

Galatians 6

Introduction

1. As is common in Paul's epistles, as he neared the end, he would make miscellaneous exhortations.
2. Though he had dealt with love from several standpoints, he will appeal to it again (5:13-15,20-21,26).
3. If church members practiced New Testament instructions, we could have a little heaven on earth.
4. Is your attitude the same as that of Ezra, Cornelius, Lydia, and Berea about hearing the word of God?

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

- A. Here is one of the most vulnerable situations we face, when charity must come into play.
 1. It is easy to see a man overtaken in a fault and be self-righteous, critical, and/or harsh.
 2. True affection and concern for a person is proven by actions when they are wrong.
- B. We are responsible as church members for the conversion and restoration of each other.
 1. The matter being taught here is saving brothers from faults, not reprobates from hell!
 2. No matter the excuse Cain gave to the LORD, we are our brother's keeper (Gen 4:9).
 3. It is our duty to keep one another living righteously (I Thes 5:14; Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).
 4. A growth in grace brings a compassion for souls and their righteousness (II Cor 12:15).
- C. Being overtaken in a fault is private sin and leaving the truth, just as in James 5:19-20.
 1. Why didn't Paul show such compassion to the fornicator, because he was a public sinner!
 2. The Spirit's choice of words indicates a man uncharacteristically in sin, not habitually.
 3. There are different strokes for different folks and for different sinners (Jude 1:22-23).
- D. The spiritual members are those with godly knowledge, perception, experience, and maturity.
 1. Spiritual members are not worldly-minded, but rather heavenly minded, holy, and sober.
 2. Spiritual members have a holy hatred for sin and worldliness and crave holiness for all.
 3. There are fewer and fewer such members as the perilous times roll on (II Tim 3:1-5).
- E. Restoration is done meekly, for if the truth is told, our differences are only by grace.
 1. Restoration is converting a sinner from the error of his way back to truth (James 5:19-20).
 2. True Christian charity and love will recognize it is God's grace that makes the difference.
 3. Sin in a brother's life is no time to haughtily and self-righteously condemn him as a loser.
- F. We must consider ourselves weak and vulnerable to any sin, lest we also be tempted to sin.
 1. Do not be guilty of harshly criticizing and judging others for their motes (Matt 7:1-5).
 2. Do not be guilty of harshly criticizing and judging others for other sins (James 2:8-11).
 3. If a man thinks himself to be something spiritually, he is a fool (6:3; I Cor 10:12).

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

- A. Love is not all fuzzy, happy, and warm feelings; it is work to help another finish his race.
 1. It is not participating in one another's pleasures as much as helping take away pain.
 2. Rather than riding along on a balloon flight, it is carrying them to the finish line.
- B. It is very easy for lazy, proud, or selfish church members to ignore the burdens of others.
 1. It is a natural instinct for them to say, "I don't want to get involved in others' business."
 2. It is a natural instinct for them to say, "He got himself into it; he can get himself out."
 3. It is a natural instinct for them to say, "I have enough of my own problems to deal with."
- C. We are bound as church members to bear others' burdens on a brother-to-brother basis.
 1. When you join this church, you commit to love other members and bear their burdens.
 2. Notice the *one another* description so common to Paul, which is a one-on-one duty.

3. A great ... or the great ... purpose of the church is our mutual support (Heb 10:23-25).
4. In the military, they say, "I got your back," meaning they will protect one another.
- D. The law of Jesus Christ is simple – we love and serve one another (5:13-14; John 13:34).
 1. The law of Jesus Christ does not include any of the ceremonial trappings of Moses.
 2. The Lord Jesus Christ emphasized this important grace of the Spirit from the beginning.
- E. How do you bear burdens? By helping support any weight that presses another brother down.
 1. We bear burdens in converting wayward brothers back to the truth (6:1; James 5:19-20).
 2. We bear burdens for the weak in spirit, body, or liberty (I Thess 5:14; Rom 14:13-21).
 3. We bear burdens by praying one for another (James 5:16; Ephesians 6:18).
 4. We bear burdens by suffering with those who suffer (Rom 12:15; I Cor 12:26; Heb 13:3).
 5. We bear burdens by doing all we can to support one another (Rom 15:1-7).
 6. We bear burdens by comforting and encouraging the cast down (I Thess 4:18).

