

The Sermon

Welcome

Good morning!

My Name is Pastor Jonathan.

And I am so grateful that each of you are here today.

Everyone is welcome at Harvey!

Opening Illustration

Now, growing up...I loved to mow grass.

And I know that may sound crazy to some of you...

But I loved it...

- I loved being outside
- I loved seeing the visible work I had done...
- And I loved the smell the fresh cut grass...

But then I started mowing yards for money.

And it became a **JOB**.

In the same way....

When I was in college...I LOVED Starbucks...it was one of the few coffee shops we had back then...

- I loved the smell of the coffee
- I loved the atmosphere they used to have back in the early 2000s with jazz music playing in the background...and the comfy chairs they used to have...

And then I begin to work at Starbucks...

And when I finally quit...

- I couldn't even stand the SMELL of a Starbucks for YEARS...

But in both of these things...nothing actually changed about the things I loved...

- The grass was the same grass...
- The coffee was the same coffee...

What changed...is that it stopped being something I GOT TO DO...

And it became something I HAD TO DO.

***The moment I started getting PAID for it.
Is the moment it became something I had to EARN...
And It quit being something I could ENJOY...***

These days...I love to smoke meat.

- I love the smell of the smoker...
- I love the process
- And I really enjoy seeing others get to enjoy good BBQ

And every now and then...somebody will taste my BBQ and say
- "Man, you ought to do this for money...You could sell this."

And every single time...I tell them NO WAY.

- ***Because I know EXACTLY what would happen...***
- ***I would LOSE THE ENJOYMENT OF IT.***

So I guard it.

- And I have to be honest with you...
- There have been times...when I have been more careful to guard the joy I get from making a BRISKET...
- Than I have been to guard my JOY in Jesus Christ.

So I want to ask you the question I had to ask myself this week...

- When did you stop enjoying this?
- And maybe for some of you....nothing comes to mind...
- But for some of us in this room...what comes to our mind is:
 - Reading our Bibles...
 - Praying...
 - Being at church...
 - Serving on a team...

Maybe there was a season when it brought you JOY...and you just couldn't wait for it...

And somewhere along the way...

- You started going through the motions...
- And your heart got cold...
 - You didn't decide to stop loving it...
 - But it quit being something that you ***GET TO DO***
 - It became something that you ***HAD TO DO***

Transition

That is EXACTLY what Paul is talking about to the church of Galatia in **Galatians 4...**

But instead of them

- Taking something **THEY LOVED**...and getting **PAID** for it...
- They took something they were **FREELY GIVEN**...and started trying to **PAY for it...**

These people had been handed something for FREE...

- And somebody came along and convinced them they needed to start making payments on it...

And church...the moment you start trying to EARN a gift...

- Is the moment you lose the JOY of it...
- You cannot enjoy what you are busy trying to earn....

In fact, our BIG IDEA FOR TODAY IS THIS:

Big Idea

Because You Are KNOWN by God... You Don't Have To EARN Him.

Transition

So, if you have your Bibles, take them out and turn to the book of **Galatians**, and we're going to be in **Chapter 4, vs. 8-20** today. I'm going to begin by reading **vs. 8-11...**

I. Don't Be Robbed of The Joy of Your Salvation (Galatians 4:8-11)

Paul's Concern for the Galatians

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?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years!

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

A. Formerly Slaves (vs. 8)

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

Last Week, we saw the truth that if we are in Christ, we've been adopted by God as a Son or Daughter of God...so we no longer need to act like orphans, but cry out like sons and daughters.

Today, as we continue in Galatians...

Paul begins by saying...**Formerly** when you didn't know God, you were enslaved by the things that are not God...

And here is what Paul is saying...

Your gods may have been FAKE...but the slavery was REAL

Rousseau a philosopher from the 1700s...famously said: **"Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains"**.

And although Rousseau wavered on his beliefs...this was a true statement, and it is even for us today!

Being in chains is humanity's natural condition....

- So Paul is saying...before God...you were enslaved!
- To a religion of **WORKS!**

And the same is true for us...before God...we were enslaved...

- Enslaved to the opinions and expectations of others
- Enslaved to trying to be good enough...
- And That's EARNING...and it will wear you out.
- In fact, every religion on earth, except for Christianity, is a religion of WORKS...but in Christianity...Jesus Christ does the work!

