

6:14-17 Contrast: Paul's cross-centered ministry.

6:14a The cross centered ministry

*But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*

6:14b The effectiveness of the Cross

*through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

- the viewpoint, the mentality, the organization of life apart from God is summed up in this word κόσμος.
- To be dead or crucified says that we're dead, separated from the values, attitudes of the world, they no longer have to impact or influence our thinking and therefore our actions.

### **Summary 6:14**

(What's in Paul's thinking here!)

1. The Judaizers boast was in human attainment, human achievement, or self effort.
2. The legalist then does not appreciate the cross because it stands as an indictment against all that they stand for.
3. Paul was very familiar with the cosmos thinking from which these Judaizers were steeped since before the Damascus road it was his world also.
4. But it was because of the cross, because of the finished work of Christ that first provided salvation but also through his identification with Christ (another aspect of the Cross) he was raised up enabled to walk in newness of life.
5. He is recognizing that he along with each of us as believers owe it all, the glory belongs to Christ not to Paul or us.

6:15 What is the basis for legitimate boasting!

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision,

Prin: The externals, the non-essentials don't really matter, that is from God's standpoint. Unfortunately the externals are far too important for most people.

What is important, what is the essential.

but a new creation. ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. emphasis is not new in time but new in form, new in quality.

### **Summary 6:15**

1. What Paul is telling the Galatians is that God is not impressed with the externals of who we are. What we might accomplish according to the standard of the flesh and this world.
2. No ritual, no none essential is really important, but what really matters is our being new creations in Christ and what can then flow from that position.
3. God's purpose or objective for this new creation that we are in Christ is for each of us to become conformed to the image of Christ in time.
4. For this to become a reality we need to grow up, to mature in Christ for it is the Word of God in us, or as we have noted Christ in us through the Word that gives us the muscle of soul to deal with the issues of life.
5. This new man, the new creation in Christ, cannot go wrong because of two essential provisions. First the word of God and second the ministry of the Holy Spirit illuminating and making that truth real and applicable.

6:16 Promise to the believer in time

And those who will walk by this rule,

What is it that accrues to those who walk by this rule or standard?

peace and mercy be upon them,

peace εἰρήνη brings back into focus the contentment that flows from our reconciliation with God and then as we grow in grace the peace of God. 1<sup>st</sup> Rom 5:1; 2<sup>nd</sup> Phil. 4:6-7

mercy ἔλεος most lexicons define as mercy, compassion, even pity

This blessing Paul says extends to the Israel of God. Who is in view here?

Some today take this to make the church is now the Israel of God, replacement theology. Wrong!!!

The Israel of God are Jews who have believed in Christ, the Messiah.

6:17 Paul's last request to them  
From now on let no one cause trouble for me,

The last phrase here brings into view the marks of his apostleship.  
for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

### **Summary 6:17**

1. Believers are to be careful not to cause the communicator, the P/T, to labor under great stress and adversity. Heb. 13:17
2. Paul clearly bore their burdens, the heavy weight of 6:2, as he did his own. 2 Cor 11:28
3. As a bond slave of Christ, in fulfilling his ministry Paul had undergone great physical pain and suffering and the marks were still there. 2 Cor 11:24-28
4. The Judaizers, the legalists sought to impose circumcision as a sign of obedience while Paul's body, marked by scars spoke more dramatically of his loyalty and devotion to Christ and the ministry he was given.

5. The Galatians were to take the teaching of this epistle and put to rest by its application there in the Churches of Galatia all the false teaching and the challenge to Paul's authority.

### **6:18 The Benediction!**

The epistle ends as it began, that the grace of God would be their abiding portion. 1:3

#### Summary 6:18

1. His final challenge to them in this short benediction is to grow in grace that the consciousness of God's grace would be a reality to them. 2 Pet. 3:18
2. Paul has made it very clear, God's grace operates in Phase 1, salvation (justification), in Phase 2 living the Christian life (sanctification) and in Phase 3 when we're face to face (glorification).
3. They as well as each of us needs to understand that God has made the total provision for us so that we can walk by the Spirit, producing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives all to His glory.
4. The decision is then up to each of us as it was to them. Will it be: Liberty, License or Legalism??