

Paul's Labor Among The Galatians

Galatians 4:12-16

Intro:

- A. Paul has expressed a fear of the Churches.
 - 1. **Vs. 4** His thoughts of them caused troubled feelings.
 - 2. He believed his arduous labor might come to naught.
- B. What caused him to have this fear?
 - 1. The showed signs of going back to sin's bondage.
 - 2. This was seen in the observation of so-called, "special days".

I. Paul Was Not Bound By His Former Religion. Vs. 12

- A. **Vs. 12 "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am..."**
 - 1. "Beseech" = δεομαι = "to beg", "to supplicate".
 - 2. "I beg you, brothers, in this matter, be like me..."
- B. **"...for I am as ye are:"**
 - 1. "I was once where you are..."
 - 2. I know how you feel
- C. **"...ye have not injured me at all."**
 - 1. "Injured" = αδικεω = "to someone wrong", "to act unjustly", "to harm or hurt".
 - 2. "You have never taken advantage of me".
 - 3. Paul was not retaliating against them for some past insult or injury.

II. Paul's First Contact With Them. Vs. 13-14

- A. **"Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you first."**
 - 1. "Infirmity" = αστενεια = "feebleness, sickness".
 - 2. "You know how handicapped I was by illness when I first preached the gospel to you" - Phi
 - 3. Paul didn't wait for the "right time", He did what he should do in spite of embarrassment and pain.
- B. **Vs. 14 "And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected;"**
 - 1. "Temptation" = πειρασμος = "a putting to the test".
 - 2. "Despised" = εξουθενεω = "to treat as contemptible".
 - 3. "Rejected" = εκπτυω = "to spit, spit out".
 - 4. "You didn't shrink from me or let yourselves be

revolted at the disease which was such a trial to you." - Phi

- C. "...but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."
 - 1. Paul was God's messenger.
 - 2. Paul was the representative of Jesus.
- D. What was Paul's illness?
 - 1. **II Cor. 12:7-10.**
 - 2. Whatever his illness, Paul preached and gave service to God. His grace is seen in weakness.

III. The Changed Attitude Of The Galatians.

- A. **Vs. 15 "Where is then the blessedness ye spoke of?"**
 - 1. "Blessedness" = μακαρισμος = "happiness".
 - 2. "Where is that joyous confidence of our early relationship"?
 - 3. Paul was still God's messenger. He still represented Jesus Christ.
- B. "**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**".
 - 1. "for I bear you witness..."
 - 2. "Plucked" = εξορυσσω = "to dig out, tear out".
 - 3. What greater act of love than to blind one's self and give their sight to another?
 - 4. This may give some insight into Paul's, "thorn in the flesh".

IV. Paul's Unanswerable Question.

- A. "**Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?**"
 - 1. "Enemy" = εχθρος = "hated", "odious", "adversary".
 - 2. "Am I now against you, an adversary, because I speak to you the truth"?
- B. The Bible tells us the truth. It is our true and faithful friend.
 - 1. Prov 27:5,6 - "Open rebuke is better than secret love." "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."
 - 2. Prov. 17:17 - "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."
- C. Love tells the truth.
 - 1. You cannot love someone too much to tell them the truth.

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2. Not telling truth is a sign of selfishness and spiritual and moral weakness.