

CONCLUSION OF GALATIANS

Sunday Morning: December 28, 2003

Text: Galatians 6:11-18 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. 12. As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. 14. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. 17. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. 18. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

I want to conclude the book of Galatians this morning if possible. We've just been having a great time in this book and it's hard to turn lose but I think that we can tie the ribbons on the study of this book and go on to some other things; some topical messages in the days ahead or the weeks ahead. But I want to read Galatians chapter six verses eleven to eighteen.

One of the things that we see in verse eleven is the fact that Paul wrote this letter in his own hand, he says

WITH MY OWN HAND

Galatians 6:11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you **with mine own hand**.

Apparently there were those that were forging Paul's epistles or putting down their own doctrine and saying it came from Paul. And in Acts chapter twenty verses twenty nine and thirty Paul was warning the church or the elders of Ephesus. He says

PAUL'S WARNING

Acts 20:29-30 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous **wolves enter in** among you, **not sparing the flock**. 30. Also **of your own** selves shall men arise, **speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them**.

That's what was happening in the church at Galatia. There were men in the church at Galatia and in that area that were trying to draw disciples away from Paul and to teach them false doctrine and that probably happened with some that were under Paul's ministry and that happened. We've had that happen here in a way, didn't happen, but somebody tried to get it going but the Lord allowed us to put a stop to that but anyway. So there were people, people were drawing others away and trying to get them away from Paul to the point they were writing epistles and putting Paul's name on them.

FALSE EPISTLES

2 Thessalonians 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor **by letter as from us**, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

The expression in there, 'nor by letter as from us.' When you start getting letters from so called Paul the apostle and it doesn't agree with what you heard him say or what you've read in other epistles of his, it is going to cause you to be shaken and troubled in mind and in spirit and so Paul is saying be assured that don't let somebody come along and deceive you as something that I wrote. In fact in second Thessalonians three seventeen Paul says

THIS LETTER IS LEGITIMATE

2 Thessalonians 3:17 The **salutation** of Paul **with mine own hand**, which is the **token** in

every epistle: so I write.

Paul didn't write out every letter in other words he had a scribe that wrote the letter and then he wrote, he put his signature on it so that people would know that it came from him and this was not a forgery. So we see that and there were other epistles like in first Corinthians sixteen twenty one

SIGNED BY PAUL

1 Corinthians 16:21 The salutation of *me* Paul **with mine own hand**.

I think the book of Colossians also gives that expression as well. Paul signed his epistles that this is from him. And so there was those that were deceiving people by writing false epistles. Then in Galatians six verses twelve and thirteen there were those that were trying to get Paul's disciples to become theirs. And it says

MAKING YOU THEIR DISCIPLES

Galatians 6:12-13 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, **they constrain you to be circumcised**; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, **that they may glory in your flesh**.

In other words, it's interesting here there are people that want you to do something but they don't do it themselves. They want to be able to be puffed up about getting you to follow their leading and to do their bidding even though they are not consistent with their own life. They desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. Not the so much, the flesh of circumcision but glorying in the flesh that they got you in their group. They're numbered with you and they're glorying in fact that you have followed what they have said and what they want you to do. And but they don't want the persecution of the cross of Christ. If you don't want the persecution of the cross of Christ you teach that circumcision and the law is what you've got to have but if you don't teach that you're going to receive persecution for the cross. By the way, we'll get into that in just a moment here but the cross of Christ is not what it seems to be. At least this is not what I've found in studying for this lesson this morning. I've always associated the cross of Christ with dying to self and that's a part of it but there's something else in the cross of Christ that we will see in just a moment. And the cross of Christ is the opposite of teaching that justification is the law. The cross of Christ teaches that justification is by faith, okay and I'll show you that in just a minute. Let's go on.

In Acts chapter eleven verse two to three we see how these Judaisers opposed Peter.