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

- A. If a man is too proud to serve others, he must think he is superior, which is entirely a case of self-delusion, for he is nothing but a loser who has lied to himself .. and believed his own lie!
- B. It is profanely sinful for men to think so highly of themselves as being above helping others.
- C. All men are nothing, so any lofty thought by any man is only self-deceit (Ps 62:9; I Cor 4:7).
- D. Without the grace of God, we are nothing, and true saints always believe and remember this.
- E. Those who think they are spiritually successful and have attained some measure of maturity or perfection are deceived – they are only self-righteous, one of the most noxious sins of all.
- F. Deceiving yourself is lying to yourself about your own abilities, value, status, or worth.
- G. The law of Christ – love – is to think more about others (Phil 2:3-4; James 2:8; Luke 6:31).
- H. Rather than vainly think yourself something, condescend to men of low estate (Rom 12:16).

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

- A. Let every man show the character of his soul by judging and directing it by Scripture, rather than by gloating over the faults of others, which is the lowest standard possible for character.
- B. A great mistake men make is to judge and measure themselves by artificial and worthless standards that they create to justify themselves. But they are fools who believe their own lies!
- C. There are only two absolute, accurate, valuable, and final standards to prove yourself good.
 1. The written word of God (Deut 29:29; Psalm 119:9; Romans 7:9-13; James 1:21-25).
 2. The living Word of God (I Cor 11:1; Eph 4:13; Phil 2:5; I Peter 2:21-25; I John 2:6).
 3. If you need practical help, copy Joseph, Esther, David, Mary, Paul, Phoebe (Phil 3:17).
- D. Rather than thinking you are something, prove yourself by your own use of God's grace.
- E. Self-examination is far superior to other-examination (Psalm 26:1-6; 139:23-24; Matt 7:1-5).
- F. Rejoicing here is not in ourselves, but in God's grace through us, like Paul (I Cor 15:10).
- G. Our rejoicing is not by foolish comparisons with other sinners, but to God (II Cor 10:12).
- H. We examine ourselves and reject flattery, public opinion, compromise, and others' failures.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