Look at **vs. 9**

B. BUT NOW! (vs. 9a)

Paul says two of my favorite words in the WHOLE BIBLE...

BUT NOW!!!

"But now that you have come to know God"....

And then almost as if mid-sentence, Paul corrects himself...he says...

OR RATHER...

That you have come to be KNOWN BY GOD!

See

- Salvation is not first OUR knowledge of God...
- It is HIS knowledge of US...

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- **BECAUSE YOU ARE KNOWN BY GOD...YOU DON'T HAVE TO EARN HIM.**
- He knew you **FIRST**...so there is nothing left for you to earn!

This is God's initiative in salvation...we this saw last week!

- You didn't make yourself a son...the Father **SENT** the Son...
- The Father **SENT** the Spirit...
- And The Father **did the adopting**...

Jesus Himself said in **John 10:14**...*"I am the good shepherd. I know my own"*

We know Him...because He **FIRST** knew us!...we love...because He first loved us - **1 John 4:19**

The Galatians didn't go looking for the true God and find Him...

- God sent Paul to them...
- They heard the Gospel...
- They heard that He had first loved them...
- And they received His love!

Last week we talked a whole lot about our adoption from God and how we can often act like Orphans instead of adopted Sons and Daughters of God...

So how then...

- ***If we have received the Father's Love and Adoption...***
- ***Could we ever go running back to the orphanage?***

And yet...that is EXACTLY what the Galatians were trying to do....

And OFTEN... that's exactly what we try to do....

- BUT WE ARE KNOWN...WE DON'T HAVE TO EARN!

C. How Can You Turn Back!? (vs. 9b-10)

That's exactly what Paul is saying...

GOD did this....

- ***God has known you...***
- ***SO HOW THEN...***
- ***Can you turn back to the weak and worthless things that once enslaved you!?***

Now that you have tasted and seen that the Lord is good... how can you go back to the things that are WEAK and WORTHLESS?

And this is nothing new...

- In the Old Testament book of Exodus, we see God's people were enslaved by the Egyptians...
- And God radically saved them!
 - And then the next thing you know...they're like...
 - Hey, let's just go back to Egypt...
 - The whips
 - The brick quotas...
 - They weren't that bad....

BUT Here's the truth...

Even for us today....

- When the way forward looks difficult...
- The past always looks promising...

You ever been there?

- ***God is like - I want you to share your faith with that person....***
 - Nope...I'm rather just talk to people I already know...
- ***Or God convicts you that you need to be serving in the church...***
 - and You're like, Nope...
 - I'm comfortable on the back row
 - I'm good...
- ***We joined a family, but we still function in isolation...because it's familiar...***

See, going back is like an addiction...

- ***oftentimes as much as we want to go forward in faith...***
- ***we end up going back to being enslaved to the same things we once were...***

AND The reality is this:

Going back requires NO faith... and that's exactly why it tempts us...

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

Augustine, who had a fascinating conversion to Christ, said that after his conversion, ***his old habits kept plucking at his sleeve and whispering... “Do you think you can live without us?”***

Hey Believer...You Know Those Voices...

- Egypt wasn't that bad...
- Those whips didn't hurt that much...
- Building bricks was actually fun...
- It wasn't that bad...before....

But God....radically saved you Christian!

- ***HOW THEN...can you turn back to the WEAK and WORTHLESS things you worshipped before!?***

For the Galatians this looked like what it says in **vs. 10**

Look at vs. 10

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years!

They had been convinced...that ***AS A WAY TO BE RIGHT WITH GOD!!!***

- they had to not only be circumcized...
- But also being ***obligated*** to follow the ritual calendar....

Now I want to be careful...

- There is nothing wrong with remembering and celebrating Jesus at Christmas or Easter....
- There is nothing wrong with keeping Sunday as a day to remember and worship God...

We keep those days as days of worship and remembrance ***OUT OF GLADNESS!***

That we JOYFULLY get to celebrate on those days!

But the difference is:

We're not doing that:

- ***As a way to be JUSTIFIED!***
- ***As a way for God to give us more...***
- ***But so we can give HIM the praise He deserves!***

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

In the same way we partook of The Lord's Supper this morning...

- we do that out of **REMEMBRANCE**
- **and OUT OF GLADNESS...**
- not as something that **SAVES US...**

In other words, what Paul is REALLY saying here is...

