

Introduction: The apostle has made some significant arguments defending the truth that Justification before God can only be achieved by faith in Jesus Christ— apart from observance of the law. Our security in Christ is based upon the work of Christ and His spirit, not our good deeds. To continue the defense of this doctrine Paul turns to a legal illustration, a personal plea and a biblical illustration. Tonight we will see Paul's personal plea.

2. Paul's Personal Plea. 4:8-20

A. **Their spiritual condition before Christ. Verse 8** Before the Galatians came to Christ they were slaves to false Gods— as everyone is, whether we realize it or not. Romans 1:20-23. We all worship in ignorance before we come to Christ. Those who think they are worshipping another God are actually worshipping demons, themselves or another person or entity which is part of Satan's deception. Rev. 9:20-21

B. **The Danger of their current spiritual direction. Verses 9-11.** the Galatians movement into legalism for acceptance of God is not spiritual progress, rather regression. They are going back to worship of self, praise of self. Religious observance and following rules or laws cannot save. Observing the OT laws and celebrations cannot add to Christ's work on the cross—rather he is the fulfillment of the law. Paul is concerned that all his spiritual labor will have been in vain if they leave the gospel of grace.

C. **His example before them. Verses 12-16** Paul wants them to remember what he was like when he was with them. He was not living under the Mosaic Law— he lived as they did as Gentiles. (1 Cor. 9:19-23).

Judaizers and legalists are known for their self confidence— Paul reminds them that he came in weakness. It was a God ordained illness that brought about an opportunity to share the gospel with them. (it was probably a complication from what many believe was an ongoing issue with his eyes.) Interestingly, through the weakness and Paul's dependence upon Christ, something wonderful happened. They saw Paul as God's messenger to them! In his absence, because of the false teachers, they have gone from loving Him, who brought a message of freedom in Christ, to perhaps becoming his enemy. Let us measure our Christianity by our commitment to the Gospel of God's grace and our love and concern for others.

D. **The Motivation of the false teachers. Verses 17-18**

When Paul preached he desired the people to follow Christ ultimately— though they looked to him as an example. False teachers desires followers of themselves— Not Jesus.

E. **Paul's concern. Verse 19-20 Paul is concerned** That they would defect from the true gospel and not continue in the way of Christ. That after beginning with Christ in faith, they would find themselves in slavery once again.