



## Rice Memorial MBC

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## **Delivered from Bondage**

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition  
or Roget's Thesaurus – **February 12, 2017**

## **Galatians 4:8-20**

**Introduction:** The design of this chapter is, to show the effect of being **UNDER the Law**, and the inconsistency of that **kind of bondage** or **servitude** with the FREEDOM which is vouchsafed (granted) to the **TRUE children** of God by the GOSPEL. It is, in accordance with the whole drift of the Epistle, to recall the Galatians to **just views** of the **gospel**; and to CONVINCE them of their **ERROR** in returning to the practice of the Mosaic rites and customs. In the previous chapter he had shown them that **believers** in the gospel were the **true children** of **Abraham**; that they had been **DELIVERED FROM** the **CURSE of the Law**; that the **Law** was a **schoolmaster** to lead them to Christ, and that they were all the children of God. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:1-2**, Now I say, That the **HEIR (inheritor)**, as long as he is a **child**, differeth nothing from a **servant**, though he be lord of all; But is **under TUTORS** and GOVERNORS until the **TIME** appointed of the father.

**NOTE:** The word rendered "**TUTORS**", is adopted by the Jewish Targumists and Rabbins into their language; and by the former is used for any ruler and governor, civil or domestic; and by the latter, for such as are **guardians** of **infants**, **fatherless children**, and such as are **UNDER AGE**, as it is here used; and who were either appointed by the will of the **deceased**, or by the Sanhedrim, ... "we appoint a guardian for an infant"; and they had not used to appoint women or servants, or such as were minors themselves, or any of the common people; but MEN of **substance**, **integrity**, and **wisdom**; a fatherless child had **TWO tutors...** (Source: *The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible*)

**Galatians 4:3-5**, Even so we, when we **were children**, were in **bondage UNDER** the **elements (principle [MIND, LAW])** of the **world**: But when the **fulness** of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the LAW, To **REDEEM (rescue from loss)** them that were **under** the **LAW**, that we might **receive** the **ADOPTION** of SONS.

**NOTE:** The person who was employed to introduce this **new dispensation** was no other than the Son of God himself, the **only-begotten** of the Father, who, as he had been prophesied of and promised from the FOUNDATION of the world, so in **DUE TIME** he was **manifested** for this purpose. (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible*)

**Hebrews 2:6-7, 9**, But one... testified, saying, What is **MAN**, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou **madest** him a little **lower** than the **angels**... But we see **Jesus**, who was **MADE** a little **LOWER** than the **angels (a human being)** for the suffering of **death**, ...that he by the **grace** of God (*the Father*) should **taste DEATH** for **every man**.

**Galatians 4:6-7**, And because ye are SONS, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son **into** your hearts, crying, **Abba (father)**, Father. Wherefore thou art **NO MORE** a servant, but a **SON**; and if (since) a son, **THEN** an **HEIR of God** through Christ.

**NOTE: If a son, then an heir through God** ...The reason Paul stressed God's **Fathership** of the Lord Jesus Christ in Galatians 4:4 was correctly discerned by Pink who declared that "**God** must be the **Father** of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be the **God** and **Father** of his **people** whom he chose **IN Christ**." [13] The Christian's **SONSHIP** to God is derived from his **UNITY** with Christ, identity with Christ, as being "**IN Christ**," and thus a part of that **spiritual BODY** which "**IS Christ**,"...

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:8**, Howbeit then, when ye **knew NOT God**, ye did service unto them which by nature are **NO gods (deity)**.

**NOTE:** In the previous verses Paul had evidently had the Jewish converts more particularly in his eye, and had described their former condition as one of **servitude** to the **Mosaic rites** and **customs**, and had shown the inconveniences of that condition, compared with the freedom imparted by the gospel. To complete the description, he refers also to the **Gentiles**, as a condition of **worse servitude** still, and shows Galatians 4:9 the absurdity of their turning back to a state of **bondage of ANY KIND**, after the **glorious deliverance** which they had obtained from the degrading servitude of **PAGAN rites**.

**Ye did service** -The meaning is, "Ye were "SLAVES" too; you were in a condition of servitude, as opposed to the **freedom** of the **gospel**;" compare Galatians 4:3, where the same word is used to describe the state of the Jews. The drift of the apostle is, to show that the **Jews and Gentiles**, before their conversion to Christianity, were in a **state of vassalage** (SLAVERY) or **servitude**, and that it was absurd in the highest degree to return to that condition again.

