Sermon: Dangerous Nostalgia. **Scripture:** Galatians 4:8-20.
Series: *Galatians: Gospel Freedom.* **Date:** October 25, 2026

OBSERVATION — As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through who, what, where, when, how, and why questions together.

INTERPRETATION — Answer these questions together:

1. What does this passage teach us about us?

a. Read verses 8–9. Paul speaks of what they were "formerly" as compared to what they are now ("But now"). Where have you seen your walk of faith bring you out of a "former" idolatry or legalism (things you can control)? Where might you see yourself falling back into a "former" bondage to those things that you want to add a sense of control to your life? Bonus: How does nostalgia (especially church nostalgia) become a form of legalism or control in our lives that fails to trust God?

2. What does this passage teach us about God?

a. In verse 9, Paul contrasts knowing God and being known by God. How are these two ideas different? (Remember Tim's baseball player illustration). How might your life be different if you believed that God fully knows you and loves you anyway?

b. In verse 16 we see that the same Galatians who loved and cared for Paul now considered him an enemy. How does a wrong view of God, such as reducing our relationship with him down to following laws or principles, impact our relationships with others (in this case, it made them "cold" towards Paul)? Can you see this dynamic at work in any of your relationships today?

3. What does this passage teach us about grace and salvation? How does it point us to Christ?

a. Read verses 17–18. How does legalism make us insecure in our salvation? How does that insecurity make us susceptible to false teachers?

b. Verse 19. Paul's top priority was that the Galatians were being formed into Christlikeness. Is this your top priority for yourself and others? How might life and ministry change if it were?

APPLICATION

a. Consider v. 12 again. Trusting the freedom of the gospel makes us open to others, without having to put them under law. How can you apply this to your relationships/family/workplace/ministry?

b. Verse 19 again. What does Christ formed in you look like? How can you know when it is happening?

PRAYER

- Thank God not only for being knowable, but for knowing you intimately as well.
- Confess ways you have returned to "former" gods and lovers in order to gain control.
- Thank Jesus for removing the insecurity of legalism and replacing it with the security of the good news.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to form Christ in you (don't worry, he is).