

Reading: Galatians 6:11-18

Reflection:

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the message of the Christian faith. Paul has spent the book of Galatians contending for the true Gospel and condemning false teaching that have crept into the church. Therefore it seems appropriate to close out Galatians with a definition of this Gospel for which Paul has so aggressively fought.

The Bible tells of one gospel in four stages: creation, fall, redemption and restoration. These stages condense the gospel into its four grand themes. To understand how to live the Gospel, we must comprehend the nature of God's Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration narrative:

- **Creation** - the Christian message does not begin with "accept Jesus as your Savior"; it begins with "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." God is the sole source of the entire created order. (mankind, science, ethics, politics, education, economics, the arts, logic, etc.) (Gen. 1-2)
- **Fall** – the universality of creation is matched by the universality of the fall. All of creation is caught up in a rebellion against its creator. (2 Cor. 4:3-5, Romans 1:18-23, Romans 8:18-25, Gen. 3)
- **Redemption** – is just as comprehensive as the creation and the fall. Jesus redeems our full man and transforms our affections to love and obey Him. (Eph. 2:1-10, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Cor. 5:17-21, Ezekiel 36: 24-27, Genesis 4 - Revelation 18)
- **Restoration** - shows us what we're moving towards. God is using this journey through life to prepare us for His perfect presence. In that place there will be no sickness, sin or despair for all eternity (Revelation 19-22). God is restoring ALL THINGS back to Himself.

Questions:

1. Please read the definition of the Gospel given above. Do you have any questions or thoughts?
2. What does vs. 12-13 reveal about the motives of Paul's opponents? How does Paul use this to contrast the true gospel from "religion?"
3. Do you think that vs. 14-15 is an appropriate summary of the book of Galatians? Please explain.
4. "For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." What are the "circumcisions" and "uncircumcisions" which count for nothing in our context?
5. What do you think are the "marks of Jesus"? Do you have any?
6. In what ways have you grown during this study of Galatians?