- There is **NO JOY** in your salvation!
- Your religion has turned into one of one rules and regulations...
- You're just doing this to check off a box...because you think it can add to your salvation...

D. I Am Afraid (vs. 11)

So Paul says in vs. 11...I am afraid for you....

- ***That's never a good thing...***

Paul says...

- I'm afraid for believers who I labored to tell the **GOOD NEWS** to... but yet have fallen back to the slavery they were freed from...
- I am **AFRAID FOR THE BELIEVER WHO HAS LOST THE JOY OF THEIR SALVATION!**

Hey Church:

I want to be honest with you...

I am fearful of the same thing...

- personally
- And for us as a congregation...

May we never be a people who have lost the joy of God's salvation!

I pray the prayer of David from **Psalm 51** often: "**Father, restore to me the joy of YOUR salvation!**"

- I pray that for me personally...
- And I pray that for us as a congregation...

I fear our losing joy in Him...

- Not happiness, which comes and goes...but joy!
- Happiness comes and goes with our circumstances...
- **BUT YOUR JOY** is anchored to something that cannot change... what **God has DONE for you in Christ...**
 - That's why Paul and Silas could sing in a jail cell

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- Not because they were happy...
- But because of what their joy was tied to...
- **AND if your joy is tied to your SALVATION...**
 - **it doesn't matter if you've had the worst week of your life!**
 - **Jesus radically saved you!**
 - **And that changes everything!**

Church:

I fear the joy of **His Salvation** is robbed from us...

- Because we're looking for our hope in all the wrong places...
- **NOT IN CHRIST ALONE.**

But like the old song says:

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus Christ, my righteousness...
All Other Ground Is Sinking Sand...

Christian...

- Don't let the things of this world....
- Be a joy-robber to you!

SET YOUR HOPE ON CHRIST!

In Christ there is joy!

Don't be robbed of The Joy of Your Salvation!

The Galatians forgot they were KNOWN by God...

- **so they went back to trying to earn their salvation...**
- **and their joy went with it!**

Because you are KNOWN by God... YOU DON'T HAVE TO EARN HIM!

Transition

And here's the thing...

- Legalism didn't just cost them their joy...
- It also cost them their memory...

Let's keep reading in vs. 12-16...

II. Don't Be Robbed of The Love You Once Had (Galatians 4:12-16)

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.

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.

16 Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

A. Become Like Me (vs. 12a)

Paul says...**BROTHERS!**

- He hasn't counted them out yet...
- They're still his brothers in Christ...
- He says: I'm begging you...**BECOME AS I AM!**

And when you read this...you're like...

- okay Paul...you're pretty confident in yourself here....

But what Paul is saying is:

- I was a JEW of Jesus...

Like remember who Paul WAS?...He was SAUL...

- Circumcised the eighth day...a Pharisee of Pharisees...
- The Law ruled and reigned his **ENTIRE** life when He was Saul
- It even made him haul Christians off to jail to be killed...

BUT THEN Christ set him FREE...

So Paul is saying...I have died to the law...so become as I am! STOP! Trying to earn your salvation!

- Paul's not bragging...or trying to say he's the perfect Christian...
 - Paul is saying...
 - I've been where you are...
 - I was enslaved...
 - I was in that prison cell...
 - So he's begging his brothers,

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- Hey, once you've been freed...don't walk back into that prison cell!

So PAUL SAYS: BECOME LIKE ME...

- I experienced freedom...
- I walked out of slavery to the law...
- I became like you...a Gentile....
- So don't you, a Gentile...go running back to the things **that I've been freed from!**

In fact, this is the **VERY FIRST imperative command** we've seen in the entire book of Galatians.

- This is the first thing that we see that God's Word here says, **WE MUST DO!**
- That we **DON'T TRY TO EARN OUR SALVATION!**
- **WE DON'T RUN BACK TO THE WEAK AND WORTHLESS GODS OF BEFORE...**

B. You Did Me No Wrong (vs. 12b-14a)

In fact, Paul says...remember **WHO YOU WERE**...even before Christ...

When I came to you, you received me and you did me no wrong...

In fact...

We come to find out, that when Paul came...he was sick...like really sick!

AND Notice this:

What Paul is saying is ...I didn't PLAN being in Galatia...

