVING BY FAITH MAY BE PERCEIVED TO BE THE ENEMY, 4:12-16.

- 17 They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them. 18 It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, 19 my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! 20 I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

FLATTERY WORKS ...

Flattery speaks to the person who is prideful and insecure: “they make much of you.”

3) IF A PERSON IS NOT DETERMINED TO LIVE BY FAITH, THEN HE IS VERY SUSCEPTIBLE TO FLATTERY AND MANIPULATION BY THE FALSE TEACHERS, 4:17-20.

- (2 Corinthians 11:4 NIV) For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.