

Become as I am, for I also have become as you are.

Read Galatians 4:8 – What is Paul saying, “by nature are not gods”?

- Paul is pointing out here that they were slaves to things they put ahead of everything else. We do not have to follow “religion” to follow after gods.
 - Things people put ahead of everything else and make them their gods.
 1. Acquiring wealth – put it above their family, their health. #1 most important in their lives.
 2. Public opinion, fame or power – some will do anything to attain recognition or sacrifice everything for power.
 3. Physical pleasure – some will sacrifice everything for food, alcohol, drugs to attain momentary pleasure.
 - "There is nothing more tragic than the man who spends his life in the pursuit of some false god - sacrificing everything along the way and then ends up with only his god." -David B. Curtis
- Read Galatians 4:9 – To be known by God.
 - To know of God is nothing compared to being known by God.

Everyone has heard of God. They may not understand Him, but people have heard of God. The Bible uses the word “Know” to mean

more than at an intellectual level, but at an intimate level. Could mean intercourse or have a love that goes beyond just physical attractiveness. To have knowledge and an understanding of who He is.

- Being known by God is He knows you better than anyone and has chosen you. Chosen you to receive the Spirit and have a relationship with Him. 1 Corinthians 1:30. Because of Him (Jesus) we are known by God.

- The word “rather” can be better translated “more importantly”.

[“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 106.

- “Our knowing of God will rise and fall depending on many things. But God’s knowing of us is absolutely fixed and solid” [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 106.

- “Weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slave you want to be once more”. The elements of the world were the pagan religious rituals or the Jewish practices and laws that these Galatians are being asked to participate in. Paul is asking them why would go back to ceremonies and rituals when you have so much more freedom in Christ.

- Read Galatians 4:10-11 – I may have labored over you in vain.

- “You observe days and months and seasons and years!” The constant things that were practiced in Judaism with the yearly festivals of sacrifices, the weekly Sabbath, and the monthly sacrifices. Paul is frustrated that they want to go back to those elementary things. Jesus fulfilled all of these things. The maturity of these Galatian Christians is why Paul is frustrated. They are very immature and do not grasp the understanding of what Christ did. He is rebuking them by saying, “have I labored in vain”.
- Read Galatians 4:12-14 – What ailment did Paul have?
 - Vs. 12 - This is not pride we see from Paul, but a genuine plea for them to come back to the truth. This is also not arrogance we see from Paul but letting them know he has the same Spirit they have. Paul is no different. Be like me without becoming like me. [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 110.
 - Vs. 13 – Paul’s bodily ailment could have been malaria. According to Acts 13 Paul came to the region of Galatia from the city of Perga in the region of Pamphylia. Perga was the place where John Mark (the writer of the Gospel of Mark) abandoned Paul and Barnabas. The trials related to this physical illness could have been why John Mark left. Perga was lowlands and a very marshy area. So, malaria is not a

bad guess. [David B. Curtis](#). Also, this option is mentioned in the [Cultural Background Study Bible](#)

- Vs. 14 – Paul’s illness was a trial for these Galatians. They did not despise him or treat him with scorn. People during this time viewed physical problems as divine punishment and viewed handsomeness and physical healthy people praiseworthy and attractive. [Cultural Background Study Bible](#). They took care of Paul and loved him as a Christian brother.
- Read Galatians 4:15-16 – What has become of their blessedness? Why have they changed?
 - Vs. 15 “you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me”. This is a figure of speech showing sacrificial love and has nothing to do with what some suggest Paul may have been blinded. Ancient Greeks viewed sacrifice for a friend as one of the highest ideals a person could live for. [Cultural Background Study Bible](#)
 - Vs. 16 – This Galatian church is turning on Paul because of the Judaizers that have come in and started twisting the truth of the Gospel. Paul will reference this in the next verse.
- Read Galatians 4: 17-20 – Paul is perplexed and confused as to why they put so much faith in the words of these Judaizers.

- Vs. 17 – The NIV says “they are zealous to win you over”. These works based Judaizers are telling the Galatians what they want to hear. There is nothing wrong with Zeal if it is for good purpose. Paul finishes with, “but with no good purpose”. Keller puts it this way. “The false teachers simply want to be built up by building the Galatians up – not in the gospel, but in pride and self-righteousness”. [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 113.
- Vs. 18 – Paul is telling them zeal is fine for a good purpose, and to be so always, not just when Paul is there.
- Vs. 19 -20 – “my little children”. Paul uses the image of labor because he wants them to understand he loves them and wants the best, which is Christ, not the false teachers. They care nothing, but for themselves. “The false teachers want followers who glorify them; Paul wants partners who glorify Christ.” [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 114. Paul wants to be gentle and affirm the love he has for them, but the gospel is too important and holding back would be an injustice to the Galatians.

Other Questions to Ask Yourself?

1. What idols are you in most danger of serving?