**by nature are no gods** - Idols, or false gods. Many of them were imaginary beings; many were the objects of creation, as the sun, and winds, and streams; and many were departed heroes that had been exalted to be objects of worship. **Yet the servitude was REAL**.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bnb/galatians-4.html>)

**1 Corinthians 10:20**, But I say, that the things which the **Gentiles sacrifice**, they sacrifice to **devils (dæmonic being)**, and NOT to God: and I would NOT that ye should have **fellowship** with DEVILS.

**Galatians 4:9**, But **NOW**, after that ye have **known God**, or rather **are known of God**, **HOW TURN** ye again to the **weak and beggary elements (rudiment [first principle])**, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage (SLAVERY)?

**NOTE: known God** - The true God, and the ease and freedom of his service in the gospel.

**Or rather are known of God** - The sense is, "Or, to speak more accurately or precisely, are known BY God." The object of this correction is to avoid the impression which might be derived from the former phrase that their acquaintance with God was owing to themselves.

**How turn ye again** - Margin, "Back." "How is it that you are returning to such a bondage?" The question implies surprise and indignation that they should do it.

**the weak and beggarly elements** - To the **rites** and **CEREMONIES** of the **Jewish law**, imposing a servitude really NOT less severe than the customs of paganism. They are called "weak" because they had **no power** to **SAVE** the soul; **no power** to justify the sinner before God.

**desire again to be in bondage** - As if you had a wish to be under servitude. The absurdity is as great as it would be for a man who had been **FREED from SLAVERY** to **DESIRE his CHAINS** again. (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bnb/galatians-4.html>)

**2 Peter 2:18-21**, For when they speak great swelling **WORDS** of **vanity**, they allure

(seduce) through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness (negligence of restraint), those that were clean **ESCAPED** from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the **servants of corruption**: for of whom a man is **OVERCOME**, of (BY) the same is he brought in **BONDAGE**. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and **Saviour Jesus Christ**, they are again **entangled therein**, and **overcome**, the latter end is **WORSE** with them than the beginning.

For it had been **better** for them **NOT** to have known the **way** of righteousness, than, **AFTER** they have known it, to **turn from** the holy commandment delivered unto them.

**1 John 3:23**, And this is **his COMMANDMENT**, That we should **BELIEVE** on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, as he gave us commandment.

**Galatians 4:10-11**, *Ye observe **DAYS**, and **months**, and **times**, and **years**. I am **afraid** (**alarmed** [notified of sudden **DANGER**]) of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in VAIN.*

**NOTE: Ye observe days and months and seasons and years** – Sabbatarians (one who observes the SEVENTH DAY of the week as the SABBATH, instead of the FIRST. A **sect** of **baptists** are called **sabbatarians**.) have done their best to eliminate the meaning of this passage, but as Huxtable tells us, the words used here "were used by Josephus for the **keeping of sabbath days**";<sup>[17]</sup> and when read in conjunction with Colossians 2:16, there cannot be any doubt that the sin of the Galatians was simply that of keeping, after the **Jewish manner**, the **sabbaths, festivals** and **special days** of **the Old Covenant**, which if persisted in, would mean their **TOTAL LOSS** to Christianity. The whole thesis (position maintained by argument) of this epistle is that "**Judaism** and **Christianity do NOT mix**." (Source: <https://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Colossians 2:10, 13-17**, And ye are **complete** IN HIM (*Jesus*), which is the **HEAD** (leader, commander) of all **PRINCIPALITY** and **power (authority, jurisdiction)**...

**Principality defined 746, magistrate** (public civil OFFICER, invested with the executive government of some branch of it. In this sense, a **KING** is the highest or **FIRST** magistrate as is the **PRESIDENT** of the United States).

And you, being **DEAD** in your sins and the **uncircumcision** of your flesh, hath he **quickened together (reanimate** [restore to LIFE] **conjointly** [in union]) with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; **Blotting out** the **handwriting of ordinances (law)** that was **against us**, which was contrary to us, and took it **OUT OF** the WAY, nailing it to his cross; Let no man therefore (for this reason) **JUDGE you** in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an **holyday**, or of the new moon, or of the **SABBATH days**: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the **body** is of Christ.

**Thought 1.** Most Christians who KNOW the TRUTH come together for worship on Sunday.

**Acts 20:7**, And upon the **FIRST DAY** of the week (*SUNDAY*), when the DISCIPLES came together to break bread, Paul PREACHED unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his **speech (doctrine, preaching)** until midnight.

**Revelation 1:10**, I was in the Spirit on the **LORD'S DAY**, and heard behind me...

**NOTE:** ...on the Lord's day, **NOT** on the **JEWISH SABBATH**, which was now **ABOLISHED**...

**Hebrews 8:6, 13**, But now hath HE (Jesus [Yahshua]) obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a **BETTER COVENANT**, which was established upon **BETTER PROMISES**.  
...In that he saith, a **NEW COVENANT**, HE hath made the **FIRST OLD**...