- I got sick and ended up here!
- The Lord used an illness to bring me to you!

Remember, in this day and time...

The normal response to somebody who was sick...

- was to push them away...
- I don't want what they got....
- I don't know where they got it....
- So you kept your distance....

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

But Paul says in **vs. 14...**

- even though my condition was a trial to you...
 - You did not scorn
 - You didn't despise me...
 - You did me no wrong!
 - **You received me!**

So Paul's saying:

- Remember **WHO YOU WERE...**
- I'm the same man with the same message that I've always been...
- **You're the ones that have changed....**
 - Where is the love that you first displayed to me?

JUST A SIDE OBSERVATION HERE:

Paul is demonstrating here what it looks like for us to use our trials to **The Glory of God...**

- Paul didn't waste his sickness...
- Paul didn't sit there feeling sorry for himself...
- Waiting to get better so the **REAL ministry** could happen...
- Paul shared The Gospel...even while He was suffering...

And God used Paul's illness, as an opportunity for an entire region to come to faith...

HEY TODAY:

How are we using OUR trials to glorify God???

...If God has given you a Trial in your life...

- look at Paul...
- and BECOME AS HE WAS...
- using his suffering to The Glory of God!

C. As An Angel of God (vs. 14b)

Look back at **vs. 14**

- Paul continues and says, not only did you not scorn or despise me
 - but you received me...**As an Angel of God, as Christ Jesus...**

Now if you're like me, when you first read that it doesn't sit well...

- **What did Paul mean by this?**
- **Why would they receive him as Christ Jesus?**

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

Well, another word for Angel is “messenger.”

So Paul is saying he was sent on mission **BY GOD** as a messenger **OF GOD!**

And they received him as Christ...?

- Now This **DOES NOT** mean they thought he **WAS CHRIST...**
 - This means they received the **Authority of The Message of JESUS Christ...**
 - They received the Gospel through Him!

Jesus Himself put it this way in **Matthew 10:40**, “Whoever receives you receives me”...

So what Paul is saying here is...

- **“you received me as a messenger of Christ...and received the message OF CHRIST”**

Paul is saying...

THIS IS WHO YOU WERE!!!!

D. What Happened To Your Joy? (vs. 15-16)

Then look at **vs. 15...**

Paul says...

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU!?!?!?

- You received me in a way that cost you a lot!
- I was sick...and you didn't do me any wrong...

WHAT CHANGED!?

In other words, Paul is saying...what happened to your joy!?

- You would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me if I had needed them...

AND NOW...

I've become your enemy by telling you the truth!????

- ***WHO ROBBED YOU OF YOUR JOY!?***

See, **this newfound legalism...**turning towards the law...going back to slavery...

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- hadn't just stolen their doctrine...
- it had also **ROBBED them of their joy...**

I wonder if you've ever been to a legalistic type church...

- Do this...
- Don't do this...
- You gotta earn your way into this family...

And usually those churches produce what legalistic religion always produces...

- Criticism...
- Suspicion...
- Sourness...

NO JOY!

Some of you know this from experience...

And maybe you even thought...What happened here?

I'll tell you what happened...

- **They lost the joy of God's salvation...**
-
- They forgot who they **HAD BEEN...**
- They forgot what God **HAD DONE** and **IS DOING...**
- And they quit asking Him to do it in anybody else's life...

Illustration

Way back in 1904...before any of us were born...right here in Erath County, there were some revivals held south of town in the Johnson Community.

And a whole bunch of people got SAVED...

- but there was no church in their area...

SO this church...Harvey Baptist was formed...out of a Revival! Way back in 1904!

- This church wasn't born because people got mad at each other and started their own church...
- This church was born because God **RADICALLY SAVED** people and they wanted to come together to **WORSHIP HIM!**

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

And since 1904... Harvey Baptist has been asking the Lord to radically save many more people...

But just for a moment...imagine if we didn't...

- Imagine if this became our little club...
- We quit asking more people to come in and be saved...and start pushing people out...
- Imagine if it became about our preferences...our comfort...our happiness...

Then I would imagine that Paul would look at us the same way he looked at Galatian believers and ask...

- **WHAT CHANGED!!!!????**
 - Has the Word of God...
 - which speaks TRUTH...
 - become your enemy?

And the answer would be similar to the Galatians...

