



## "What Really Counts: A New Creation" (Gal.6:11-18)

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Intro:

1. II Thess.3: 17 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write.

2. Dictating letters was common, but so was forgery (see II Thess.2:2). So what people began to do was give the benediction of a letter in their own handwriting, thereby testifying to the authenticity of the letter. Paul probably had to write with large letters because of eye trouble (Gal.4:13). But that is not the only reason he wrote here with such large letters. Large letters in correspondence called for something of special attention. It is like bold type or italics or double underlining. By these large letters, Paul is in essence calling for them to pay careful attention to his closing remarks, which he now pens personally. His usual benediction was brief, but here he writes a whole paragraph...

### I. THE TEXT

v.12 This literally means "to present a good looking face"

\* Matthew 23: 5 "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;

6 they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; 7 they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.' ... 28 In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

\* Matthew 6: 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men... 16 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

v.12b In the world of the Pharisee/legalist, to preach & believe in a pure gospel message meant being persecuted by fellow Jews, and most people were not willing to suffer for the truth...refer to Galatians 2:11-16; Acts 11:1-3.

v.13 They boast about an outward religious rite that does nothing to change the character of the individual.

v.14 The cross is where salvation begins, and where sanctification continues... The cross is the place of death, and in Christianity, also the place of resurrection...

vv.15-16 The only ones who have found peace and received mercy are the ones who follow this "rule" (measuring rod).

\* Romans 2: 28 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

\* Romans 9: 6 ... For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

v.17 The word here is "stigmata," which was used to refer to a brand or tattoo that identified a slave as belonging to a particular master.

v.18 Grace, this is the theme with which Paul began this letter (1:3), and this is the theme with which he ends. See I Cor.1:3;16:23; II Cor.1:3;13:14; Eph.1:2; 6:24; Phil.1:2;4:23; Col.1:2; 4:18; I Thess.1:1; 5:28; II Thess.1:2;3:18; I Tim.1:2;6:21; II Tim.1:2;4:22; Titus 1:4;3:15; Philemon 3

## II. THE MESSAGE IN THE TEXT

A. This Is Important, Take Note, Listen Up!

B. What Does Not Count

### 1. Circumcision

\* Depending on religious rites and observations. No one is made righteous by circumcision, baptism, attending church, receiving communion, doing good works, etc.

\* What counts is not how religiously impressive I am (See Phil.3:3-9).

\* Matthew 23: 25 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.

\* Luke 16: 13 "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." 14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to

them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your **hearts**. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.

## 2. Uncircumcision

\* Those not bound by religious rites and observations ("I'm not a hypocrite")...the discernment to see through the falsehood and hypocrisy of legalism...but despite their lack of hypocrisy, they have not been born again.

\* These people are no different from the unregenerate religious person, except that their sin is not cloaked under the cover of religiosity...Matthew the tax collector, Zacchaeus, etc.

## C. What Does Count: A New Creation

\* John 3:11 Jesus is slamming the group that Nicodemus is not only part of, but leader of. He is saying to Nicodemus very plainly, "If you REALLY believe in me, you've got to leave that crowd you are identified with!" See Matt.15:7-13.

\* John 3:14-15 See Num.21:4-9

\* John 3:16 \* believe = 4100. pisteuo, pist-yoo'-o; from G4102; to have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), i.e. credit; by impl. to entrust (espec. one's spiritual well-being to Christ):--believe (-r), commit (to trust), put in trust with. It is the same word translated "entrust" in 2:24 (WOW!)

\* John 3:19-20 vv.19-20 verdict = 2920. krisis, kree'-sis; decision (subj. or obj., for or against); by extens. a tribunal; by impl. justice (spec. divine law):--accusation, condemnation, damnation, judgment.

\* What was his condemnation? The fact that he would not respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting to completely put his faith in Jesus Christ. Walk away from the Pharisees, and openly live for the Lord.

\* What evil deeds would be exposed about Nicodemus? His self-righteousness, his love of the praise of men over the praise of God, the peer pressure that kept him from coming to Jesus openly...

\* What would be the consequences of Nicodemus' exposure? Persecution; Loss of position...salvation, deliverance, heaven!

## D. The Marks Of Genuineness

1. My deliverance from legalism/religious hypocrisy (vv.12-13).

## 2. My disconnection to this present world and its disconnection to me.

- I Cor.7: 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

- Heb.11:13-16

- II Cor.5: 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

- Phil.1: 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

- John 15: 18 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.

19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

- I Cor.4: 13 ... Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.

## 3. My new life

- II Cor.5:17; The cross is where the old man died, and the new man was born...

- Zacchaeus

## 4. The peace that I have; the mercy I have received (v.16)

- Saul of Tarsus watching Stephen as he died...

## 5. My willingness to suffer for my faith

- Nicodemus (John 7:50-52; 19:38-42)

- Rom.8: 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

## III. CONCLUSION

\* God has grace that He wants to pour out today...salvation invitation... What is keeping me from experiencing the power of the cross?

\* Rich young ruler; Judas (money/greed); The Pharisees loved money; Contrast with Zacchaeus, Saul of Tarsus/Paul...

\* Family; Luke 14:25-35

\* Fear; John 12: 42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

\* Prov.29: 25 Fear of man will prove to be a snare

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