

## Who looks after us?

- Who looks after us?
    - eg parents, teachers, firemen, policemen, medical staff, etc, etc
  - In what ways? For what reasons?
    - interested in exploring fact that most often people are concerned for our well-being, and not just their own interests...
  - This is what Paul was doing...
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## Exposition

- (v.8) Were in slavery before knew Christ - allegiance to something which bound you, something that isn't a god - to sin and its consequences
  - implicit here, and explicit elsewhere, is that putting faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord sets us free
- (v.9) Problem is that now they are turning back to their slave ways, though they should be free
- (v.10) In particular observing special days:
  - some debate over precisely what this refers to...
  - but point is that it had become their master, not their servant
  - "had to" observe, rather than knowing the blessing and benefit...
  - we have that challenge with Sunday, with Christmas and Easter, etc...
- (v.11) Sense is focused on the Galatians and their well-being more than on Paul feeling aggrieved himself
  
- (v.12) Like me - in freedom
  - as I became like you - came to where you were, worked amongst you...
  - its a little puzzling, but I suppose its Paul's plea for a hearing from the Galatians
- (v.13) Quirk of circumstance...
- (v.14) In welcoming Paul in, whether as an already formed Christian community or as those who simply looked after a sick man...
  - they ended up welcoming Christ himself!
  - clearly went out of their way to help Paul in his illness - he was weak, but they didn't scorn or pour contempt on him
- (v.15) In welcoming Christ they had been filled with joy
  - but Paul's observation is that now, under the influence of the Judaisers, those who were pulling them back to being good, doing the right things as the way to God's favour, they had lost their joy
  - law makes us aware of how bad we are - remember, **the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.** (3:24)
  - but one who keeps us locked up doesn't make us joyful - one who sets us free does that!
  - he gives an example of the depths of their joyful gratitude - they'd have given a part of their body for Paul, for through him God had brought them such joy!
  - (where is our joy?)
- (v.16) There has been a breakdown of relationships, the Galatians turned against Paul by the Judaisers...
  - but all Paul is doing is bring truth to light, reality into clear view - he is asking whether that is really a bad thing!
  
- (v.17) The incomers who are encouraging the Galatians to get tied up with the Law, with religious observance, as their master, want to win the Galatians over:
  - and to do that they realise they have to get them away from the true Gospel that Paul preaches, of freedom in Christ

## Galatians 4:8-20 Paul's Concern for the Galatians Fintry, 26/4/2009, am

- so they are trying to alienate them from Paul, presumably casting aspersions upon him and his teaching...
- (v.18) Paul notes its not their zeal which is the problem, but the focus of their zeal
  - are they zealous for something worth being zealous about?
  - (this is a problem we have, in a largely apathetic age; easy to see zeal and be encouraged by its presence - and not look too closely about what the focus of that zeal is!!)
  - Paul wants the Galatians to be zealous for the right things, and at all times - not just when he is present!
- (v.19) Depth of care - **dear children...**
  - seeing them come to faith was like childbirth, painful, perhaps slow, wonderfully joyful when brought to delivery
  - but he feels he's having to go through it all again for them!
  - his desire is that they grow in maturity, to be like Christ, to know him, and to become like him
- (v.20) Can you sense his frustration
  - doesn't want to be harsh, but is concerned...

### Share Paul's Concern

- Watch out for one another
  - pray
  - open up the Scriptures together
  - talk
  - share our lives with one another
- All with a profound desire for **Christ to be formed in one another (v.19)**
- This a particular responsibility for those who have a leadership role:
  - me, elders, Bodybuilders, Girls Brigade and JAM leaders, Bible Study group leaders, etc
  - but certainly not limited to that...

### Know God's Concern

- Danger of thinking we've just "**got to be more like Paul...**"
  - or whoever the Christian hero that is being held up before us is on any particular occasion
- But Paul's concern merely mirrors God's love and care for us
  - this is grace
  - this is God saying to the Galatians, and to us, through Paul's words, "**Your stuck in the mud again... just take my hand and trust me and I'll rescue you from all your sin. You don't need to struggle yourself, you can't make yourself good enough. And anyway, I love you, and don't want to leave you in the spiritual mud!!**"