- We lost the joy of His salvation....
- It quit being about **WHAT GOD HAD DONE...**
- And it started being **ABOUT US!**

BUT Praise be to God, **THAT HASN'T** been the story for God's people called **Harvey Baptist** for **122 years...**

- And I pray it will never be the story of this church!
- May we always be **Remembering and Celebrating What God has Done and Asking Him TO DO IT AGAIN** in many more lives!

See, the Galatians received Paul with blessedness...

- **When they liked His message!**
- But they treated him like an enemy...
 - **when they didn't want to hear what he had to say...**

Hey Church:

May we never treat The LORD and His Word in that way!!!!

- You don't get to receive God's Word with blessedness on the verses you like
- and then as an enemy with the verses you don't like...

God's Word either has ALL Authority... or NO Authority...

- And since 1904...here...
- in this body of believers...
- it has had **ALL AUTHORITY!**

See the Galatians...

- had been robbed of their joy...
 - They had Forgotten who they were in Christ..
 - Forgotten what God had done...
- And then looked at Paul like an enemy for telling them the truth in love that they didn't have to **EARN GOD when they were KNOWN by HIM!...**

Transition

So if Paul speaking the truth wasn't the enemy...

Then who was?

Who was doing the robbing?

Let's keep reading in vs. 17-20

III. Don't Be Robbed By Those Who Only Want You For Themselves (Galatians 4:17-20)

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

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. Flattery With A Hook In It (vs. 17-18)

Paul, out of his love for The Galatians...warns them about the puppet masters...

Paul tells them: "They're making much of you...but for no good purpose"...

- In other words, they're talking like they really care for you...
- But their true wish is **JUST TO CONTROL YOU...**

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- SO THAT...*much can be made OF THEM!*

In other words, it's flattery...***but it's got a hook in it....***

- They make much of you...they throw the bait in the water...to get your attention...to dazzle you with the shiny bait...
- Then...once they get you hooked...they shut you OUT....
- And they say they hold the keys to your standing before God...

John Stott summarized this in this way:

- ***Grace Christianity makes believers mature and free of their teachers.***
- ***While Legalistic Religion ties its victims to the Apron Strings of their teachers forever!***

Paul is telling them...they want followers...

- So they are using you to ***GROW THEIR KINGDOM!***
- Rather than letting you rest in the freedom of ***GOD'S KINGDOM!***

Even in vs. 18, Paul said...there is nothing wrong with being pursued...

- Like Paul himself, had eagerly sought out the Galatians when he first preached the Gospel to them...

BUT HE DIDN'T DO THAT...SO HE COULD GAIN FOLLOWERS

- ***HE PREACHED THE GOSPEL THAT THEY MAY BE FREE IN CHRIST!***
- ***NOT IN HIM!!***

In fact, Paul says in the second half of vs. 18...

- ***I'm not even there with you...and I'm still fighting for your freedom in Christ...***
- ***But these that want you to make much of them...***
 - They only care about you when you're in the room with them...
 - When you can make them look good!

Because it was never about you...it was ALWAYS about what they could get FROM you...

- Paul cared about these people when he was 500 miles away...
- Writing them a letter with tears in his eyes...with nothing to gain

That's the difference:

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- Love keeps showing up when nobody's looking.
- Manipulation shows up when it's being watched.

Hey Today:

We live in a world where you can listen to preachers or teachers of any ministry, any where in the world...non-stop...

But the question I have is...

- Is their ministry binding **YOU TO THEM...**
- OR IS IT binding **YOU TO CHRIST!**

Not every person who calls themselves a Preacher or Teacher...

- desires for you to find freedom in Christ...
- some of them just want followers...they want you to be bound to them...

Listen to Paul's message here...

- Don't be **ROBBED** of the **Freedom that you have in Christ!**
- Don't find freedom in Christ...
 - And let some podcaster **rob you of the joy of your salvation...**

B. My Little Children (vs. 19)

Look at vs. 19

Paul had just called them "brothers"...

- And now Paul calls them "**my little children**"...

Not in a way to belittle them...

- But in a way like a pleading mother who loves her little children!

Paul, when he says I am in the anguish of childbirth...is saying....

- **First** I was in labor pains over your conversion...
- **AND NOW** I am in labor pains over your formation!!!

See the goal for a Christian **IS NOT JUST** that they are converted, **BUT ALSO** that they are formed in Christ!

