



DISCERNING HOW INFLUENCE BUILDS OR STEALS YOUR FREEDOM

Galatians 4:8-20

REVIEW: WE NOW LIVE APART FROM THE LAW BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS BEEN SENT!

Gal. 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" *7* So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

PAUL DRAWS ATTENTION TO THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF FALSE TEACHERS

Negative influences...

1. ...compel us to return to former enslavement.

Gal. 4:8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. *9* But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

2. ...prioritize the non-priorities.

Gal. 4:10 You observe days and months and seasons and years!

3. ...negate the work of positive influences.

Gal. 4:11 I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

PAUL APPEALS TO THEIR SHARED EXPERIENCE OF LOVE AND AFFECTION

1. Appeal #1: Their initial reception

Gal. 4:12 Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. *13* You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, *14* and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.

2. Appeal #2: Their heart of sacrificial love

Gal. 4:15 What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me.

3. Appeal #3: His commitment to teaching truth

Gal. 4:16 Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

NOTES:

PAUL CONTRASTS POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE INFLUENCES – DISCERN MOTIVATION!

1. Identify the motivation of false teachers – and run away!

Gal. 4:17 They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.

2. Identify the motives of Godly teachers and...

Gal. 4:18 It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, 19 my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! 20 I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

- a. ...hold them in high esteem – embrace them!

- b. ...recognize the reason they labor and sacrifice is for your growth!

- c. ... work with them to develop deeper Christ likeness.

REVIEW/DISCUSS

1. What does it mean to have Christ fully formed in us? Read Galatians 5:22-23. Do you see these attributes being developed in your life (attitudes, relationships, decision-making)? Who in your life has influenced you to develop these characteristics?

2. Take some time this week to read all of Galatians 4. Make note of Paul’s use of the words “freedom, promise, and Spirit”, as well as “slavery, flesh, and Law”. What strikes you in this chapter? What is not currently clear? What encourages you? Share your thoughts with someone.

APPLY

1. Take some time this week to think back on your life with Jesus. To the best of your ability, identify dates or markers where Jesus became more fully formed in your heart (think through old habits, seasons of suffering/ grief, high points of joy and gratitude). How have you experienced growth of freedom and dependence over the course of your Christian life?

SONGS

- Found In You
- Praise is Rising (Hosanna)
- At Your Name
- Glorious Day

2026 BUDGET

Weekly Giving:	\$6,877
Weekly Need:	\$12,300
YTD Giving:	\$176,183
YTD Need:	\$196,800
Expansion Fund:	\$390,823

COMMUNICATION & GIVING

Envelopes for financial gifts, prayer requests, and communication to our church leadership are in the seat back pockets. Please pass your envelope to the ushers or deposit them in the offering box by the exit doors. Thank you!

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