- A. Every man, woman, and child will be judged now and later by their own works.
 - 1. God does not use the opinions or standards of men either now or later at all.
 - 2. How you compare to others, especially in your own sight, is totally irrelevant.
 - 3. We shall all give an account of the things done in our bodies (II Cor 5:10-11).
- B. You cannot blame others that you are not the greatest saint in the world today.
 - 1. If you can hear and understand this sermon, then you cannot blame your parents at all.
 - 2. You cannot blame your spouse, for they cannot hold you back from walking with God.
 - 3. You cannot blame God for not giving you more, for He only judges by what you have.
- C. The pastor is not responsible or accountable for your actions, but for warning you.
 - 1. Ministers are to warn their hearers, but then their work is done (Ezek 3:17-21).
 - 2. When men turn from God's reproofs, they beg for God's judgment (Pr 1:28-31).
 - 2. With a pastor that reproves often, irremediable judgment is coming (Pr 29:1).
 - 3. I have taught you much, but I cannot do beyond teaching and warning you.
 - 4. Neither is the church responsible for your actions – you are responsible.
- C. Because you may perceive yourself better than others means nothing. God is Judge.
 - 1. If God has given you more grace than others, you are expected to use it.
 - 2. Lofty thoughts about yourself are a horrible lie. Do not lie to yourself (6:7).
 - 3. Measuring yourself by others is a false way of measurement (II Cor 10:12).
 - 4. In the light of other men's faults, it is easy but wrong to deceive yourself.
 - 5. The number of stripes is determined by the amount of knowledge, and anyone in this church has been taught much and warned often (Luke 12:48).
 - 6. God will judge every man, even the one not given very much (Matt 25:14-30).
- D. You will receive in direct proportion to what you are investing by God's rule (6:7).
 - 1. Backsliders will be filled with their own ways, the faithful satisfied (Pr 14:14).
 - 2. Be sure your sin will find you out – our holy God does not overlook (Nu 32:23).
 - 3. The reward of both the righteous and wicked shall be given to them (Is 3:9-11).
 - 4. If you return to your vomit after instruction, your end will be bad (II Pet 2:22).
 - 5. God pours out wrath and their own way on the heads of enemies (Ezek 22:31).
 - 6. God will give every man according to his doings, so repent and live (Jer 17:10).
 - 7. God's judgment is according to the fruit of one's doing, so beware (Prov 1:31).
 - 8. David was better than Saul and rewarded (I Sam 13:14; 15:28; 16:12; Ac 13:22).
- E. You must measure yourself honestly by what you have heard and understood.
 - 1. Paul was confident in his conscience of his godly conduct (II Cor 1:12).
 - 2. Don't measure yourself foolishly by your family. Turn and live (Ezek 18:1-32).
 - 3. Do not measure yourself by the house of the Lord – or a church (Jer 17:1-15).
 - 4. For God deals with individuals in His churches (Revelation 2:24; 3:4,20).
 - 5. God killed Ananias and Saphirra in the midst of the church (Acts 5:1-11).
 - 6. Remember, only Joshua and Caleb made it to Canaan (Hebrews 3:16).
 - 7. Pure religion is measured man-by-man, woman-by-woman (James 1:22-27).

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

- A. This does not say church members are to talk to their pastors when they teach good sermons!
- B. Saints are to support their minister by financial remuneration for receiving spiritual things.
- C. Communication here is not conversation as we use it, but rather the giving of carnal things.

- D. “Communicate” means to give, transfer, or impart something to another person.
- E. In this context it is giving financial support (Phil 4:14-16; I Timothy 6:18; Hebrews 13:16).
- F. The “all good things” are those carnal blessings that support and encourage your teacher, for supplying their portion to give themselves wholly to their work is encouraging (II Chr 31:4).
- G. You never receive any other service from others without paying, why gospel preaching?
- H. It is right to trade carnal things for spiritual things from a teacher (I Cor 9:11; Rom 15:27).

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

- A. Whether their stinginess was due to false teachers or a selfish spirit, we are not clearly told.
- B. Due to the context of 6:6, we shall keep it here as well – Paul warned about financial giving.
 - 1. Is it fair to say eternal life is related to financial giving (6:7)? Absolutely (I Tim 6:17-19)!
 - 2. But we shall not lose a broader application of this general axiom of religion either.
- C. Do not go further in lying to yourself that you can get away with a stingy approach to giving.
 - 1. Men comfort themselves by various arguments to keep their money in their own pockets.
 - 2. I have heard, “I cannot afford to give. I will give when I get out of debt. I have needs.”
 - 3. This fool will never get out of debt or have things beyond bare necessities by his greed.
 - 4. Do not think for a minute that you can get away by following your own heart or mind.
 - 5. Men think they can get ahead cheating the Lord, but they are so wrong (Prov 11:24-26)!
- D. God is not mocked – you cannot break His laws, defraud His ministers, and get away with it.
 - 1. The previous verse had a command, which God required from the beginning (Deu 12:19).
 - 2. You cannot live any way you wish and not suffer the consequences – He will see to that!
 - 3. There is no respecter of persons with God – you will be given exactly what you deserve.
- E. Here is a rule of God’s government of men – you will surely receive exactly what you sow.
 - 1. Men often say, “What goes around comes around,” which is a weak version of this rule.
 - 2. If a man sows wheat in his field, he is going to reap wheat at harvest, not barley or corn.
 - 3. The blessed God is a fair paymaster, and He will reward men exactly as they serve Him.
- F. Do not think so highly of yourself that God will allow you to escape His just judgment.
- G. This is an area of easy deception, so it is our sober duty to avoid it carefully by faith.
- H. You cannot play with God and His gospel and expect to get away with it, even with money!
- I. The Bible is full of promises of God’s favor on generous givers (Pr 3:9-10; 22:9; Mal 3:8-12; Luke 6:38; II Cor 9:6; etc.).