- That we become **NEW CREATIONS IN CHRIST!**

Charles Spurgeon referred to this burden as "**the paternity of souls**"...and said that **this should be the heart of every believer!**

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

That we see those that we have been entrusted to share The Gospel with

- not only to be saved in Christ
- But also to grow to become more like Christ
- To be discipled

And the word used for **FORMED** here...has to do with inside-out change....

- It doesn't mean that God is after a **Christian-LOOKING** person...
- It means that God is after a person who has **CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER!**

In fact, the word Paul uses here is the word for the shaping of an EMBRYO into a body...

- Cell added to cell...
- Tissue added to tissue...

Which tells US something about how this works...

- ***This formation is GRADUAL***
- This is a lifelong journey, of being formed, ***into Christ-likeness!***

And Paul says...my heart hurts, my soul has labor pains...

- ***FOR CHRIST TO BE FORMED IN YOU!***

C. I Wish I Could Be With You (vs. 20)

Paul closes our text today like this...

I wish I could trade this LETTER... for my PRESENCE with you...

In fact...Paul says...

"I am PERPLEXED about you."

- ***I don't know what to do with you.***
- You got wandering hearts...
- You got hearts that decided you want to go back to Egypt...
 - to slavery...

So what is Paul's solution....

- He does what mothers do...
- He keeps LABORING...

Hey For Us Today...

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Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

You know somebody with a wandering heart...

- They've run back to the things you thought they had been freed from...

God knows your pain...

- Paul knows your pain...
- **But look at what Paul did...**
 - He just kept on laboring...
 - He kept on speaking the truth...
 - He kept on praying...

May we do the same...for those we love...who have wandering hearts...

And may we each of us **ALSO BE ON GUARD...**

- Against those....
- Who are seeking to rob us of the joy of God's salvation...

AND REMEMBER:

- Because You are KNOWN by God...You don't have to EARN Him.

Transition

That's what God's Word says and means today.

Now really, I want us to see 2 ways that we can apply this text to our own lives today.

Applications

1. Guard The Joy of Your Salvation

Life is hard...

- Many of us are busy people...running from point A to point B
- Many of us are dealing with trial after trial after trial...

And somewhere in the middle of that busyness and the trials...

- We slow down...
- And we quietly ask...**where did my joy go?**

When did this start feeling like just another thing **I HAVE TO DO...**

Instead of something **I GET TO JOYFULLY PARTICIPATE IN?**

I have an old F-150 pickup...

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- And it's got a slow oil leak and a coolant leak...just like every old F-150...

And there are times I'll get busy running from point A to point B...

- And the next thing I know...my truck starts running weird...
- And I remember...oh...I've got leak...
- What I took for granted...is nearly **EMPTY**...

And here is the thing about joy...in the same way...it's rarely stolen in a moment....

- But just like that pickup truck...
 - it slowly leaks out
 - Drip by drip...
 - Until one day you realize you're running on EMPTY...

So how do we fill the tank back up?

Well First...you gotta do what I HAVEN'T done with my truck...FIX THE LEAKS.

- Because almost every single time our joy runs low...
- Come to find out
- It's because we've **SET OUR HOPE** on the wrong thing...
 - ***We set our hope on our HEALTH***
 - ***We set our hope on THIS WORLD***
 - ***We set our hope on a RELATIONSHIP***
 - ***We set our hope on our POSSESSIONS***

And the leak we saw in our text today...

- ***It's when we set our hope on our PERFORMANCE...***
 - On the days we observed...
 - On being good enough...
 - ***On trying to earn what were never asked to...***

AND here's the truth:

The only source that we can place our Hope in that will fix the leaks, is by placing our Hope in Christ alone!

That no matter what happens...

- ***God has called you His Child!***
- ***Not because of what you have done...***

- ***But because of WHAT CHRIST HAS ALREADY DONE!***

So we gotta fix the leaks...by setting OUR HOPE IN THE PROPER PLACE....ON CHRIST ALONE!

- then you can begin filling your joy tank once again!
- By spending time with the ***source of our joy, which is God!***

Maybe this week, it's time to fix the leaks in your life...

- Asking the hard questions...where have I really been setting hope?
- And then refusing to set your HOPE on anything else other than Christ alone....

And the best way to fill up our JOY TANK...

