

Galatians

Conclusion [6:11-18]

- Paul's Authorship [6:11]
 - Take notice of the large letters I now use as I am writing to you with my own hand.
Ἴδετε πηλίκους ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ.
 - The word “See” is from εἶδον (eidon) which means “see” or “perceive”.
 - This is an imperative here, so we will translate this as “Take notice”.
 - The phrase “with what large letters” describes the manner in which Paul was writing.
 - This indicates a change in the handwriting at this point in the letter.
 - To correctly capture this transition, we will translate this as “of the large letters I now use as”.
 - The phrase “I am writing” is from γράφω (graphō) which means “write” or “write down”.
 - This is an aorist verb, but is used to refer back to the time of writing, so “I am writing” is correct.
 - The phrase “with my own hand” tells us that Paul is now writing down this part of the letter himself.
 - Paul used a scribe to pen his letters, but at times did so himself [1 Cor 16:21; Col 4:18; 2 Th 3:17].
 - Principles of Galatians 6:11
 - In order to assure the believers in the Galatian churches that he was, in fact, the author of this letter, Paul wrote the ending to this epistle.
 - He wrote with letters that were quite large relative to the writing used for the rest of the epistle.
 - This change would have been obvious to anyone who was reading the letter.
 - However, Paul mentioned the change explicitly because letters like this were intended to be read aloud in the churches that received them [1 Thess 5:27; Col 4:16] and the congregants would not have been able to observe the change.
 - Some speculate he used large letters because he had poor eyesight, citing Gal 4:15.
 - It is just as likely that he used large letters to give emphasis to the end of the epistle.
 - It is also possible that he merely did so to distinguish his writing from the body of the epistle which had been penned by his amanuensis.
 - In any case, the remainder of this letter was penned by Paul himself as an epilogue.

- The Cross vs. Circumcision [6:12-15]

- Those who desire to make a good impression outwardly, these people are trying to compel you to be circumcised,
 Ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι,
 - The phrase “Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh” is referring to the Judaizers.
 - After his defense of liberty, Paul gets back to the main purpose of this letter in its conclusion.
 - The phrase “make a good showing” is from εὐπροσωπέω (euprosōpeō) which means “show off” or “make a good showing”.
 - This is a hapax legomena, but both the positive and negative uses of this word can be found in contemporary Greek writings.
 - We will translate this as “make a good impression”.
 - The phrase “in the flesh” is not used in the same sense that it was in chapter five and the beginning of chapter six referring to the sin nature.
 - Here, this phrase is used idiomatically of doing something outwardly, for everyone to see.
 - Therefore, we will translate this as “outwardly”.
 - The phrase “try to compel” is from ἀναγκάζω (anagkazō) which means “compel” or “force”.
 - This is a present active indicative which could be translated as “are compelling”.
 - However, the Judaizers had not succeeded in compelling the Galatians believers to get circumcised, so “are trying to compel” is correct.
 - The comma and the pronoun οὗτοι (houtoi) are left untranslated here.
 - We will add the comma and the phrase “these people” to the translation.
- but only so that they might not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.
 μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται.
 - The word “simply” is from μόνος (monos) which means “only” or “alone”.
 - This word is used here in the sense of “the only reason” for the Judaizers trying to compel the Galatian believers to be circumcised.
 - The phrase “so that” is ἵνα (hina) which means “so that” or “in order that”.
 - This word is used to introduce a purpose clause here – the purpose of the Judaizers.
 - The phrase “will not be persecuted” is from διώκω (diōkō) which means “pursue” or “persecute”.
 - This is a subjunctive, so we will translate this as “might not be persecuted”.
 - The phrase “for the cross of Christ” gives the reason the Judaizers could be persecuted.
 - To those who try to add works to salvation, the cross of Christ is an offense [Gal 5:11].

