

## Sermon Discussion

### 3 July 2022

Read Galatians 6:11-18

#### Dig Deeper

Evidently Paul wrote the rest of this letter himself. He probably dictated the former verses to a scribe (*see 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17*). The **large letters** were probably capitals used for the sake of emphasis and to distinguish Paul's handwriting from his secretary's.

In v. 12-13, Paul was concerned about the Spirit's inward work in his converts, so that Christ should be **formed** in them (*see 4:19*). The Judaizers' concern was for an external mark, a mark produced in the **flesh** of those whom they could win over to their side.

**The cross of Christ** (v. 12) stands here for the whole doctrine of justification by faith alone that Paul had been defending in this letter.

Paul wished for God's **peace and mercy** (v. 16) for all who walked by **the rule**, namely, faith apart from works. It is interesting that he has been opposing people who subjected believers to strict rules. But rule (*meaning straight rod*) points us to the authentic way...the one right path on which to walk...God's Word.

Paul's final word of benediction is noteworthy. He asked for an end to such **trouble**, and he offered as a final proof to his critics the **marks** of Jesus on his body. These "marks" (*literally-stigmata*) meant signs of ownership that were branded on slaves and cattle. Paul referred to the scars on his body, which were caused by persecution for Christ's sake because they demonstrated he was a slave of Christ and not just a people-pleaser. He may have received some of these scars when the people of Lystra stoned him during his preaching tour of Galatia (*see Acts 14:19-20; 2 Cor. 11:25*).

1. How does Paul speak of the hypocrisy of the false teachers in these verses? How does legalism lead to hypocrisy?
2. In what possessions, gifts, and opportunities are you tempted to boast? How does the message of the cross change your perspective?
3. What does it mean to boast in the cross? How can you boast in the cross practically every day?
4. Do you think many people perceive Christianity as "being nice" instead of "becoming a new creation"? How does the latter change everything?
5. What role should the cross play in a gospel presentation? Be specific.

## **Application & Prayer**

We have been set free to live free through Jesus' death and resurrection. We don't have to find our identity in obeying the law, but as new creations in Christ we live to please the Spirit. We do that when we follow God's leading in our lives and take the opportunities He gives us to do good. And when we "sow" into our lives in this way, we reap eternal life and blessings. It is at the cross that we can join with Paul to say, in this alone I will boast.

Memorise this verse...

*But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.* Galatians 6:14

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.