- ***Is by remembering....***

REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

- ***Remember that you were a slave...and He set you free!***
- ***Remember that you were an orphan...and He adopted you!...***
- ***Remember how He answered that prayer...that you never thought could ever happen....***

And then pray David's prayer...

"Restore to me the JOY of your salvation."

And Christian, I can guarantee He will...

- ***How...***
- ***Because He's done it for me....over and over and over...***
 - Set Your Hope
 - Remember You're His
 - ***AND Guard The Joy of Your Salvation!***

2. Be Formed In Christ

Christian...

If you are in Christ this morning...hear me...The labor is not over.

- God did not save you to store you on a shelf...
- He did not adopt you so you could stay eating baby food...
- ***He saved you so that CHRIST WOULD BE FORMED IN YOU...***
 - ***AND You didn't EARN your way IN***

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- **SO** You can't **LOSE** your way **OUT**
- **If you are in Christ..**
- You are **KNOWN BY GOD**...and being **KNOWN by God** is what changes and **FORMS** a person!
- That Christ is **FORMED IN US!**

And remember this is a **GRADUAL WORK**...

- ***But It Can't Be Done In Isolation!***

So ask yourself these questions:

- ***WHO in my life has PERMISSION to care for MY soul?***
 - It can't be nobody!
- ***WHO in my life and I CARING for their Soul?***
 - It can't be nobody!

Now don't misunderstand me...

That person is not going to FORM you...only Christ does that...

But...

- That's the person in your life who keeps telling you the TRUTH...
- That's the person in your life who notices when your joy starts leaking...
- That's the person in your life who says, "***hey...stay away...that's not the Gospel***"...

And FAITH comes by hearing...

- So you gotta have someone speaking God's` truth into your life...

So maybe for YOU THIS WEEK...it looks like...

- Finally joining a small group...
- Finally saying yes to disciplining someone else...or being disciplined by someone else...

John Piper asked this question:

Are the powerful shaping forces in your life coming from CHRIST WITHIN...Or from the WORLD WITHOUT?

Would you just be honest with yourself this morning?

- Who has actually been shaping and forming your life?
- Whose voice have you heard the most?

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- If it's not Christ and God's Word...
- Maybe something else might be **FORMING YOU....**

Child of God:

BE FORMED IN CHRIST!!!

To The Unbeliever....

If you have never been **KNOWN** by the Father.

You will never Earn Him...

But you can be KNOWN by Him today!

The Whole of The Bible Tells Us This:

GOD IS HOLY.

In the beginning, God created all things...and He alone is perfect...

And He made you to KNOW Him...

WE ARE SINFUL.

But every single one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God...we've all sinned...

AND THAT CREATES A PROBLEM.

Because our sin separates us from a Holy God...in this life and in the next...

And no amount of rule-keeping can fix it...

BUT JESUS IS THE ANSWER.

Because God...who KNEW YOU...before you ever knew Him...sent forth His Son...

- Born of a woman...born under the law...
- He lived the perfect life that you could never live...
- He went to a cross and He REALLY died...taking the punishment that your sin deserved...
- He was REALLY buried...
- And three days later He REALLY rose from that grave...defeating sin and death forever...

WHY?

- So that you could be KNOWN by the Father...FOREVER.

SO THIS MORNING...

- You may have walked in here a stranger to God...
- But you can walk out of here KNOWN by the Father...

Galatians 4.8-20 | That Christ Would Be Formed In You

- Not by cleaning yourself up first...
- But by **GRACE ALONE...**through **FAITH ALONE...**in **CHRIST ALONE...**

Would you turn from your sin...

- Confess Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior...
- And believe that He is WHO HE SAYS HE IS?

If that's you...don't leave this room the way you walked in...

- Grab any member of this church...this week...any time...
- And we would LOVE to show you what it means to be known by the Father.
- Christ is enough!
 - Won't you trust Him?

Big Idea

Because You Are KNOWN by God...You Don't Have To EARN Him."

Every Head Bowed and Every Eye Closed:

HEY Believer...

- Guard the JOY of your salvation...and refuse to be robbed of it...
- And may Christ be FORMED in you...

Unbeliever:

- Do not harden your heart...
- Cry out to Him today...
- And be KNOWN by the Father.

Church, I Love You So Much.

Let's Pray.