CONTENDING WITH PETER

Acts 11:2-3 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the **circumcision** contended with him, 3. Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

They were talking about Cornelius. And it just so happened that there were those of the circumcision that were with Peter and they did the same thing. They didn't jump on them, they jumped on Peter because you know, apparently these people were able to persuade those other guys that were with Peter to join with them. But they were opposing the fact that Gentiles could have the same inheritance that Jews could have, a heavenly inheritance. There's never been an argument that gentiles could not have an inheritance in the land among the tribes in which they'd dwell. That was a given! Moses talked about it, I mean if a Jew dwelt in a particular tribe like Caleb, they were guaranteed a land in the tribe in which they dwelt. They didn't have cities. In other words, it wasn't cities, it was suburbs, okay? They didn't have the authority. They were

just blessed to be among them. That's basically what it amounts to. But they were contending with Peter. In Acts chapter fifteen and verse five it says

CIRCUMCISION AND THE LAW NEEDED

Acts 15:5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees **which believed**, saying, That it was needful to **circumcise** them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.

Which was not the truth but they were saying that it was the truth and so there was contention and the persecution came from these that believed you had to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses. They persecuted the saints. A real heartache is to see Christians persecuting Christians. It's one thing to be persecuted outside, you know pagans persecuting Christians. But when Christians are attacking Christians that is really sad. So what did they say in the church at Jerusalem? Well, Acts fifteen twenty four

NO SUCH COMMANDMENT

Acts 15:24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must be circumcised*, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:

There was no commandment from the church in Jerusalem that this be the way it was. And it wasn't just words by the way, let me tell you, it was stoning. We'll see in just a moment in fact, in the latter part of this book, Paul says don't bother me anymore about this, he says, man I've got the marks of this problem in my body. I've got scars over this. Now get off my back! I'm willing to have those scars to put up, to tell you the truth and we'll see that in just a moment. Now in Galatians six fourteen Paul continues

GLORY IN THE CROSS

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should **glory**, save **in the cross** of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the **world** (Israel, law) is **crucified unto me**, and I unto the world (Israel and the law).

The world in this verse, I believe is Israel and the law. When Paul says, 'I am crucified the world is crucified unto me, the whole context here is dealing with the Law. I am dead to the Law of Moses. I am dead to the influence of Israel to keep the ceremonial law and circumcision. That's what he has died to, and I'll confirm this thought about the world in John chapter eighteen verse twenty

THE WORLD

John 18:20 Jesus answered him, I spake **openly to the world** (to Israel only and not to Gentiles); I ever taught in the **synagogue**, and in the **temple**, **whither the Jews always resort**; and in secret have I said nothing.

Remember when Jesus sent His disciple out He says you go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He was not taking the world in that case was not the Gentiles and the church of God was not involved in this situation. It was either Jew or Gentile. That's the way it is or was. And but anyway, He said, I spake openly to the world, that is to Israel only and not to Gentiles; 'I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.' So Paul says I am crucified, by whom the world is crucified unto me, that is through the Lord Jesus Christ. I am no longer under the Law of Moses and Circumcision. Now what is the significance of the cross of Christ? Well, in first Corinthians chapter one, verse eighteen Paul talks about the preaching of the cross to them that are perishing

THE POWER OF GOD

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the **preaching of the cross** is to them that **perish** [present middle]

foolishness; but unto us which are **saved** [present passive] it is **the power of God**.

The cross of Christ is the power of God. And this power of God is what we need if we're going to take a stand against the Judaizer; of course we don't have that problem today. What we have a problem with is legalist being legalistic and also those that just simply oppose the truth of the coming Kingdom. Now what is the message of the cross? Well, I think that we can see that in Ephesians chapter two verses fourteen through seventeen

MESSAGE OF THE CROSS

Ephesians 2:14-17 For he is our peace, who hath made **both one**, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; 15. Having **abolished** in his flesh the **enmity**, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself **of twain one new man**, so making peace; 16. And that he might **reconcile both** unto God in one body **by the cross**, having slain the enmity thereby: 17. And came and preached peace to you which were **afar off** (called Gentiles), and to **them** (called Jews) that were **nigh**.