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

- A. Given the context beginning with 6:6, we make the first application of this verse financially.
 - 1. If you covet money for fleshly goals rather than spiritual, you will rot, die, and go to hell.
 - 2. If you generously give money, you are going to heaven (Matt 25:31-46; I Tim 6:17-19).
- B. You will surely receive in kind whatever you sow – either to the flesh or to the Spirit.
- C. If you sow – invest or plant – to the flesh, you will reap – or harvest – corruption and death.
- D. If you invest in the Spirit and His things, you will receive everlasting life as its reward.
- E. If you seek to save your life, you will lose it; if you will lose your life, you will save it.
- F. Your life here and hereafter will reflect what you have sown in your life yesterday and today.
- G. If you seek the things of the world, you will lose all here, and you will lose eternal life then.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

- A. There is no reason to be discouraged and slack in this effort, for rewards are surely coming.
- B. There is truly a reward for well doing, and faith remembers this at all times (Hebrews 11:6).
- C. The Christian life is a long distance race requiring you to continue though tired (Heb 12:1).
- D. The true measure of grace is patient continuance in well doing, even though you get tired.
- E. Paul had more burdens than anyone else, but he was the most peaceful of men, trusting God.
- F. Jesus taught, "In your patience possess ye your souls," emphasizing patience (Luke 21:19).
- G. A great event is coming soon, at which time your labor in the Lord will be amply rewarded.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

- A. Let us accordingly use our available opportunities to live a life of Christian love and service, since it is the sowing of such efforts to the Spirit that shall bring the harvest of eternal life.
- B. Our direct godliness should be visible to all men, in and out of our church (I Thess 5:15).
- C. But we should especially serve those in the kingdom of Christ, here and in other churches.
- D. Recall the order of godly charity: family, church, poor saints elsewhere, and then providence.
 - 1. You are to provide for those in your family, but this does not reduce your debt to saints.
 - 2. After those in your family, your first line of charitable thinking and giving is our church.
 - 3. After our own church, we look for opportunities for others of faith in other churches.
 - 4. Only after family and saints do we consider worldlings, and then only those God sends.
 - 5. God only expects us to help the pagans He clearly puts in our path (Luke 10:25-37).
 - 6. The sermon outline, "[What About Tsunami Relief?](#)" provides all the scriptural detail.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

- A. As Paul began his conclusion of this epistle, he told the Galatians he had written it himself.
 - 1. Others usually wrote the epistles for him, as we learn from the one to Rome (Rom 16:22).
 - 2. It was his practice to personally add a salutation to what others had penned (I Cor 16:21).
 - 3. He added to every epistle a salutation of God's grace to each reader (II Thess 3:17-18).
 - 4. And Paul did the same to this epistle, giving a salutary benediction of God's grace (6:18).
- B. This personalized epistle indicated Paul's sincere affection and concern to the readers' minds, for this was a lengthy epistle in contrast to his very short salutation to other churches.
- C. It would also be in stark contrast to the false teachers next mentioned, who endured nothing.
- D. Some use this verse and 4:15 to surmise Paul had poor eyesight, but the data is insufficient.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

- A. The teachers here that Paul condemned again are the Judaizing false teachers requiring circumcision, who had corrupted the Galatians (1:6-7; 2:4-5; 3:1; 4:17; 5:10-12; 6:13-16).
 - 1. Paul opposed these men from the beginning to the end of the epistle by many arguments.
 - 2. The constraint they put upon the Galatians was to be circumcised in order for eternal life.
 - 3. This great zeal for the Law of Moses and the rite of circumcision appeared holy indeed.
- B. The *fair shew in the flesh* describes men exalting the fleshly requirements of Moses' Law.
 - 1. The Judaizers exalted works of the flesh – Moses' legal works on the body (6:13; 3:1-3).
 - 2. These false teachers make a great *shew* over formality and ritual, not truth (Col 2:18-23).

