

True children of God are often misled by persuasive talkers who promise *great expectations*. If misled people continue in false teaching it raises questions if they were ever really alive to God in the first place.

I. The people described in 4:4-7 apparently possessed the following:

- vs. 5 **redemption**: released from guilt and condemnation—passed from death unto life: God's wrath no longer hovers¹ over them.
- vs. 6 **“you are sons”**—true children of God, men and women both.
- vs. 6 possessors of **“the Spirit in their hearts”**
- vs. 6. able to begin recognizing God as **“Abba, Father”**
- vs.7 **“an heir of God through Christ”** This is the basis of great expectations now and in the world to come. See Hebrews 2:5-11.

The people described in 4:4-7 were being misled by persuasive talkers who promised greater spiritual elevation. They took the bait and were in the process of embracing perverted teaching dressed up as good news, but was really *cursed teaching*: Galatians 1:6-9.

Two questions that can help recover misled children of God:

First: Can you remember your relationship to God **before you heard the message of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone?** Galatians 4:8. Some of you can. Some of you can't because you are not first generation Christians and have heard the gospel since infancy.

Second: What changed the non-existent relationship to a real relationship with God? _____

II. What is it like to be *in religious bondage and not know God* in the context of Galatians 4:8?

¹ John 3:36

See Acts 14:8-18

The bondage of such an existence is hard for us here now in the USA to understand. But many still live in such a wretched existence.

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2:30-7:20; 12:45-14:15.

Can you remember your relationship to God **before you heard the message of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone?** Galatians 4:8.

The Galatian region was dense spiritual darkness until Paul and Barnabas came.

Lost people know something of the existence of a divine being: Romans 1:19-21. The gospel announces not only God's existence, but also His identity: Acts 17:23-31.

What changes the non-existent relationship to a real relationship with God? "...after you have _____ God, or rather known by God...." Galatians 4:9

III. What is it like to actually read the scriptures and regularly congregate with people who read the Bible and claim to worship the one true God **and still not know God?**

Acts 9:1-5a. What is Saul the persecutor's **first question?**

_____, _____?

A. Paul gives his testimony in Galatians 1:13-16. There he describes salvation as *a revelation*², a supernatural divine intervention wherein God turns on the light, *that results in a decision*.

² Isaiah 53:1

B. This knowledge is of such value that it cannot be overstated.

When people stand before their judge this saving knowledge will surely be priceless: John 17:3 Jeremiah 9:23,24

D. See how Paul stresses the divine initiative: "Known by God"

IV. How is it that actual believers go back to bondage? and to what are they going back to? Galatians 4:9

A. **They are going back to "weak and beggarly elements."** In context this is various ceremonies and requirements of the Old Testament.

Does this seem remarkable? See II Kings 18:4

Hebrews 7:18 "...its weakness and unprofitableness."

Catholicism: Crisis Of Faith 3:30-6:30; 10:00-10:25; 12:00-12:20 24-36

B. Why are they going back?

The people described in 4:4-7 were being misled by persuasive talkers who promised greater spiritual elevation.

Beware of "The New Perspective on Paul" N.T. Wright is a false teacher who is a very persuasive talker.³

C. Some of you are not first generation Christians and have heard the gospel since infancy.

Idolatry in your life would probably not be as obvious as raw pagan idolatry. Please note however—idolatry, substitutes for God—come in many forms: I John 5:21.

³ *The Future of Justification: A Response to N.T. Wright* by John Piper p. 178,79 glaring error regarding reconciliation p. 181,82 Is The Reformation Over?

