

The Epistle to the Galatians
Lesson #25 • Galatians 6:11-18
“Concluding Remarks”

• **H A N D O U T** •

► Now, our study of the Epistle to the Galatians is about to be concluded. Paul seems to have reached the end of what he felt he needed to say. Our expectation is that Paul will summarize his points, reemphasize all he has so painstakingly presented to the Gentile Believers in Galatia and pronounce his usual benediction.

But, instead of doing the expected, Paul takes the pen from the hand of his secretary – [the man he has employed to write from his oral dictation] – and Paul adds some thoughts in his own handwriting. Paul even inserts a fresh warning against the teaching of the Judaizers. The expected benediction will follow, ending the Epistle.

► **So ... we begin Paul's conclusion as he takes his secretary's pen and writes: ...**

Galatians 6:11 • See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!

Q: Why would Paul make such a big deal about writing with his own hand?

- 1.
- 2.

Q: Was it unusual for Paul to write a greeting or salutation in his own hand?

- In [1 Corinthians 16:21](#), Paul wrote: *“I Paul, write this greeting in my own hand.”*
- In [Colossians 4:18](#), Paul wrote: *“I Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.”*
- In [2 Thessalonians 3:17](#), he wrote: *“I Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write.”*

Q: What is the significance of Paul calling attention to the fact he used “large letters?”

► **Here are four reasonable possibilities:**

1. Some, [including reformers Luther and Calvin,] say the word "large" refers to:

2. Other scholars believe he was using large letters to:

3. A few, like Stott, believe he was treating his readers like:

4. The fourth possibility suggests that Paul was writing with large letters:

Q: What do you think? Which of the four possibilities seem most logical to you? In each possibility, do you concur or object and why?

First possibility:

Second possibility:

Third possibility:

Fourth possibility:

▶ Paul wrote about his thorn in the flesh and God's sufficient grace in Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 · To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surprisingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul warns the Galatians, one last time, about the Judaizers, revealing their motivation.

Galatians 6:12 · Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.

Q: What does Paul reveal about the Judaizers motivation for continuing to demand the Gentiles be circumcised?

Q: What was it about the Cross of Christ that would cause both shame and persecution?

▶ From the Roman point of view:

▶ From the Jewish point of view:

▶ From a Christian point of view:

Q: What are the far reaching consequences for either trusting the Cross of Christ, or rejecting the Cross of Christ?

Q: What three theological doctrines does the Cross of Christ create?

1.

2.

3.

Q: What are the expected results do these three doctrines listed above?

1.

2.

The Judaizers hypocrisy is revealed ...

Galatians 6:13 · Not even those who are circumcised keep the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your circumcision in the flesh.

Q: What are the two things which Paul accuses the Judaizers in this verse?

Q: *What does Paul mean by: "... that they may boast about your circumcision in the flesh?"*

Galatians 6:14 · May I never boast except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Q: Why does Paul criticize the Judaizers for their shameful boasting and then turn around and declare that he himself is boasting in the Cross? Isn't that hypocritical?

Q: What does Paul mean when he said "the world has been crucified to me?"

Q: What does Paul mean by “the world?”

▶ The “world” of this verse is the:

Q: Up until now, Paul has used the words, “the Cross of Christ.” Is it significant that he changed it to: “the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?”

▶ A literal transliteration of the words “Lord Jesus Christ” means:

Q: What is significant about Paul using the pronoun “**our**” when writing: “the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?”

Paul now summaries the entire letter in two very terse statements ...

Galatians 6:15-16 • Neither circumcision nor un-circumcision means anything; What counts is the new creation. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule – even to the Israel of God.

Q: What does Paul mean: “Neither circumcision nor un-circumcision means anything?”

Q: What is the “rule” that all must follow – even the “Israel of God?”

Q: Why does Paul declare “*peace and mercy to all who follow this rule?*”

▶ Peace:

▶ Mercy:

Q: Who are the “Israel of God?”

Q: What are the three immutable truths in this passage?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Paul makes one last request as he ends his Epistle with a benediction ...

Galatians 6:17-18 • From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

Q: What are the “marks of Jesus” Paul refers to?

Q: What do these “marks of Jesus” represent to Paul?

Q: What does Paul mean by “let no one cause me trouble?” Is he saying that, in the future, he doesn't want to hear about any of the problems in the churches of Galatia?

Q: How does Paul end his Epistle to the community of faith in Galatia?

William Barclay [1907-1978], Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism adds a noteworthy comment regarding the end of the Epistle to the Galatians:

“After the storm and stress and intensity of the letter comes the peace of the benediction. Paul has argued and rebuked and cajoled, but his last word is GRACE. For him, it’s the only word that really matters.”



**Paul's Epistle to the Galatians has now come to an End ...
Grace and Peace to all who have studied its message.**

