

Growing Deeper

Hollow: Reclaiming our heart, our life

Week Four: Misguided Zeal

Galatians 4:12-20

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Read Galatians 4. What do you suppose is the most famous verse in that chapter? Why?
2. Galatians 4:4 says, “When the set time had fully come....” Who determines when something is the “right time”? When is the “right time” to pick vegetables or fruit? How do you know? How is that like life?
3. Do you consider yourself a patient person? Read Galatians 5:22. Patience is found in a list of various virtues. What are those virtues called?
4. What’s the difference between a “fruit” of the spirit and a “gift” of the spirit?
5. Do you think all mature Christians should demonstrate the fruit of the spirit, including patience?
6. If you are not by nature a patient person, what can be done to increase your patience?
7. End your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for a greater measure of God’s spirit to demonstrate and benefit from the fruit of the spirit.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. Reread Galatians 4:1. What makes a slave and an under-aged child alike?
9. What is the ultimate difference between a slave and an under-aged child?
10. Who determines (according to Galatians 4:2) when a child is no longer to be treated like a slave? What is the point of comparison between us and an under-aged child in this reference?
11. According to Galatians 4:3, before we became “mature” of faith, how (and to what) were we enslaved?
12. How were the chains of our slavery broken?

13. Some are slaves to this world and some are slaves to the law. What's the difference? What's the same?
14. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to always treasure the freedom of the gospel and never again revert to legalism.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

15. Galatians 4:7 states that true sons (who are no longer slaves to the world or to legalism) now think of God as a dear father. What's the difference between a loving father and an abusive father? How is that similar to those who are living under legalist religion, and those living under grace?
16. Fearful children and loving children will both try to do what pleases their parents. So what's the difference?
17. In the letter to the people of Galatia, Paul is concerned about slippage of faith. Where was the danger coming from according to Galatians 4:17? (See Galatians 1:6-7 for additional help.)
18. Read Galatians 4:9-10. What was the proof that they were returning to slavery?
19. Are there Christians today who are living under the slavery of "do's and don'ts" that distort the true faith for rules and traditions? What does that look like today?
20. What's the relationship between good works and faith versus salvation by works and demanded obedience? (See Paul's explanation in Ephesians 2:8-10.)
21. Conclude your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to be more gracious towards yourself and towards others who believe and especially towards those who still think the true faith is a form of religious behavior.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

22. Paul spoke of a personal health struggle while living among the people in the region of Galatia – modern day Turkey. From the hint in Galatians 4:15 and Galatians 6:11, what can we deduce about the nature of Paul's infirmity?
23. How would this infirmity have been a hindrance to his ministry?
24. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. How did Paul attempt to deal with his infirmity?
25. Why did God not release him from his hardship?

26. Do you think God still acts that way towards faithful Christians today?
27. According to Romans 8:28, what can Christians be sure of despite the circumstance of their life?
28. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for patience in accepting the hindrances you are enduring in life.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

29. Begin by reading Galatians 4:17-23. When is zeal good and when can zeal be bad?
30. Do you know people who are zealous for the wrong thing? Give an example.
31. Was Paul zealous for the people of Galatia? What was Paul willing to do out of zeal for their good? (See Galatians 4:16.)
32. What did their misguided zeal rob from the people who were being drawn back into legalism? (See Galatians 4:15.)
33. Do you know people who view the Christian faith as a burden? How so?
34. Read Jesus' words in Matthew 11:28-30. What did Jesus offer to those who follow Him by grace through faith vs. those who make faith into rules?
35. End your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray the words of David from Psalm 51:10-12.