

“A Pastor’s Expectation”
Galatians 4:11-20
(Preached at Trinity, May 12, 2012)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In the Book of Galatians Paul was zealously contending for the faith. The Gospel was at stake. He knew he had been entrusted with it. It was a weighty stewardship.
Galatians 1:11-12 NAU - "For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but *I received it* through a revelation of Jesus Christ."
2. Paul felt the weighty burden of defending the truth. He knew he had been called and set apart as God’s herald. And most important, Paul was motivated by a love for Christ. He had an intimate relationship with Christ.
3. In the first three chapters Paul has been speaking with power defending the truth. But suddenly, beginning with **Verse 11**, Paul changes his tone. It is as if he steps aside momentarily to speak to them on a personal level. Paul knew many of them personally. He had led many of them to Christ. He had lived with them, ministered to them, taught them, loved them. He now speaks to them as a pastor.
4. The Apostles held a high office. It was unique to the first century with no succession. But the Apostles also served as pastors and elders.
1 Peter 5:1 NAU - "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed"
John 21:16 NAS - "Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep.""
5. The Apostles were unique in that they had broad authority over all the churches. Their apostolic authority was unique to their office. A pastor’s authority today doesn’t reach beyond his congregation and it is a limited authority. He leads primarily by example and has a responsibility to love and care for his flock. He must feed them and care for them. He must protect them. He has a duty to be faithful to his Divine calling to his office.
1 Peter 5:1-4 NAU - "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, ² shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."
6. A pastor’s success is not measured by the number saved under his ministry or the size of his church. It is measured by his faithfulness.
1 Corinthians 4:2 KJV - " Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."
Paul’s word to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4 describes this faithfulness.

- A. He must remain faithful to his calling
1 Timothy 4:14 NAS - "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery."
- B. He must be faithful to the Word of God – teaching is at the heart of the pastoral ministry. Not every pastor will have the primary preaching ministry of the church but all must teach.
1 Timothy 4:11 NAU - "Prescribe and teach these things."
1 Timothy 4:11 KJV - "These things command and teach."
1 Timothy 4:13 NAS - "Until I come, give attention to the *public* reading of *Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching."
- C. He must give himself faithfully to his own personal edification
1 Timothy 4:15 NAS - "Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them, so that your progress may be evident to all."
7. Congregations should have expectations regarding their pastors. But Pastors also have certain expectations of their flock. This morning I want us to look at these expectations. Paul had these expectations and I believe every pastor has them.
- I. The Expectation of progress in the faith – **Verse 11**
- A. There is an expectation of perseverance
1. The members of the church are expected to grow and prosper in the faith. They have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them; they have renewed hearts. God is continuing the work He began in them.
Philippians 1:3-6 KJV - "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, ⁵ For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; ⁶ Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:"
 2. Paul had an expectation that the Galatian believers would prosper in the faith. But he had serious concerns
Galatians 1:6 NAS - "I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel"
Galatians 3:1 NAS - "You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you"
Galatians 4:11 NAU - " I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain."
 - a. The word “perhaps” $\pi\omega\varsigma$ is important. It means he hasn't lost all hope for them.
 - b. If they were believers they would grow and persevere
Paul had this expectation
- B. Every true believer makes progress in the faith
1. Paul expressed this expectation over and over
2 Corinthians 11:2 NAU - "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin."
Galatians 4:19 NAU - " My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you"

2. This was expressed clearly by the writer of the Book of Hebrews
Hebrews 5:12 NAU - "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food."
 3. Peter gave the charge for spiritual fruitfulness
2 Peter 3:18 NAU - "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."
1 Peter 2:2-3 NAS - "like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³ if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord."
 4. As a faithful pastor Paul was concerned for their souls, yet he continued to hold out hope.
- C. I have an expectation that those of you who know Christ will continue to progress in the Gospel. Pastor Rob shares this expectation.
It gives me great joy to see the vast majority of our congregation prospering and growing.

II. The Expectation of Their Love for Him – **Verses 12-16**

- A. When Paul arrived in Galatia he faced severe opposition. His life was constantly in danger. Remember, the southern Galatian cities included Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe and Paul suffered in them all.
 1. In Antioch they were expelled from the city.
Acts 13:50 NAS - "But the Jews aroused the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district."
 2. In Lystra Paul was actually stoned so severely they thought he was dead.
Acts 14:19 NAS - "But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead."
 3. The next day after the stoning Paul and Barnabas traveled on to Derbe. After preaching the Gospel at Derbe we find they did an unusual thing. They returned to the very cities where they had been persecuted so sorely.
Acts 14:20-22 NAS - "the next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹ And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."
 4. Paul had this great love for the lost and he felt compelled with the Gospel
1 Corinthians 9:16-17 NAU - "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. ¹⁷ For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me."