3. Pharisees show a great zeal for religion in their manmade commandments (Matt 15:1-9).
 4. God's faithful ministries build gold, silver, and precious stones on Christ (I Cor 3:10-17).
 5. God's faithful ministers are the offscouring of the world and do not care (I Cor 4:13).
 6. Imposters choose ministry from a college handbook and treat it like any other profession.
- C. Paul indicts their motives by declaring their obsession for circumcision was self-protection.
1. The preaching of Jesus Christ crucified is foolishness and brings persecution (I Cor 1:18).
 2. Paul had introduced this thought earlier, for circumcision removed persecution (5:11).
 3. The Jews tolerated Gentile Christians who were circumcised to be like Jews (Acts 16:3).
 4. The Romans ordinarily tolerated Christians who were circumcised like Jews (Acts 18:2).
 5. Paul suffered much for Jesus and truth and did not mind it (Acts 9:16; II Cor 11:23-33).

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

- A. The false teachers did not keep the whole law, though circumcision demanded it (3:10; 5:3)!
1. If circumcision was necessary for eternal life, then so was the rest of the Law of Moses.
 2. These false teachers picked and chose from Moses Law for the rite adored by the Jews.
 3. If they had required the law without exception, Christians would not have heard them.
 4. It was a great ambition for Jews to convert a Gentile and circumcise him (Matt 23:15).
 5. These pretenders knew the Law was vain, but they knew circumcision pleased the Jews.
- B. They promoted circumcision among the Gentiles for the great reputation it gave them.
1. They could gloat and glory in getting Gentiles to follow them in this cosmetic surgery.
 2. They were building their own cult and denomination that mixed Christ and circumcision.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

- A. If this is not one of your favorite verses, it should be. If it is, learn to love its every word.
- B. Paul defied Judaizers and glorying in circumcision by putting his whole religion in Christ.
- C. Paul used the strongest negative to deny association or compromise with the Judaizers' glory.
1. He has just explained and indicted the false teachers for false motives with circumcision.
 2. They gloried in getting Gentiles to follow them in the flesh by having cosmetic surgery.
- D. Paul's religion did not stoop to such ridiculous things, for his glory was in the cross of Christ.
1. He dumbed down his message and chose one great theme – Christ crucified (I Cor 2:1-5).
 2. *Save* indicates he had nothing else to glory in at all – his glorying was entirely in Christ.
 3. Paul had more to glory about as a Jew than anyone (Phil 3:4-7; II Cor 11:18,30; 12:1)!
 4. But his great glory was in the death of Jesus Christ, which drove him (II Cor 5:13-16).
 5. He counted all things of this world, including O.T. religion, to be only dung (Phil 3:8-11).
 6. They mocked him and tried to kill him repeatedly for Christ (Acts 17:32; 20:23; 26:24).
 7. Men will glory in anything and everything but Jesus Christ, for He is foolishness to them.
- E. Do you ... glory in the religion of Christ? Is this the source and object of your fullest joy?
1. As you reflect on this question, compare your glorying to God's definition (Jer 9:23-24).
 2. How can you delight in the Lord, if the things of Christ's religion bore you (Psalm 37:4)?
 3. Do you have any comprehension of how great the gospel and religion of Jesus Christ are?
 4. You know the only true and living God, and He came to earth 2000 years ago for you!
 5. You know where Jesus Christ is right now with the most glorious names (I Tim 6:16)!
 6. You know the cause of death, source of death, cure for death, and place of no more death!
 7. You know there is an inheritance reserved for you in heaven that includes God Himself!