"middle wall of partition between us;" that is Jew and Gentile and this is elect Jews and elect Gentiles. The book of Ephesians is written to the saints and faithful at Ephesus that He has chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, okay?

What was the message of the cross of Christ? He has abolished the difference between Gentiles and Jews as far as the inheritance is concerned. The message of the cross of Christ is that both Jew and Gentiles can now have a heavenly inheritance. Let's continue.

"One new man." A new creature; it's not the word 'preacher' in here but he has made of two a new creation. He's made one. By taking two loaves of bread and you twist that dough together and put it in a, I was going to say pot, but in a pan and what happens to that dough? They become one, they blend right together. They may have a few lumps on top but it's still one loaf, okay? Now, so He made peace.

"...Having slain the enmity thereby." In other words there was enmity. The Jew wasn't to have fellowship with the Gentile and they weren't to eat with them, they weren't to have fellowship with them. Peter says it's not legal for me to be here with you guys, Cornelius, but I'm here on God's command and you know, I'm going to find out what it's all about here in just a minute. They didn't quite say it that way, but that's what happened!

But anyway, He has slain the enmity thereby and "came and preached peace to you which were afar of, and to them that are nigh." Who was it that was afar off? Gentiles! Gentile believers not lost Gentiles. The Gentile believers and who are those that were nigh? They were Jews and by the way these are called Gentiles and called Jews. Not just saved Gentiles but saved Gentiles that were called. Not just saved Jews but saved Jews that were called. Called to what? Unto His Kingdom and glory!

THE PROMISE

Acts 2:39 For **the promise** (life in the kingdom age) is unto **you** (Israel, nigh), and to **your children**, and to all that are afar off (Gentiles), *even* as **many** as the Lord our God shall **call** (unto His kingdom and glory).

"The promise" singular in number with a definite article before it which is a reference to life in the coming Kingdom age is unto you, that is Israel that was nigh. In other words the promise of a heavenly inheritance is to those that are afar off and it's not to every Gentile that's saved because it goes on and says, "even as many as the Lord your God shall call." Call to what? Unto His Kingdom and glory. In other words, how can you receive a calling if you don't have what? Ears to hear! Did you know that a blind man can't follow you anywhere? The blind don't

follow; did you know that? You've got to have eyes to see. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and what do they do? They follow me. You've got to have eyes to see to follow. But anyway, these are talking about those who have ears to hear. He has called these unto the promise, which is age lasting life.

THE PROMISE DEFINED

1 John 2:25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life.

Or life in the Kingdom age. Now in Ephesians chapter three, verse four to six, he's talking about the same body and the inheritance

OF THE SAME BODY

Ephesians 3:4-6 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5. Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his [the] **promise** in Christ by the gospel:

In fact it wasn't revealed to Peter, it wasn't revealed to John. It was revealed to Paul and then it was revealed to Peter and John and the other apostles. And what was it that was revealed to Paul that wasn't revealed to the apostles themselves this particular time? That Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of His promise, or **the** promise of His in Christ by the Gospel. So there is a body that's in the Body of Christ that has been created a new creation and this is made up of people who have been born into the family of God and have been called. Becoming a new creation is not getting saved, okay? When we bear children, they're not new creations, they're just born into the family, basically that is what it amounts to and I think that there is this distinction between that.

BRETHREN ARE NEW CREATURES

Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus **neither circumcision** availeth any thing, **nor uncircumcision**, but a **new creature**.

