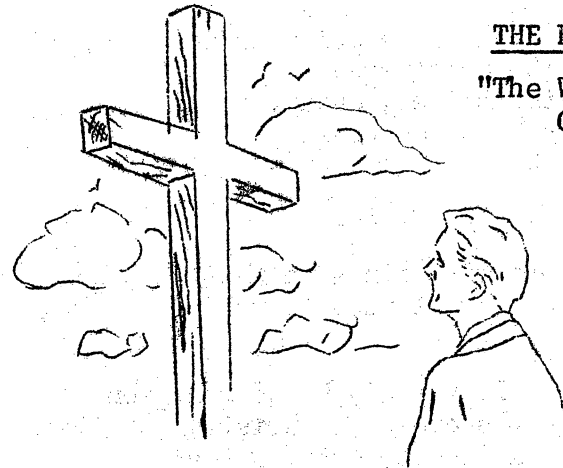


THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

"The Way Of The Cross."

Gal. 6:11-18

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Introduction

1. There is no more glorious manner in which to complete a study on the purity of God's grace than to lift high the Cross of Christ. This Paul does.

2. To accent the cross, Paul deals with a variety of subjects in his closing remarks. Furthermore he does this in his own handwriting. So eager to convey his message, Paul did not use a secretary. Consider the fact that the way of the cross leads to the following conclusions:

1. REJECTION OF CELEBRATION. vv. 12-13.

Paul summarizes three big reasons why the Judaizers press for the celebration of circumcision:

- a. To show the flesh. Greek verb here means to "put on a good face." It has thought of making a pretentious display of their religion in outward ordinances. Insincerity is prominent.
- b. To avoid persecution. To stand up for the cross alone against ritualism is unique. The god of this world opposes it. Better relent and acquiesce is the desire of a Judaizer. How about today?

- c. To glory in ritual. The whole point is to make capital of the Galatians. Unable to keep the law themselves, Judaizers would fain gain others who would go along with them. What an unworthy goal!

2. GLORIFICATION OF CRUCIFIXION. v. 14.

The word "crucify" occurs five times in this book (3:1; 2:20; 5:24; 6:14). Here Paul uses it twice and in a double sense.

- a. Cosmic crucifixion. All worldly based religion is cursed through the cross of Christ. There is fundamental enmity between the world and Paul because of the cross.
- b. Specific crucifixion. Paul himself has become a felon to the world because of the cross. Verb for "crucified" is perfect in the original Greek.

3. RECOGNITION OF CREATION. v. 15.

Here is a marvelous truth which needs to be emphasized today more than ever. God is not concerned with outward ordinances as a means of righteous relationship with Himself, but He demands a totally new creation (better rendering than creature). The word "new" signifies newness in quality or character. What the Judaizers urged could never produce what the Spirit generated!

4. ACCEPTATION OF REGULATION. v. 16.

The connection between vv. 15 and 16 must be clearly noted otherwise false notions about the church being the Israel of God will be taught. The word "rule" specifies a "rod" or "that which regulates the actions of men." It is a standard or principle. Hence, Paul urges that those who walk according to the rule of the new creation have God's peace breathed upon them. This brings to light the fact that the verb "walk" is a verb

used of keeping step with others. Here is an oblique reference by Paul that the Judaizers were not keeping step with those who were in the true new creation. Oh, beloved, how important to keep pace with others within the union and creation perfected by the Holy Spirit of God!

In addition to the new creation, the Apostle breathes "mercy" upon the "Israel of God" or the nation Israel. Here is plain and direct distinction of Israel from the church. It is one of the major areas which individualize the teaching of dispensations from those who reject such orderly understanding of the Word.

5. DEMONSTRATION OF DEDICATION. v. 17.

This is urged by:

- a. An appellation. Since his subject has been fully covered, Paul appeals for no further trouble either by their instability or by thwarting the apostolic authority which he possessed.
- b. A stigmatization. Paul claims he has been branded with the mark of ownership to the Lord Jesus. As His eternal slave, this should be enough and the Galatians should rejoice in the grace of God!

Conclusion. Having given the cross such high emphasis and proclaimed the grace of God with such vigor, Paul concludes affectionately - "brethren" may the grace of our Lord be with your spirit. Such a sweet benediction is not found elsewhere save in 2 Tim. 4:22 and Phile. 25. May the ardor of His grace be our daily portion both now and always.

Amen.