

## Galatians 6:11-18 – Boasting in the Cross

While Paul made it clear that we are not justified by works, those who are justified through faith alone in Christ alone are engaged in good works. The one who lives by the Spirit and follows the Spirit will love others. The love for others manifests itself in good works. The good work may be to restore a brother who is caught in a transgression. It may be to weep with someone who has lost a loved one. It may be to give money, food or shelter to someone in need. The good work may involve giving financially to support the work of Christ's church. The fruit of the spirit can manifest itself in many ways. No law should restrict or confine the good work of the Spirit.

**Read Galatians 6:11-18.**

Why was Paul writing in big letters? (6:11)

Why did the Judaizers want to force the Gentile Christians to be circumcised? What two motives were mentioned in verse 12?

Why would insisting on circumcision protect the Judaizers from being persecuted? What is the relationship between preaching circumcision and preaching Christ crucified? (6:12)

Verse 13 revealed a third motivation for the Judaizers to insist that Gentile Christians needed to be circumcised. What was the motive? Why were the Judaizers hypocrites?

What was the object of Paul's boasting? Why was the cross so offensive in Paul's day? Is the message of the cross still offensive in our day? Why are people offended about the cross now? (6:14)

I have never been to a church where they boasted about how many people had been circumcised. What are some fleshly things that Christians boast about today as opposed to boasting in the cross of Christ?

What does it mean to have the world crucified to us and us crucified to the world? (6:14)

Paul's letter to the Galatian churches warned them over and over again that the Gentile Christians should not be circumcised. Who had the advantage in the church, the circumcised or the uncircumcised? What was far more important than circumcision? (6:15)

In verse 15, what does it mean to be a new creation? Where else did Paul use this term "new creation"? See 2 Corinthians 5:16-18, 21.

What "rule" was Paul referring to in verse 16? What did Paul pronounce on all who walked by this rule? The "walk" of verse 16 is the same word as the "walk" in 5:25 (If we live by the Spirit let us also walk by the Spirit). It means to "follow" the rule, to "be in harmony with" the rule.

"The Israel of God" has produced a lot of debate. What group of people do you think Paul was referring to when he said "Israel of God"? Notice that this exact phrase does not appear anywhere else in the Bible. "God of Israel" is used about 200 times in the Old Testament but the phrase "Israel of God" is not used anywhere but here. ESV and many others have "and upon the Israel of God". The older RSV did not include the word "and". The NIV has a dash in place of "and". "And" can connect two different groups or it can be used in an explanatory sense "upon all who walk by this rule, **that is** upon the Israel of God". The old RSV, the NIV, along with some other translations understand the word "and" in this verse to be used in an explanatory way. (6:16)

What marks did Paul bear on his body? How were these marks the marks of Christ? (6:17)

What significance do you find in Paul's final words to end the letter? What words did he use which were emphasized in the letter? (6:18)