- For those who are circumcised do not even observe the requirements of the Law themselves,
οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν
 - The phrase “those who are circumcised” could refer to anyone who has been circumcised.
 - However, Paul is using this phrase here to refer to the Judaizers.
 - The word “keep” is from φυλάσσω (phulassō) which means “guard” or “observe”.
 - Here, this is referring to observing the requirements of the Law.
 - We do not know if Paul was thinking of something specifically here.
 - He was likely thinking of the fact that no one observes all of the Law [Mt 23:2-3].
- but even so, they desire to have you circumcised so that they may brag about your circumcision.
ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχῶνται.
 - The word “but” is ἀλλὰ (alla) which marks a sharp contrast with what precedes.
 - We will translate this as “but even so,”.
 - The word “desire” is from θέλω (thelō) which means “want” or “desire”.
 - This indicates that the Galatian believers had not yet been circumcised.
 - The phrase “so that” is ἵνα (hina) which means “so that” or “in order that”.
 - Once again, this word is used to introduce the purpose of the Judaizers.
 - The word “boast” is from καυχάομαι (kauchaomai) which means “boast” or “brag”.
 - We saw the cognate noun καύχημα (kauchēma) back in v4 used in the positive sense.
 - In this case, καυχάομαι (kauchaomai) is used in the negative sense of bragging.
 - The phrase “in your flesh” refers to the fleshly change wrought by the circumcision.
 - We will translate this as “about your circumcision”.
- But I absolutely do not make confident assertions, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
 - The word “But” is δὲ (de) which is a soft conjunction – a continuation of thought.
 - This word can be left untranslated or translated as “and”, “but” or “now” depending upon the context.
 - The phrase “may it never be” is μὴ γένοιτο (mē genoito) which is a strong assertion.
 - We have translated this as “absolutely not” in previous Pauline uses.
 - Here, Paul is not speaking of a hypothetical situation, but is talking about himself.
 - We will translate this as “absolutely do not”.
 - Once again, the word “boast” is from καυχάομαι (kauchaomai).
 - Here, this word is used in the positive sense, so we will translate as “make confident assertions”.
 - Paul makes it clear that the only time he will make confident assertions is in regard to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, referring to all that Jesus accomplished on the cross of Calvary.

- through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.
δι' οὗ ἔμοι κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὼ κόσμῳ.
 - The word “which” is the masc. pronoun οὗ (hou).
 - Grammatically, this pronoun could refer back to the cross or to Jesus Christ, both of which were mentioned in the first part of this verse.
 - However, if we follow Paul’s logic, it makes more sense for this to be referring to the cross – in particular what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross of Calvary.
 - The two references to the world here are referring to Satan’s κόσμος system and all that it entails.
 - This does not refer to the people of the world, to whom we have been called to be witnesses.
 - The phrase “has been crucified” is from σταυρόω (stauroō) which means “crucify”.
 - This verb is in the perfect tense indicating a past completed action with present, ongoing results.
 - This mutual crucifixion does not mean that Paul has been cut off from the world.
 - Instead, this indicates that Paul has been freed from being under the control of the world system’s perverted way of thinking and living.
- For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but what matters is a new creation.
οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστίν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις.
 - Some manuscripts contain the phrase “in Christ Jesus” after the word “For”.
 - This is more than likely the result of the copyists harmonizing this verse with Gal 5:6.
 - This verse in the NASB is an awkward translation of the neither-nor construction.
 - We will rearrange the order of things in order to make it more clearly understood.
 - The phrase “is anything” is a literal translation of the Greek words here.
 - What Paul is communicating is that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision *means* anything.
 - The word “but” is ἀλλὰ (alla) which marks a sharp contrast with what precedes.
 - We will translate this as “but what matters is”.
 - The word “creation” is κτίσις (ktisis) which means “creation” or “creature”.
 - Both words could be used in this context.
 - We are not an entirely new creature as a result of being born-again (we still have the old self), but we are a new creation in Christ [Eph 4:24].

- Summary of Galatians 6:12-15
 - In the conclusion to this letter, Paul reveals the motivation for the Judaizers.
 - Much the same as the scribes and Pharisees, the Judaizers were focused on trying to look good outwardly [Matt 23:27-28; Luke 16:14-15].
 - Jesus warned against doing things to be noticed by men [Matt 6:1-8, 16-21].
 - In addition, these Judaizers were concerned that they could be persecuted for their faith + works viewpoint regarding acceptance before God.
 - By adding works to faith, these Judaizers were diminishing the finished work of Christ on the cross [John 19:30] and nullifying grace [Rom 11:6].
 - In order to avoid persecution, they attempted to compel the believers in the Galatian churches to agree with their viewpoint and be circumcised [Acts 15:1] so they could tell others about them.
 - We should not want to boast about anything but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified [1 Cor 2:2].
 - God does not desire for us to do anything under compulsion [2 Cor 9:7; Plmn 12-15; Gal 2:3].
 - Sadly, the Judaizers who were trying to compel the Galatians were unable to recognize that they could not keep the Law themselves [Gal 5:3; Jas 2:10].
 - Through faith in Jesus Christ, we have died to the world and its principles [Col 2:20-23].
 - Going hand-to-hand with that is the fact that we are no longer under Law, but grace [Rom 6:14].
 - Believers today do not live according to the Mosaic Law, but are expected to live according to the new self [2 Cor 5:17; Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9-17].
 - As such, physical circumcision has no significance [Rom 2:25-29; Gal 5:6; 1 Cor 7:19].

