

Study 10
Galatians 4:12-20

1. Paul writes in Galatians 4:12 Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. Taking into account the fact that Paul is a former Pharisee and theologian what is the significance of this statement?
2. What was the motive of the false Jewish teachers in Galatia? What were they trying to do to Paul and his gospel?
3. Can you compare the motives of the false teachers with that of Paul's?

4. What does Paul mean by desiring to see Christ formed in the Galatians? Compare Ephesians 4:11-16. How should this inform us in the manner in which we conduct our Gamma Discipleship program? Are we doing this? What are the obstacles and how can we improve?

Case Study

Aaron Lai has been attending the 3rd Baptist church for the last 30 years and was in charge of the missions to Vietnam. This ministry started 5 years ago and he had led multiple trips to Vietnam as a result the team grew to a healthy 25 interested individuals. There was much fruit from the ministry. Then the direction of the church changed and the elders wanted to concentrate their efforts on reaching out to Indonesia hence much of the funding went there and a new committee was set up to spearhead this rather than Aaron's own missions committee. He was asked to advise and help with this new work but was very hurt and angry as he was not consulted on this move. He was totally convicted on the Vietnam missions instead and fought tooth and nail to expand the program even at the expense of taking resources from this new ministry. He severely criticized the leaders and people involved in the new ministry and said he would not attend the prayer meetings for these. One of the elders gave a suggestion on saving money for his short-term missionaries to Vietnam by using Air Asia instead of MAS and Aaron got upset and said elders should not micromanage and interfere with his ministry.

One of the elders criticised Aaron's response as an outgrowth of his loss of bearing with respect to justification. He said Christians who are no longer sure that God loves and accepts them in Jesus, apart from their present spiritual achievements, are subconsciously radically insecure persons – much less secure than non-Christians, because of the constant bulletins they receive from their Christian environment about the holiness of God and the righteousness they are supposed to have. Their insecurity shows itself in pride, a fierce, defensive assertion of their own righteousness, ministries, and defensive criticism of others. They come naturally to hate other cultural styles and others different from themselves in order to bolster their own security and discharge their suppressed anger. They cling desperately to legal, pharisaical righteousness, but envy, jealousy, and other branches on the tree of sin grow out of their fundamental insecurity.

- a. What do you make of the situation? Did all parties display maturity?

- b. How should the situation be handled?

Takeaway

Paul urges the Galatians to reject the Judaizers' false teachings and embrace the gospel of grace, emphasizing that salvation comes through faith alone, not the law. He passionately reminds them of their past love for him and warns against false teachers who seek personal gain, stressing that true ministry aims to form Christ in believers, not to secure followers for oneself.