In Christ it's the new creature. What is this new creature? It's the Gentile and the Jew being made one. It is the Gentile and the Jew that is the new creature; that is fellow heirs in other words they're going to have the same blessings in the heavenlies, why? Because of the cross of Christ! Not the salvation cross part of it, it's something, it's the cross of Christ which is the power of God which pertains to the message of joining two groups of people that have been called. Now:

NEW CREATURE

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, ~~he is~~ a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things **are become** [perfect active, have become and continue to] **new**.

If you notice in this verse that the word 'be' is in italics. So if you read it that way, if you scratch out the word 'be'; "if any man in Christ a new creature". The word "he is" is not in the text, it's been added. So it's not saying that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature nor it's everybody in Christ is a new creature; that's not what it's saying. It's saying if there's any man in Christ that's a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. I think this has to do with the hope. What hope? The hope of the resurrection of Christ; it provides for us with a heavenly inheritance, okay? And all things are *becoming* new, this is in the perfect tense, have become and continue to become new. I think this pertains to putting off the old man and putting on the new man.

THE NEW MAN

Ephesians 4:22-24 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the **old man**, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23. And be **renewed in the spirit** of your mind; 24. And that ye put on **the new man**, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Now, this isn't salvation, this has to do with preparation for ruling and reigning. It's preparation for the promise which is after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. So the new man is changing the lifestyle. Taking off the old and putting on the new. In Colossians chapter two it talks about the circumcision of Christ. In other words, the new man; his heart has been circumcised by the Lord.

CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST

Colossians 2:11 In whom also ye are **circumcised** with the **circumcision** made without hands, in **putting off** the body of **the sins of the flesh** by the **circumcision** of Christ:

So what it says, when Paul is saying for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but it's the new creation. That's what's important. Circumcision and uncircumcision, that's in the past and it's the new creation in the Body of Christ that will, that's important and it has to do with the blessings of well, the passage in Ephesians two having to do with two being made one and that one body will one day rule and reign with Christ in His coming Kingdom. Now, Paul saying is we have a standard here and the standard is not in the law. It's not in the keeping of the law; it's not in circumcision.

THE STANDARD

Galatians 6:16 And **as many as walk** according to this **rule** [line (standard, boundary)], **peace** be on them, and **mercy**, and upon the Israel of God.

The word, 'rule' is also translated, 'line.' It has the idea of being a standard or a boundary. As many as walk according to this boundary or rule or standard; they get to have peace. What happens if you're not walking that way? You don't have any peace! Peace comes when you're doing the right thing. When you're not doing the right thing, you know it and you're not going to have any peace. And so what Paul is saying, you walk according to this rule; you're going to have the peace of God. And God's going to have mercy on you; not all of us, none of us, can walk according to the rule perfectly, we all fail! You know I thought to myself, if I'm, you know pulled over by a policeman and if I'm checked for my sobriety and I wonder if I'm just not well balanced at the time and I can't walk that line. You know, I guess he takes a sense of your breath to see if you've got any booze on your breath but I'm just thinking about it. Thought about how am I going to walk that line? I may not be able to do that. Sometimes I get a little dizzy, I kind of tip! Well, you know what, we do that when we're walking according to this rule, we stagger sometimes. But you know what? God has mercy on us and we can get back in line. So we need to appreciate the fact that the standard is what? Justification by the law? No! Justification by faith! Paul was contending for that

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

Galatians 3:11 But that no man is **justified** by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The just shall live by **faith**.

Now, that's the standard, living by faith. Pleasing God. Setting aside the Mosaic law and the ordinances and the bondage of the law of Moses. Now, Paul picks up in

NO FURTHER DEBATE

Galatians 6:17 From henceforth **let no man trouble me**: for I bear in my body the **marks** of

the Lord Jesus.

