

**I. Introduction.**

**II. Remember from where you have come. v. 8**

**A. Before you did not know God. v. 8a**

1. It is not that they didn't believe in a deity (or deities). Ro. 1:19-23 Acts 17:16,22
2. They did not believe in the one true God nor did they have any relationship with Him. They were far off. Eph. 2:11-12 4:18
3. You cannot know God through false religion.

**B. You were slaves to your false gods. v. 8b**

1. Those who have false beliefs about God are, in a sense, atheists.
2. In effect, they offer worship to demons. 1 Co. 10:19-20 8:4-5 Dt. 32:17 Isa. 1:13-15
3. What does this say about the civil idea of religion which states that all religions (Mormons, Catholics, Jews, Muslims and Evangelicals) worship the same god?
4. Not all religion is a good thing. Jer. 2:13 Acts 17:22
5. False religion is enslaving. 4:25

**C. Do you remember from where you came?**

**III. Then you came to know God. v. 9a**

**A. You turned away from your former idols (demons). 1:4 1 Th. 1:9-10 1 Co. 12:2 Acts 14:15**

1. Unbelievers think that to become a Christian is to go from freedom to slavery, but the reality is that the gospel sets you free. 4:3
2. From what idols have you turned (repented)? Isa. 55:1-2 Ezek. 14:4,7 Col. 2:23
3. What does it look like to turn from your idols? Acts 19:19

**B. Conversion is described as knowing God.**

1. You did not merely learn some facts about God – one can know a lot about God without actually knowing God. Js. 2:19 Mt. 7:21-23
2. You came to a true understanding of God and entered into a personal relationship with Him. John 17:3 10:14
3. The only way you can know God is through faith in Jesus Christ. 2:16 John 14:6 Acts 4:12 Mt. 7:13-14

**C. You are known by God. John 10:27-28,14 1 Co. 8:3 1 Tim. 2:19 Ps. 139:1 Is. 65:1 Ex. 33:17**

1. He knew and loved you before you knew and loved Him. 1:15 Jer. 1:5 Eph. 1:3ff Rom. 8:29-30 1 Jo. 4:19 Gen. 18:19 John 6:44
2. You are precious to Him. Isa. 62:4-5 61:10

**D. You enjoy great privileges and blessings. 2:16 3:24,7**

1. You are adopted sons of God. 4:5b 3:7
2. The Holy Spirit indwells your heart. 4:6 3:2-5 5:22-24 Ro. 8:13-14 Joel 2:28-32
3. You are heirs of God's promises. 3:29,18 4:7 Ro. 4:13 1 Pe. 1:4 Eph. 1:11,14,18

**E. Those who truly know God are transformed by Him. 1 Co. 6:9ff 1 Pe. 2:2f Eph. 2:18**

#### **IV. Why would you want to go back to slavery? v. 9b-10**

- A. To what exactly are they going back?**
- 1. Before, they were in bondage to their old pagan religious systems.**
  - 2. Now they are being persuaded to use the Mosaic law as a means of justifying themselves.**
  - 3. These religious systems are weak, worthless and enslaving. Col. 2:20 Ro. 10:3**
  - 4. The gospel has moved us past these elementary things. 4:3 Col. 2:20-23**
- B. Paul now adds the legalistic observance of holy days to circumcision as barriers to gospel faith. 2:3 5:2 Num. 28:11ff Lev. 23:1ff Col. 2:17-23**
- 1. What is wrong with observing Passover and other Jewish holy days?**
  - 2. With the coming of Christ, the ceremonial law has been fulfilled. 1 Cor. 5:7 Heb. 10:10,14 8:13**
  - 3. Are there any conditions under which it would be appropriate for someone to observe Passover or other Jewish holy days? Rom. 14:4ff**
  - 4. What would you say to those who teach that Jewish holy days should still be observed by Messianic Jews? Eph. 2:11ff Acts 20:16**
  - 5. Other religions also observe certain days.**
  - 6. What about Christian holy days? Rom. 14:4-6 Col. 2:16**
  - 7. Extrabiblical religious observances actually create a barrier between men and God. John 4:21-24 Col. 2:23**
- C. Why are people so attracted to go back to be enslaved by legalism? Col. 2:20  
Luke 12:11-12 2 Co. 11:13-15**
- D. What place do rules have for Christians? 5:13-14 John 14:15 1 Jo. 2:1-4**

#### **V. Conclusion – Have I labored over you in vain? v. 11 Phil. 2:16 Isa. 49:4**

- A. Paul is astonished and grieved. 4:20 1:6 3:1 5:7,1 2 Pe. 1:9**
- B. Ministry is laborious. 1 Co. 15:10 2 Co. 23-29 Phil. 2:19 Col. 1:29 1 Th. 5:12  
1 Tim. 5:17 4:10 2 Tim. 2:6**
- C. How can people fall away from the gospel? John 10:27-29 Mt. 13:18-23 7:23  
1 Jo. 2:19**
- D. Paul still hopes that they will turn back to Christ. 5:10 3:4 1 Pe. 2:25 Rom. 8:35-39  
Phil. 1:6**

#### **Discussion questions**

- 1. In what sense are those who practice false religion atheists?**
- 2. How is false religion enslaving?**
- 3. What good did the ceremonies and feast days of the Law do?**
- 4. Would it be right to devote a worship service to observing Passover? Why or why not?**
- 5. When is it permissible to observe a day and when is it wrong?**
- 6. How would this passage apply to Christian holy days (Christmas, Easter, etc.)?**
- 7. How did you come to know God?**
- 8. Why are people so attracted to ritual and law?**
- 9. How do extra-biblical rituals keep people from knowing God?**