**Old defined 3822, to declare obsolete (NO LONGER IN USE).**

...nor was that ever called the Lord's day, and had John meant that, he would have said on the **sabbath day**; much less the Jewish passover, but the **FIRST DAY** of **the WEEK** is designed;... so the Ethiopic version renders it "on the **first day**"; and that because it was the **day** in which our Lord **ROSE** from the dead; Mk. 16:9 (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/revelation-1.html>)

**Galatians 4:12-13**, Brethren, I **beseech (beg)** you, **BE** as I am; for **I am as ye are**: ye have NOT injured me at all. Ye know how through **infirmity (sickness) of the flesh (body)** I **preached the gospel** unto you at the first.

**NOTE:** Ye did me no wrong ... As Howard said, "The Galatians would certainly have known what Paul means by this, but it is not clear to modern readers.

**Because of an infirmity of the flesh ...** Endless speculations concerning the **illness** (that is the way it must be understood) that caused Paul to preach to the Galatians have found no general agreement among scholars; but the **most reasonable explanation** of it would seem to be that advocated by William M. Ramsay and accepted by Dummelow, Barclay and many others to the effect that when Paul came to Perga in Pamphylia on the first missionary journey (Acts 13:13ff), **he did not preach there** (at Perga), due to a **sudden onset of MALARIA**, taking refuge in the highlands of Pisidian Antioch (and later going to the other cities of the first tour). The question is NOT really important.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:14**, And my **temptation (adversity [affliction])** which was in my **flesh (body)** ye despised NOT, nor rejected; but received me as an **ANGEL** of God, even as Christ Jesus.

**NOTE:** There is always a temptation to belittle a sick man, especially one seeking to change one's whole manner of life, but the Galatians did NOT yield to it. It seems that all speculations about how repulsive and repugnant Paul's disease was are merely morbid (unhealthy) imagination. He was sick. That is all that is said here...

**As an angel of God ...** As a matter of fact, some of the Galatians tried to worship him, before they understood his message (Acts 14:11ff).

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:15**, Where is then the **blessedness YE spake of?** for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

**NOTE:** Of course, here is the ground of the **speculation** that Paul's **infirmity** was temporary blindness, which of course is a possibility; but such an expression as Paul used here is **proverbial** (used as a proverb [striking {impressive} assertion]), and there can be NO CERTAINTY that any such thing is meant. Ridderbos said, "Galatians 4:15 has nothing to do with Paul's infirmity." [22] Whatever lay behind such a statement, Paul here **appealed to the LOVE** which the Galatians manifested toward him from the very first time he ever saw them. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:16**, Am I therefore **become your ENEMY**, because I tell you the **TRUTH?**

**NOTE:** How is it that I, who was heretofore your favourite, am now accounted your enemy? Can you pretend any other reason for it than that I have **told you the truth**, endeavoured to acquaint you with, and to confirm you in, the truth of the gospel? And, if not, how **unreasonable** must your **disaffection** (unfriendliness; hostility, DISLIKE) be! Note, **1.** It is no uncommon thing for men to account (CONSIDER) those **their enemies who are really their BEST friends** for so, undoubtedly, those are, whether **MINISTERS** or others, who TELL them the **TRUTH**, and deal **freely** and **faithfully** with them in matters relating to their eternal salvation, as the apostle now did with these Christians. **2.** Ministers may

sometimes **create enemies** to themselves by the **faithful discharge of their DUTY** for this was the case of Paul, he was accounted their enemy for telling them the truth. **3.** Yet ministers must NOT forbear (STOP, delay) speaking the truth, **for FEAR** of **OFFENDING** (displeasing; making ANGRY) others and drawing their displeasure upon them. **4.** They may be easy in their own MINDS, when they are conscious to themselves that, if **others have become their enemies, it is only** for **telling them the truth.**

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/galatians-4.html>)

**Deuteronomy 18:18,** I will raise them up a **Prophet** from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will **put my WORDS** in his mouth; and he **shall speak** unto them **ALL** that I shall command him.