5. Paul treated them with patience and love
Even in the harshness of this letter there is an overtone of love
Galatians 4:11-12 NAU - "I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. ¹² I beg of you, brethren, become as I *am*, for I also *have become* as you *are*. You have done me no wrong;"
 6. You can sense Paul's displeasure at having to speak so firmly to them
Galatians 4:19-20 NAU - "My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you-- ²⁰ but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you."
- B. Paul had an expectation that this love be returned
1. Paul witnessed the transforming work of God's grace upon many of the Galatian people. They began to respond to him with love.
 2. Apparently Paul arrived with some sort of affliction. Some say it might have been some sort of eye disease or eye infection
Galatians 4:13 NAU - "you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time"
 3. These Christians had treated him with love and kindness
Galatians 4:14 NAU - "and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus *Himself*."
Galatians 4:15 NAU - "For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me."
 4. Apparently now this love had faded and many had turned against him. Paul's expectation was that they restore the love they had demonstrated to him
Galatians 4:15 NAU - "Where then is that sense of blessing you had?"
Galatians 4:16 NAU - "So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?"
- C. The shepherds of Christ's church have an expectation of the care of those they care for.
Hebrews 13:7 NAU - "Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith."
1 Timothy 5:17 NAS - "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching."
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 NAU - "But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, ¹³ and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another."

III. The Expectation of Loyalty – Verses 17-20

- A. Some of the Galatian Christians were turning away from the teaching of Paul
1. False teachers had entered and they were rejecting Paul's instruction in favor of these other teachers
Galatians 4:17-18 NAU - "They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them. ¹⁸ But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you."
 2. These false teachers were seeking to isolate the Galatians from the influence of Paul, but not with good motivation.
 3. Paul, on the other hand, zealously sought them, but with a commendable motive.
 4. Sadly, the love and loyalty they had previously given to Paul, they were now giving to the false teachers.
- B. Our generation has lost all sense of loyalty
1. Ball players determine their team by money – change continually
 Businesses can no longer trust in faithful customers
 People are no longer loyal to their church – it is more of a selfish what's in it for me and mine attitude.
 2. Pastors often find themselves out of a job often because of pettiness and indifference. On the flip side, pastors too often leave their churches for no better reason than a better offer.
- C. The elders of the church should have an expectation of loyalty from the congregation
1. They want the congregation to see themselves under *their* care.
 "Obey *them* that have the rule over you."
 2. Too often today church members are constantly visiting from one church to the next depending upon who is speaking or what program is being offered.
 3. The expectation of loyalty is not for personal reasons. It is so our influence might lead them to Christ. If the pastors of a local church must give account for the souls of those entrusted to them, it is only fitting that they will be jealous for them.
2 Corinthians 11:2 NAU - "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin."
 (same verb as in **Verses 17-18**)
 4. A pastor's love for his congregation should mirror a parent's love for their children. A parent wants to see his children prosper and do well.

Galatians 4:19-20 - "My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you-- ²⁰ but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you."
 William Hendriksen – "The apostle is yearning for his children. He is afflicted. In his heartache also this element is included, "that the Galatians are making the maternal heart of Paul suffer all the birth-pains a second time, something which no offspring ever does in nature . . .Unnaturally they are causing Paul to suffer all these pains over again, even in a more severe way."

Conclusion:

1. The relationship between pastors and church members is a reciprocal relationship. It demands love and faithfulness from both sides.
2. This was seen so vividly between Paul and the elders at Ephesus.
Acts 20:17-20 NAU - "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. ¹⁸ And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,"
Acts 20:26-27 NAU - "I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God."
Acts 20:31 NAU - "night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears."
Acts 20:36-38 NAU - "When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ And they *began* to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him, ³⁸ grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they were accompanying him to the ship."
3. We should always strive for love and harmony in the congregation. It is our duty. When a pastor and congregation become estranged the pastor should seek to win them back, but not at the expense of truth.
 Timothy George – "When pastors become estranged from their people for whatever reason, it is always appropriate for them to try to win back the former affection and goodwill of their flock, just as Paul was doing here with the Galatians. But we must remember that the pastor is not called to be popular but to be faithful. He has been commissioned by the Lord of heaven to preach the Word of God in season and out of season; he must not fail in this divine assignment whether he be applauded warmly or shunned as a leper. For the man of God there is an arena of approval infinitely superior to the opinion of his congregation, or the applause of his peers."
4. May we be a congregation where both the pastors and the members of the congregation are faithful.
 Philip Ryken - "Ministers should be evaluated primarily by their faithfulness to the Word of God. If they are faithful, then to welcome their message is to welcome Christ Himself. Happy is that Christian society when the minister loves his people, and the people love their minister for truth's sake."