



“The Packaging of the ‘Gospel’”

Galatians 6:11-13

Theme: *Those given to the true Gospel realize it is about Christ, not themselves.*

Introduction: This will persevere in seeking the glory of Christ in the lives of others” ...

I. THE PRIORITY OF INTEGRITY – 6:11

A. The Affirmation of the Gospel

1. Throughout the epistle, Paul has been defending the Gospel against the corruption of those who were perverting it through adding good works to what actually saves.
2. Paul begins the letter giving all glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for the work He accomplished for us on the cross – cp. [1:3-5](#).
3. He indicated that the Galatians were listening to false teachers who were perverting the Gospel by appealing to the contribution that the sinner can make to gain God’s favor – “distorting the Gospel” – v. [1:7](#).
4. He declares that anyone who preaches a Gospel of works is to be damned since such a Gospel cannot save – v. [1:9](#).
5. He hints that such false teachers are seeking the favor of men – most notably those who are of the “Party of the Circumcision” – the legalists who put conditions on a person’s eligibility to be saved.
6. Now, as he comes to the end of the letter, Paul seeks to affirm the Gospel by putting his hand to the parchment and calling attention to what he is writing.
7. He declares – *“See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.”*
8. The exact reason for calling attention to the *“large letters”* [πηλίκος ... γράμμα] is uncertain:
 - a) *One explanation is the eye condition that causes him to have to write with large, uncial letters to see what he is writing – cp. [Galatians 4:13-15](#).*
 - b) *Another is the use of Uncials (all caps) as the ancient way of calling attention or bringing emphasis – like “shouting” in text messaging.*
9. Nevertheless, Paul’s desire is to provide a personal affirmation of the

message written in the epistle, taking responsibility for its content.

B. The Authentication of the Gospel

1. It was in this way that authentication was provided – [2 Thessalonians 3:17](#).
2. One of the problems Paul encountered was the underhanded way that the false teachers were seeking to bring confusion and gain credibility in the eyes of the early church was to represent their teaching as having come from Paul – cp. [2 Thessalonians 2:2](#).
3. Hence, Paul would commonly authenticate what he wrote by picking up the quill and writing a greeting at the end – cp. [1 Corinthians 16:21](#); [Colossians 4:18](#).
4. His message is hereby distinguished from that of the false teachers and affirmed and authenticated as having its ultimate source in Christ Jesus through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

II. THE PLOY OF INSINCERITY – [6:12-13](#)

A. The Treachery of Appearances – [6:12a](#)

1. As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul's Gospel is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ – [Galatians 1:11-12; 15-16](#).
2. As such, Paul did not “put on airs” – nor did He seek the favor of men.
3. However, not so with those who were preaching a different gospel – a gospel that drew the focus off what Christ has done and seduced the Galatians to consider what they could do.
4. Paul identifies their motivation – *“Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised ...”*
5. These false teachers desired to *“make a good showing”* [εὐπροσωπέω] – simply means “to look good,” lit. “have a fair face.”
6. There is an undue priority of projecting a carefully crafted outward appearance for self-promotion.
7. Their craving is to appear to others to be of great influence – to thwart the advances of the true Gospel through their lures back under the legalistic, self-righteous, “system” of merit.
8. Their appearance is designed in two ways:
 - a) *... to have influence as they “... try to compel you to be circumcised;”*
 - b) *... to have influence because they successfully “... compelled you to be circumcised.”*
9. *“compel”* [ἀναγκάζω] – refers to apply pressure both internally and externally – (internally by appealing to their anxieties; externally appealing to their peers).
10. Through these tactics, they sought to lure these new saints away from a

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

confidence in faith alone in Christ alone thereby compromising the Gospel into a perverted gospel that cannot save.

B. The Tactic of Appeasement – 6:12b

1. Paul further exposes their motivation when he states that the reason they are seeking “... to make a good showing in the flesh ... [is] ... *“simply so they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.”*”
2. Their insistence on fulfilling the Law of Moses was because of the reaction by the legalists in Judaism against those who taught the truth about the work of Christ Jesus.
3. They were cowardly and self-serving as they avoided the difficulties of rejection by those against the true Gospel.
4. *“The cross of Christ”* is a watershed by those hearing the Gospel – considered an offense by the Jews and foolishness by the Gentiles – cp. **1 Corinthians 1:23.**
5. It doesn’t matter how ascetic or self-denying a person seeks to be, but when they begin to claim there is nothing, we can do for ourselves – we are completely dependent upon what Christ Jesus did on the cross, sinners’ pride is exposed, and they react.
6. Reliance on the flesh is the natural way to approach reconciliation to God – but it always ends in destruction – cp. **Philippians 1:18-19.**
7. Hence, the “party of the circumcision” had no loyalty to the cross (a reference to the consummated work of Christ that would have included the resurrection) but thought of Christ as a rallying cry against the oppressors – a form of “social justice” tool.
8. They are like the “rocky soil” in the Parable of the Sower, where when persecution comes, they abandon – cp. **Matthew 13:20-21.**
9. Hence, the false teachers troubling the church in Galatia had no love for Christ and would not be willing to suffer for His sake.

C. The Theatrics of Artificiality – 6:13

1. Finally, Paul blasts these false teachings by saying *“For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves ...”*
2. This describes their hypocrisy and inconsistency as they “cherry pick” which regulations they consider obligatory.
3. Their religion was a pretense, a show put on to lure others away from the Gospel.
4. However, they were obsessed with what other people were doing and sought to obligate others to do what they themselves are not willing to do.
5. Theirs was no desire to bring glory to Jesus, to evidence the power of the Holy Spirit, to evidence the genuine grace of God in their lives ... they



merely desired to place burdens on others, in contrast to those who are genuine believers who love others – cp. [Galatians 6:2](#).

6. They loaded others with obligations and burdens but were unwilling to carry them personally – “... *but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh.*” – cp. [Matthew 23:2-4](#).
7. Circumcision serves as a metonymy of salvation by works – an awful burden imposed upon a struggling sinner which brings no relief from guilt, shame, and brokenness.
8. This “form of godliness” is nothing but a veil that covers the ugliness of their real condition – cp. [2 Timothy 3:1-5](#).
9. Despite the guilt, sustained shame, sense of dread, constant manifestations of the flesh, and defeat at the hands of our flesh, some prefer a man-centered, works-based, salvation based on human achievement because it gives man some sense of compensating their sins and preserves a measure of dignity whereby salvation by grace humiliates the sinner and places all merit of Jesus – cp. v. 14.

So What?

1. The Gospel is God's, we have no right to subject it to our “improvement.”
2. When we become ashamed of the Gospel, we know we have lost our love for Christ – be constantly making Him the point.
3. We must care far more about how Jesus sees us with His penetrating gaze than how we appear to others' superficial glances.

**Those given to the true Gospel realize it is about
Christ, not themselves.**