

Closing with the Cross

Galatians 6:11-18

Galatians 6:11-18 (CSB)

*Look at what large letters I use as I write to you in my own handwriting. **12** Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh are the ones who would compel you to be circumcised — but only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. **13** For even the circumcised don't keep the law themselves, and yet they want you to be circumcised in order to boast about your flesh. **14** But as for me, I will never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The world has been crucified to me through the cross, and I to the world.*

Galatians 6:11-18 (CSB)

15 *For both circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing; what matters instead is a new creation. **16** May peace come to all those who follow this standard, and mercy even to the Israel of God!*

17 *From now on, let no one cause me trouble, because I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. **18** Brothers and sisters, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.*

Paul rests his case upon THE CROSS.

- It is on the cross that...
 - the grace of God is most fully shown.
 - God proves his power to extinguish sin (something the Law can't do)
 - All human achievement and religious striving ends.

Look at what large letter I use...in my own hand.

- Common for rabbis or apostles to have assistants write letters for them as they dictate out loud.
- Paul's own hand indicates the high importance, personal appeal, urgency.

v.12-13 Portrait

- Before Paul goes to the cross, he paints one last portrait of the “Jesus + something” people.
- **12** *Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh are the ones who would compel you to be circumcised — but only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 For even the circumcised don’t keep the law themselves, and yet they want you to be circumcised in order to boast about your flesh.*
- Paul paints the Galatians one final UGLY portrait of these false teachers.

v. 14 Real Deal

- And then he changes brush strokes. The portrait of the false stops. And an alternative begins to take form.
- **14** *But as for me, I will never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The world has been crucified to me through the cross, and I to the world.*
- Contrast vv. 12-13 with v. 14.
- *World has been crucified to me thru the cross and I to the world.*
 - “Just as Jesus died on the cross, so also have my desires to be great in this world, be rich in this world, be powerful in this world. My only desire now is to glorify and enjoy God, sharing His love and truth with you... in the Spirit!”
- Paul has died. And he has been raised anew. NEW CREATION.

v. 15 New Creation

- All that matters is new creation! Uncircumcision and circumcision don't matter – they MEAN NOTHING.

See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

*and streams in the wasteland. **Isaiah 43:19***

*Along both banks of the river, fruit trees of all kinds will grow. Their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. Each month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will be used for food and their leaves for healing. **Ezekiel 47:12***

v. 15 New Creation

*Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: “I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. ²“The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him. **Exodus 15:1-2***

*¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **2 Corinthians 5:17***

*1 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ ^b or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” 5 He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” **Revelation 21:1-5***

Respond

- ***Upon what or whom do I rest my case?***