- F. Do you ... glory in the cross of Jesus Christ? Is His death and resurrection a great joy to you?
 - 1. Do you look forward to the Lord's Supper for remembering His death until He comes?
 - 2. Does His death for you constrain you to think of living for Him in payment (II Cor 5:14)?
 - 3. Are you delighted in the free gift of eternal life obtained by His death alone (Rom 5:19)?
 - 4. Do you glory in such a gospel of free grace compared to the systems of works of men?
 - 5. Do you delight remembering His physical, nonphysical, devilish, and spiritual torment?
 - 6. The cross is not something you wear around your neck or have on the wall of your house.
 - 7. The use of *cross* here is a metonym, the place of death being substituted for His death.
- G. Do you ... consider the world crucified to you? All that the world can offer is only vanity?
 - 1. Do you despise and hate all that is in the world – lusts and pride (I Jn 2:15-17; Jas 4:4)?
 - 2. Do you understand, accept, and delight in serving only one Master (Matt 6:24; Jas 4:8)?
 - 3. Could you die for Jesus Christ? But better yet, can you live for Him against the world?
 - 4. If you were to lose everything but still had Jesus Christ and His gospel, is it enough?
- H. Do you ... prove that you are crucified to the world? They despise and hate you for Christ?
 - 1. All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (II Tim 3:12). Are you godly?
 - 2. Do they recognize you are different by character, conduct, clothing, speech, and actions?
 - 3. How many enemies do you have for the sake of Christ alone without any faults yourself?
- I. A glorious Saviour died, under glorious circumstances, out of glorious love, after a glorious life of righteousness, after a glorious testimony before Pilate, with glorious mercy to sinners, for the glorious purpose of redeeming His elect, and rose gloriously from the dead to the right hand of God Almighty, where He reigns gloriously, reserving a glorious inheritance for you, and He is coming soon in glory to take you to heaven. What keeps you from glorying?
- J. What will you glory in? Your looks, which are fading every day? Your accomplishments, which are nothing at all? Your wealth, which you cannot take with you? Your thoughts, which are deceitful delusions? Your friends, which cannot help you? Your strength, which is nothing and quickly disappearing? Your wisdom, which is folly in His sight and cannot save you? Your religious devotion, concerning which He will consign many to hell? Your knowledge, which is void of truth. Your future, when you cannot even boast of tomorrow?

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

- A. The religion of Jesus Christ is not affected at all by circumcision or the lack of circumcision.
 - 1. The poor Gentiles of Galatia were attacked by the Judaizers demanding circumcision.
 - 2. New Testament Christianity could not care less about circumcision, but rather Christ.
 - 3. The only circumcision we can accept is Christ's cutting off of all our sins (Col 2:11), or the circumcision done upon our hearts by the Spirit of God (Rom 2:28-29).
 - 4. Abraham, father of the Jews, was justified by faith before circumcision (Rom 4:6-12)!
 - 5. The religions of men put heretical emphasis on any manmade aspect that they can exalt.
 - 6. The exclusivity they create by their manmade criteria is entirely contrary to Christianity.
 - 7. Paul rejected distinction by nationality, race, economics, surgery, or sex (3:28; Col 3:11)
 - 8. John 1:13 declares that man is not part of the equation of regeneration, but God only.
 - 9. The issue is whether you are chosen in Christ Jesus and accepted in Him (Eph 1:3-6).
 - 10. How can you know whether this is true or not about you? By good works (II Pet 1:5-10).
- B. The important issue in the religion of Jesus Christ is whether you have been altered by grace.
 - 1. Cutting the old creature, the flesh, by circumcision is vanity compared to a new creature.
 - 2. Paul ridiculed the Jews as the concision for missing the truth of Christianity (Phil 3:1-3).

