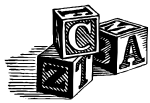


Acts 2:12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another,

"What Does This Mean?"

Response Questions for, "Paul's Theological Defense: Persevering in Grace and the Fatal Flaw of Legalism.'" (Galatians 4:8-11).



Basic Ideas from Galatians 4:8-11.

The Holy Spirit is calling to us from this passage to consider three ideas.

1. The Holy Spirit desires for us to know He loves us more than we love Him.
2. The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose not to turn back from following Him.
3. The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel the joy of resting in His sufficiency.



Basic Questions from Galatians 4:8-11.

1. Notice the contrast between the Jews and the Gentile. What are they?
2. Is verse 9 speaking of God's omniscience or God's "election"?
3. Are the elemental things in verse 9 the same as in verse 3?
4. How are they the same, how might they be different?
5. What was Paul's concern? Is he concerned that they might not be saved?
6. Assuming that "basic principles of the world" refers to the Galatians' pre-Christian religious beliefs, can you think of how religious beliefs not based on Christ can cause one to be "enslaved" or "in bondage?"
7. It is common, almost a cliché, to state that "Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship." Explain the distinction between "a religion" and "a relationship."
8. Is it possible that one can get so caught up with the traditions and rituals of "religion" that one completely misses the God to whom those traditions and rituals point? How does this relate to the statement that "Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship?"
9. Is there a sense in which "religion" can trap or hold somebody back from knowing God?
10. Suppose one had the religious belief that one earned blessings from God by being especially good or "spiritual." Can you think of how that could prevent one from knowing what God was really like?
11. Can you think of any specific religious beliefs or practices that you now have, or had in the past, that are/were ABOUT God, but in fact kept you from truly knowing Him?
12. In what way have you found your religious experience "enslaving?" How does your relationship with God feel right now? Does it feel like you are enslaved to a religious system?
13. Why do you think the Galatians would turn away from their "spiritual success" following the path of faith, to pursue God via a different path, the path of "law?"
14. Have you ever felt dissatisfied with your life as a Christian? Disappointed with the rate of progress in your spiritual life? Have you had times when you felt

Continued on the other side...

unfulfilled in your relationship with God? At these times, were you ever tempted to pursue a “different path” in your spiritual journey? In the space below, explain how Galatians 4:8-11 pertains to these questions.



The **Basic Application** from Galatians 4:8-11.

1. Assuming that “basic principles of the world” refers to the Galatians’ pre-Christian religious beliefs, can you think of how religious beliefs not based on Christ can cause one to be “enslaved” or “in bondage?”
2. “Once saved always saved” that is the consistent message of the New Testament.
3. It is equally true that, “Faith alone saves, but faith is never alone.” The life you live is not a cause for salvation, but the life you live is a consequence of your salvation.
4. Fruit bearing is not a work, but a result.
5. I do not try to ‘act’ saved, I am saved so I will inevitably live like a saved person.
6. I do not believe the Christian life is an obligation to be kept, but rather it is the outworking of life.
7. Only living people have a pulse. A pulse does not give life; a pulse is a sign of life. “Works” are the pulse of faith never a cause or maintainer of life.
8. It will never be my intent to create doubt. Paul has just told his audience in 4:7 that they are heirs. If this is true, then why would they be looking back? Was Paul’s labor in vain? What typically happens in a situation like this is that those who are sincere and fruit bearers have a tendency to examine themselves whereas those who really need to examine themselves sit snugly in their unbelief.
9. Are you saved? Yes or No. If you are, rejoice and thank God. Continue in your walk with God. If you are not saved, then perhaps today is your day set by the Father to be received as a son and heir?