- Christ's Mark on Paul [6:16-17]

- And those who will live by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, εἰρήνῃ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ.

- The phrase “walk by” is from στοιχέω (stoicheō) which means “hold to”, “follow”, or “live by”.
- We will translate this as “live by” here.
- The phrase “this rule” refers to what was just stated in verse 15.
- This gives a basic delineation of one of the great distinctives of the dispensation of the Church.
- Paul desires that peace and mercy be upon those who live according to the new creation in Christ.
- These two are often combined with love and/or grace [1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; 2 John 3; Jude 2].
- Paul also desires that peace and mercy be upon the Israel of God.
- He makes it clear that his criticism of the Judaizers does not mean he is being critical of Israel.
- Paul understands that Israel has a future in God's A to Ω plan.
- At the time of this writing, the Israel of God has been scattered among the nations [Deut 4:23-26].

- From now on let no one cause distress for me,

Τοῦ λοιποῦ κόπους μοι μηδεὶς παρεχέτω.

- The phrase “From now on” is from λοιπός (loipos) which means “from now on” or “in the future”.
- This indicates that Paul has had enough of the trouble being caused by the Judaizers.
- The word “trouble” is from κόπος (kopos) which means “trouble” or “difficulty”.
- This word describes discomfort or distress, so we will translate this as “distress”.

- for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματί μου βαστάζω.

- The word “for” is γὰρ (gar) which means “for” or “you see”.
- This word is used here to introduce an explanation as to why those causing distress need to stop.
- The word “bear” is βαστάζω (bastazō) which means “carry” or “bear”.
- This is the same word we saw earlier in this chapter in verse 2 and verse 5.
- The phrase “brand-marks” is from στίγμα (stigma) which means “mark” or “brand”.
- These brand-marks would typically be used on slaves or soldiers.
- The brand-marks indicated ownership, service and even protection.
- God had warned the people of Israel not to put such brand-marks on themselves [Lev 19:28].

- These brand-marks of Jesus were on Paul's body meaning they were literal brand-marks – the wounds and scars that Paul suffered in his service to his Lord Jesus Christ.
- Summary of Galatians 6:16-17
 - At the conclusion of this letter, Paul wishes peace and mercy be upon three distinct entities.
 - Those who live by the standard required of believers in the Church Age [Phil 3:15-17; 4:9].
 - The Israel of God [Psalm 125:5; 128:6; Ezek 39:25].
 - Himself – mercy from the Judaizers and peace from the distress they had caused him.
 - Paul insisted that the Judaizers cease from causing him distress.
 - They had undermined his authority as an apostle.
 - They had distorted the gospel of grace he adamantly proclaimed.
 - They had challenged the liberty of the Galatian believers whom Paul had led to Christ.
 - Paul offered one final example of proof that he was on the right side of their dispute – he had the very brand-marks of Jesus on his body.
 - These marks were the wounds and scars that Paul had obtained in his service to the Lord [1 Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 6:4-5, 9; 11:24-25].
 - They demonstrated that Paul was a slave of Christ.
- Salutation [6:18]
 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.
Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί· ἀμήν.
 - The phrase “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” is common in the closing of Paul's letters [1 Cor 16:23; 2 Cor 13:14; Phil 4:23; 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18; Phlm 25].
 - This closing says “be with your spirit” which is found only here, in Phil 4:23, and in Phlm 25.
 - He knew that the Judaizers had troubled the spirits of the Galatian believers.
 - This closing is unique in that Paul adds the word “brethren” here.
 - Throughout this letter, Paul has called the Galatian believers brethren to highlight kinship with them.
 - Paul adds the word “Amen” here.
 - The only other Pauline letter that ends with an “Amen” is 1st Corinthians.