

Galatians 4:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

Analysis

Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Paul laments their lost joy. "Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?" (pou oun ho makarismos hymōn)—what happened to your happiness, your sense of privilege and blessing? Makarismos (μακαρισμός) means blessed state, joy. They'd counted themselves blessed when they first believed. That joy had evaporated under the Judaizers' influence. Legalism always steals joy, replacing it with anxiety and burden.

"I bear you record" (martyrō gar hymin)—I testify concerning you. "That, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me" (hoti ei dynaton tous ophthalmous hymōn exoryxantes edōkate moi). This vivid hyperbole illustrates their extraordinary love and sacrifice for Paul initially. Some suggest Paul's "infirmity of the flesh" (verse 13) was eye disease, making this literal. More likely it's proverbial: they'd have given their most precious possession to help him. Their former extravagant love contrasted sharply with their current defection. Paul's rhetorical question stings: you've lost your joy and your love. Was it worth it?

Historical Context

Joy, blessing, and love are fruits of the Spirit (5:22). The Galatians' initial conversion produced these abundantly—evidence of genuine salvation. The Judaizers' law-focused teaching drained their joy, replacing freedom's delight with law's drudgery. This pattern repeats throughout church history: legalistic movements begin with promise of deeper spirituality but produce joyless, anxious religion. Paul's question implies the answer: the blessing is gone because they've abandoned the gospel that produces blessing.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Have you lost the joy and sense of blessedness you had when you first believed, and if so, what stole it?
2. How does legalistic religion rob believers of joy, and how is joy restored through returning to the gospel of grace?
3. What would you be willing to sacrifice for the sake of those who first brought you the gospel, and what does that reveal about your current spiritual state?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| τίς | οὖν | ἡν | ό | μακαρισμὸς | ὑμῶν | μαρτυρῶ | γὰρ |
| Where | then | is | | the blessedness | ye | I bear | spake of for |
| G5101 | G3767 | G2258 | G3588 | G3108 | G5216 | G3140 | G1063 |
| ὑμῖν | ὅτι | εἰ | δυνατὸν | τοὺς | όφθαλμοὺς | ὑμῶν | |
| you | that | if | it had been possible | | own eyes | ye | |
| G5213 | G3754 | G1487 | G1415 | G3588 | G3788 | G5216 | |
| ἐξορύξαντες | | | ἄν | ἐδώκατέ | μοι | | |
| ye would have plucked out | and have given them | | | G1325 | to me | | |
| G1846 | | | G302 | | G3427 | | |

Additional Cross-References

Romans 5:2 (Parallel theme): By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Colossians 4:13 (Parallel theme): For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

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