

Through the Cross

6.11-18

vs. 11, Use of a secretary / scribe.

Large letters -> making a point, showing his emotion (agitation)

vs. 12-13, Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh.

Judaizers - selfish and cowards.

Flesh -> self centered cravings and impulses that are hostile to the leading of the Spirit. Shallow - all about appearance.

“The rival teachers are promoting circumcision, not because they are wholeheartedly devoted to the whole of the Torah, but because their success among gentile Christians will enhance their prestige in the eyes of (and reduce negative attention from) their significant others, the larger Jewish population.” ~ David A. deSilva

Paul is now suffering as a result of preaching a Torah free gospel.

- Non-Christian Jews don't want Gentiles polluting their lives

vs. 14, The cross has given Paul far more than any of his Israelite pedigree and religiosity (Pharisaical practices).

Honor

Cross

In 1st century Palestine these words are on the opposite ends of the spectrum.

This is the upside down reality of the kingdom of heaven.

- Serving, caring, and bearing with one another is a practice which pulls these two concepts together.
- Obedience to God, even if it leads to worldly disgrace, is a path to eternal honor.
- Giving oneself away leads to fullness not emptiness.
- The cross was judgement toward Jesus and yet it became judgement toward the world that placed him there (by the way that includes you).

World - this present evil age

Creates systems to uphold divisive categories.

Injustice, violence, you are an outsider, food access, etc.

Kingdom - the structures of this world do not have power over a person filled with the Spirit.

vs. 15, New Creation

A world without Jesus is quick to label who is important and who is not.

Are you in or are you out?

A Jesus person or a Jesus community has no place for this type of treatment of others.

- Inclusion in the household of God does not depend on circumcision / the law. It only depends on Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 From now on, then, we do not know anyone from a worldly perspective. Even if we have known Christ from a worldly perspective, yet now we no longer know him in this way. **17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

New Creation = Spirit indwelling = bearing the image of Jesus

Faith walking through love = being led, living, and walking by the Spirit.

You are a person of honor and a community of honor on the basis of the cross.

vs. 16, Follow this standard.

What is the measuring stick for Christianity? Jesus

2:14 But when I saw that they were deviating from the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas in front of everyone, "If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?"

We must walk straight towards the gospel.

Israel of God - 1 of 2 things

#1 - Literally Israel

#2 - The people of God who have, in some sense, inherited the title "Israel". A title given by Paul to the Christian movement. Those who walk by the standard (6:15).

Most likely #2. Why?

- Paul has spent his whole letter defining and explaining why Gentiles are given access to becoming heirs of the promise through Jesus. Jew and Gentile Christians together (4:21-31). The Judaizers are spending all of their time trying to emphasize Israel according to the flesh.
- Christians are those who rely on Jesus, not Torah (3:6-9, 14, 26-29).
- Paul's entire point is unity. Why would he end his letter returning to the idea of division between the church of Jews and Gentiles and "Israel" as an ethnic entity defined by Torah?

vs. 17, I have the marks of a slave of Christ.

Acts 13-14; 2 Timothy 3:11

Side note: Their smooth skin show their unwillingness to face the difficulty of kingdom living.

vs. 18, God's favor (grace)

Paul is using kinship language.

We are family!

The Christian life is about investing in one another. We are together being led, living, and walking by the Spirit!

- Treat one another as family.
- The last word Paul uses in his letter before Amen is ἀδελφοί.

Question: How does Galatians continue to be relevant to you today?

How often do you minimize Jesus' sufficiency?

How often do you minimize the power of the Holy Spirit?

Are you trying to add lists of do's and don'ts to your faith?

The target of Galatians today is anyone who depreciates Jesus as the sufficient Savior and minimizes the power of the Holy Spirit as sufficient guide.

"whereas Christ turned the water into wine, the church has succeeded in doing something more difficult; it has turned wine into water." ~ Søren Kierkegaard (Danish Theologian and Philosopher)

How do we turn the water of the flesh into the wine of the Spirit? The Holy Spirit wants to turn your life into fine wine...Are you going to let him?

That is the message of Galatians!