

Study 9  
Galatians 4:8-11

1. How is the observance of certain holy days months or years equivalent to being enslaved to idolatry again?
2. How were the Judaizers and the Gentiles in Galatia idolaters in their own right?
3. Tim Keller writes in his book *Counterfeit Gods* "*[An idol] is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.*"

Can you share what are the modern-day idols that we struggle with every day?

4. a) Paul's description of idols whatever their shape or form is that they are "weak and worthless" Gal 4:9. In what way are idols weak and worthless?

b) Reflection Question. How have you personally experienced their weakness in your life please share.

5. Paul writes that the Galatians have come to “know God “and then further clarifies that rather they have been “known by God” What is he attempting to clarify and why does this matter?

### **Case Study 1**

1. April Devadass was a recent member of the 4<sup>th</sup> Baptist church who had been quite involved with the church for a few weeks but with time had gotten cynical. She noted how members were always coming late. She listened to the groups of members as they complained that particular individuals who were leaders would act in a selfish greedy manner. One leader in particular, she was told always fronted up to the Alpha meetings and never put a cent into the offering but always complained about the food. Another leader never lifted a finger to help in the ministry and just sat around. Still, these members with criticisms would never bring up the complaints to the individuals. April brought up these grouses on their behalf to the elders of the church and after a few months, she did not notice any change. She wanted the elders to tell these folks to change their behavior to try harder and that she expected better from the church leadership. She said Jesus expected better. The elders to whom she complained spoke to the individual leaders who were criticized and they denied such behavior. There was a lot of acrimony and the result was these leaders left the church. A new set of leaders were installed and they were less mature than the previous lot hence more complaints were forthcoming from April as she picked all these up from the ground. The elders asked her if she would like to be a leader but she declined and said “no time”.



## Case Study 2

Celine had been a banker for many years and was attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baptist church. She has always struggled with depression and loneliness as she was single and pushing 40 with little prospect of getting married. She was overweight with oily skin and bad breath. She had a kind of funny inappropriate laugh which was a cross between a hyena's and a wolf's. She had difficulty loving others and was always critical of others in church dividing people up into the "good guys" and the "bad guys" based on how they treated her. A couple of her friends tried to help her do a makeover with a new hairstyle, braces, weight loss program, and a dermatologist but with her looks it would have taken major surgery hence that effort failed leaving her frustrated and more bitter.

The other friends in church told her to learn to love herself, pimples and all, and said to her unless she learned to love herself she could not get over her depression. She was taught to look at herself in the mirror each day and say to herself that she was a beautiful person, a wonderful person.

- a. Why do you think the physical makeover program will always fail?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Do you think her other friend's advice about loving herself and looking at herself in the mirror will work?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. What should Celine do instead?

### **Takeaway**

**Paul warns the Galatians against returning to the bondage of the law and idolatry, emphasizing that true freedom comes through faith in Christ alone, not religious observances or human efforts. He urges them to trust in God's calling and grace rather than relying on their own works for salvation**