3. Jesus taught it plainly, Except a man be born again, he cannot enter heaven (John 3:3).
4. The *new creature* is not only regeneration (vital salvation) but also conversion (practical).
5. As Paul already wrote, we should both live and walk in the Spirit, not just live (5:25).
6. It is heresy to turn the New Testament into legal and vital salvation and ignore practical.
7. It is heresy to turn the N.T. into justification and regeneration and ignore conversion.
8. We must deny any thinking that sounds like fatalism, which is contrary to true religion.
9. The important evidence of eternal life is living a holy life by the Spirit (5:19-25; 6:7-10).
10. The new creature in Christ Jesus with all things new is active obedience (II Cor 5:9-17).
11. But of course, this new life that saints live is by Holy Spirit power creating it in them.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

- A. What rule is under consideration we should walk by? The rule of a new creature by grace.
 1. There is no reason to apply this clause to anything but what immediately went before.
 2. The rule has just been given, circumcision is irrelevant, but a new life in Christ is crucial.
 3. The argument throughout is Christ vs. circumcision, with Christ being proven by works.
 4. Those who are new creatures by living in newness of life receive God's great blessings.
- B. The great benefits of peace and mercy are by apostolic blessing on new creatures in Christ.
 1. The peace of God passing understanding is a great gift and reward to men (Phil 4:7).
 2. The mercy of God in His providential relationship with us is a great gift and reward.
 3. These both are obtained by God's approval and favor upon those living righteous lives.
- C. A further distinction is made that such new creatures are the true Israelites in God's sight.
 1. The Jews took confidence in being Israelites after the flesh, but this proved nothing at all.
 2. John called them a generation of vipers, and Jesus called them children of the devil.
 3. This further description of Gentile saints is to comfort them in light of Jewish arrogance.
 4. Remember, he has already in this epistle identified peculiar Israelites (3:26-29; 4:26-31).
 5. Paul argued that not all those of fleshly Israel were spiritual children of God (Rom 9:6).
 6. Jesus Christ identified Nathanael as an Israelite indeed, with no inner guile (John 1:47).
 7. The true Jews in the sight of God are those with a spiritual work inside (Rom 2:28-29).

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

- A. There could be no doubt where Paul stood on this subject of justification by law or by grace.
- B. Paul was tired of being opposed by effeminate men, who compromised the doctrine of Christ.
 1. He declared, This controversy is over; the false teachers are wrong; get with the program!
 2. These men required circumcision only to glory in Gentile flesh and avoid persecution.
 3. These men were afraid of Jews and Romans and would compromise where they could.
 4. They had attacked his doctrine, his office, his authority, and his integrity in the matter, but he had sufficiently defended himself and proved his doctrine to last the rest of his life.
 5. Further attacks, insinuations, or questions would be considered foolish and unlearned.
- C. In contrast to those seeking to avoid persecution, Paul had plenty of physical evidence of it.
 1. The integrity of Paul and his doctrine was confirmed and proven by sufferings for Christ.
 2. If any man ever had the Catholic heresy of stigmata in his body, it would have been Paul.
 3. But the words here need indicate no more than the wounds and scars from persecution.
 4. If you read Paul's persecution resume, he would have plenty of marks (II Cor 11:23-33).
 5. Paul's suffering were in complete contrast to the compromising ladies he opposed (5:11).

- D. Rather than cutting himself by circumcision to be religious, he was cut by Christ's enemies!
- E. His relationship and commitment to Jesus Christ was more than words, it was by marks.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

- A. What kind graciousness for Paul to close out by calling these unstable children his brethren!
- B. Here is Paul's constant closing salutation – a blessing of grace on readers (II Thess 3:17-18).
- C. God's grace is in, through, by, and for Jesus Christ upon those who are in Jesus Christ.
- D. It is only by the grace of God that we are kept through faith unto salvation to be revealed.
- E. Without God's grace in Jesus Christ, your spirit would be overthrown and overwhelmed.

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "[The Love of Christ Constrains Us](#)," exposit II Cor 5:12-17 in light of Gal 6:14-15 above.