

## Gal. 6:11-15

- I. Notice with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand (11)
- II. Don't boast in outward, fleshly things, but in the cross of Christ and new creation (12-15)
  - A. Neg: The Judaizers are focusing on outward things for worldly reasons (12-13)
    - 1. They are compelling circumcision to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ (12)
      - a They are compelling you to be circumcised for outward show (12a-b)
        - 1) As many as want to make a good show with outward appearances (12a)
          - Showy hypocrisy
          - Outward appearance, not necessarily reality
          - Beware of concentrating mostly on spin, publicity and image
        - 2) These are compelling you to be circumcised (12b)
          - "compel" has a range of meanings from "encourage," to "compel," to "force"
          - No certainty how hard they compelled, but not really significant
          - This term is used 3 times in this letter
            - 2:3 false brothers who would compel Titus to be circumcised
            - 2:14 Peter would compel gentiles to live like Jews
          - Here
            - This was motivated by their publicity, not your spiritual health
            - So that they look good, not caring so much about you
            - Beware of this self-centered model of ministry
      - b Purpose: Only so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ (12c)
        - Better to be persecuted than to give up the cross
        - cf. possible good (in their minds) motives of Peter and the false teachers
        - But they did not recognize what they were giving up
        - Self-protection is not the highest virtue – cf. 1 Pet. 2:11-12
        - cf. those who want to be thought well of by the world
          - Some with good evangelistic motive
          - Some for cowardice – avoid scorn from the world
          - Some for love of the world and comfort
    - 2. Reason: They want to hypocritically boast in outward matters (13)
      - a Neg: These who are circumcised are not keeping the Law (13a)
      - b Pos: But they want you to be circumcised so they can boast (13b-c)
        - 1) They want you to be circumcised (13b)
        - 2) Purpose: So that they can boast in your flesh (13c)
          - More paying attention to the outward, without dealing with inward reality
          - Reminder that it will never work because flesh is weak and sinful and we need the Spirit of God, the power of God

**B. Pos: The cross and new creation are what really matters (14-15)**

**1. I refuse to boast in anything but the cross of Christ (14)**

**a May it never be for me to boast (14a)**

**b Except in Christ's cross, which severed me from the world (14b-d)**

**1) Except [I may boast] in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (14b)**

Notice the centrality of the cross

It is the answer to all problems

Go to the cross first

Meditate on the cross

Boast in the cross

**2) I and the world are dead to each other through Christ (14c-d)**

Elaboration on the function and significance of the cross

Telling why it is boast-worthy

**a) Through Whom the world is crucified to me (14c)**

**b) And I to the world (14d)**

The cross and resurrection is the beginning of the new age

Therefore, it is the end of the old age

We are no longer destined only for this world

We are no longer captive only to this age

The new world/new age has been opened to us

This new age is characterized by freedom, the experience and power of the Spirit, and the presence of God

cf. 1:4 Christ is the one who rescues us from this present evil age

Paul bookends Galatians with the new creation

**2. Reason: New creation matters, not circumcision (15)**

**a Neg: Neither circumcision or uncircumcision is anything (15a-b)**

2nd time that Paul has said that circumcision is neither here nor there

Neither option is bad in itself, neither option is good in itself

Paul does not mind for Jews to be circumcised

**1) Neither circumcision is anything (15a)**

**2) Nor is uncircumcision anything (15b)**

**b Pos: But the new creation [is what really matters] (15c)**

Not just our subjective experience of the new creation

But primarily the eschatological reality

b/c we are experiencing the new age, the old age does not matter

Christ has come, the Law does not have a hold on us