There's no further debate with me, fellows. This is what he's saying. I bear in my body the standard, because of the standard that I have or the rule that I have for my own life. I'm willing to pay the price so don't debate with me, I'm not changing. That's what he's saying. I bear the marks in my body and I'm not changing! Being persecuted because of my position is not going to make me change. I was thinking about these things here lately. There are certain things that people don't do and I was thinking to myself, you don't do certain things, you don't eat meat or you just eat herbs and I thought to myself, well, fine, is that a preference? A strong preference or a conviction and I had a guy explain to me the difference, particularly about a strong preference. A strong preference is that means that you really feel strongly about it. But you know what the difference between conviction and strong preference? Well, if it costs you your life, a strong preference can be set on the shelf! But if it's conviction that means that you are willing to die for it! And so therefore there are strong preferences in our life and that's okay. But when it's a conviction it means you're ready to die to take your stand on that position. And Paul is saying, look I'm not changing on this. It's a conviction. It's not a strong preference and that's the reason why he was able to be stoned to death because of his stand. And so therefore there is no debate

EVIDENCE OF MY POSITION

Galatians 5:11 And I, **brethren**, if I yet preach **circumcision**, why do I yet **suffer persecution**? then is the **offence of the cross** ceased.

Paul preached the cross. What was he preaching? Jew and Gentiles can be joint heirs of Christ okay? Apart from the law, apart from the Mosaic Law! And he says if I preach circumcision, why am I suffering? Well, he says I'm not preaching circumcision, I'm preaching the cross of Christ and that means circumcision and the Law of Moses is out! And so therefore I am going to continue to suffer persecution because I stand on the message of the cross. So, Paul continues

GRACE TO ENDURE

Galatians 6:18 **Brethren, the grace** of our Lord Jesus Christ **be with your (Abba) spirit**. Amen.

I tell you, you need the grace of God if you're going to take this kind of stand. It takes the power of Christ to take a stand on the Word of God and you need to have the grace of God in your life. And it has to be with your spirit and I think this is the Abba spirit. I think this has to do with our decision making spirit; the things that we are submitting ourselves to and not just simply something that we can't relate to. This is the Abba spirit, not my will – it's all things are possible unto thee, Father; but not my will but thine be done. And it takes the grace of God to take this kind of stand.

DO NOT FALL FROM GRACE

Galatians 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are **justified** by the **law**; ye are **fallen from grace**.

You start trying to justify yourself with the law, you're not going to have the grace of God to stand, to endure. In fact

BY GRACE YE ENDURE

Ephesians 2:8 For **by grace** are ye [endure, Mark 4:17] saved [having been saved] through **faith** (you obtain grace, Romans 5:2); and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

And it takes faith to obtain the grace in Romans five two. So if you don't have grace you're not going to endure and I included the verses that substantiate what I've just got through saying in this Ephesians two eight

ARE YE = ENDURE

Mark 4:17 And have no root in themselves, and so **endure** [are ye in Eph. 2:8] but **for a time**: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

The word endure in Mark chapter four verse seventeen is the same word, the Greek word as 'as ye' in Ephesians chapter two verse eight. Same word. They have a different person or persons number in there but it's the same word, of present active abiding. And it says so by grace you endure. And how do you get that grace? By faith

GRACE BY FAITH

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have **access by faith into this grace** wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

If you're pleasing God, you're living by faith. And if you're living by faith, you're going to have the grace that's needed to endure and so Paul says, Paul I believe is summing up with a few verses here that I'm committed to this doctrine, to this truth and I'm willing to pay the price and God's going to give me the power to do it and that's his grace. And the message that Paul was preaching was the cross, that is what? New creation in Christ! Who are called unto His Kingdom and glory, they will rule and reign from the heavens and it cost Paul a lot to preach that message and it costs us the same way, same thing.

Father, we just thank you for your Word. We thank you, Lord for this study in the book of Galatians and the richness of this book and the light that you have given us as we have studied this book. We thank you for it and we pray Lord that you would help us to walk in that light and apply that light to our lives that we might be found approved at the Judgment seat of Christ and hear, 'well done thou good and faithful servant.' Again, we just thank you for the day and your blessing upon us. In Jesus Christ's name we pray, amen.