**Matthew 15:10-13,** And he (*Jesus*) **CALLED** the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: **NOT** that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh OUT of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came **HIS disciples**, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees **were OFFENDED** (displeased), after they **heard** this saying? But he answered and said, **EVERY plant,** which my heavenly **Father** hath **NOT planted,** shall be **rooted up.**

**Matthew 28:20,** teaching them to observe all things **whatsoever** I have **COMMANDED** you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**Acts 5:17-20,** Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the **Sadducees**,) and were filled with **indignation ("zeal" (as of an ENEMY))**, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common PRISON. But the **angel** of the Lord **BY NIGHT opened the prison doors,** and brought them forth, and said, **Go, stand** and **SPEAK** in the temple to the **people ALL the words of this LIFE.**

**Acts 5:25-29,** Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and **TEACHING** the **people.** Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they **feared** the people, lest they should have been **stoned.** And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did NOT **WE** straitly **command you** that ye should **NOT TEACH** in this **name?** and, behold, ye have FILLED Jerusalem with your **doctrine,** and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then **Peter** and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to OBEY God** rather than **men.**

**Galatians 4:17,** *They zealously affect (have warmth of feeling for) you, but NOT well; yea, they would exclude you, that YE might affect (desire) them.*

**NOTE:** ..."they show a mighty RESPECT for you, and pretend a great deal of **affection** to you, but ... That which they are chiefly aiming at is to **engage your affections TO THEM** and, in order to this, they are doing all they can to **DRAW OFF** your **affections from me and FROM the TRUTH,** that so they may engross you to themselves." This, he assures them, was their design, and therefore they must needs be very unwise in hearkening to them. Note, **1.** There may appear to be a great deal of zeal where yet there is but little truth and sincerity. **2.** It is the usual way of seducers (deceivers) to insinuate (introduce by slow, gentle or artful means) themselves into people's affections, and by that means to **draw them into their opinions.** **3.** Whatever pretenses such may make, they have usually more regard to their OWN INTEREST than that of others, and will NOT stick (stop) at ruining the **reputation of others,** if by that means they can raise their own.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:18,** *But it is good to be zealously affected (have warmth of feeling for) always in a GOOD thing, and NOT only when I am PRESENT with you.*

**NOTE:** A **zealous affection** when **RIGHT** is very commendable, as the instances of Phinehas, Elijah, John the Baptist, and our Lord Jesus Christ show, and a contrary spirit is very disagreeable. But then it must be expressed **in a good thing; in a good cause,** for God, and the things of Christ; for the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and for the **discipline** (education; instruction; correction; chastisement) of **God's house,** and **against immorality and profaneness, errors and heresies:** and **it should be "ALWAYS";** NOT at certain times, and upon some particular accounts, but it should be constant....  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/galatians-4.html>)

**NOTE:** **...not only when I am present with you** - The sense may be, "You were exceedingly zealous in a good cause when I was WITH YOU. **You loved the truth; you LOVED me.** Since I left you, and as soon almost as I was out of your sight, your zeal died away, and your ardent love for me was transferred to others. Allow me to remind you, that it would be well to be zealous of good when I am away, AS WELL as when I am WITH YOU. There is not much **true affection** in that which **dies away** as soon as a man's **back is turned.**"  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:19,** My *little children,* of whom I **travail in birth (experience the PAINS of parturition [being delivered of young]) again** until Christ **be formed** in you...

**NOTE:** **My little children** - The language of TENDER AFFECTION, such as a **parent** would use toward his own offspring; see the note at 1 Cor. 4:15; compare Matt. 18:3; John 13:33; 1 John 2:1, 1 John 2:12-13; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:21.  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/galatians-4.html>)

**NOTE:** **Again in travail ...** TWO things appear in this: **(1)** there had been an agony of Travail (labor) (like that of a woman in **childbirth**) on Paul's part at the founding of those churches, Acts 13 and Acts 14 giving many of the details of his **sorrows** and **bitter sufferings,** and **(2)** he was going through the same deep **anxieties** (CONCERN respecting some event, future or uncertain, which disturbs the MIND, and keeps it in a state of painful uneasiness) AGAIN upon their behalf.

**Until Christ be formed in you ...** The drifting into **Judaism** had blurred and distorted the IMAGE of Christ in their hearts, and Paul wishes it to be perfectly formed.  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:20,** I desire to be present WITH YOU now, and to **change my voice;** for I stand in **doubt (perplexed [embarrassed; puzzled])** of you.

**NOTE:** This is an inverted (reversed) manner of Paul's saying that he **regretted** the necessity of reprimanding (rebuking) in order to correct those whom he loved so much.  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/galatians-4.html>)

**Galatians 4:21-31,** Tell me, ye that desire to be **under the law,** do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had **TWO SONS,** the one by a bondmaid, the other by a FREEWOMAN. But he who was of the **bondwoman** was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the **TWO covenants;** the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is **above is FREE,** which is the **mother of us all.** For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now **WE,** brethren, as **Isaac was,** are the **children of promise.** But as then he that was born after the flesh PERSECUTED him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is NOW. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman **shall NOT be heir** with the **son** of the **freewoman.** So then, **brethren, WE are NOT children** of the BONDWOMAN, but of the FREE.