

Galatians

1:1. “out from among the dead.” See Romans 4:24. Wuest: “from among the dead.”

1:10. “Indeed.” Although the Greek word is *gar* (usually translated “for”), Lenski writes, “In this instance γάρ cannot mean ‘for’ (our versions) as either stating a reason or offering an explanation... γάρ is but the explanatory adverb which is here used in a question in order to point to what the previous statements make decidedly plain and thus make the question more urgent and the desired answer more inevitable” (Lenski). Paul has just said that anyone who teaches another Good News than what he had taught was accursed. It is obvious that he is not trying to soften his message so it is acceptable to everyone. Rather, he is acting in his capacity as the apostle to whom was committed the information of the Sacred Secret. Thus he says, “Indeed, am I now seeking the favor of men...,” clearly not.

1:20. “(In what I am writing to you...). This verse clearly displays Paul’s love for the Galatians and his passionate desire that they believe the truth of what he was saying. This is the figure of speech Interjectio (Interjection) a form of parenthesis thrown into the text to express feeling (Cp. Bullinger, *Figures*). In this case, the apostle Paul has deep feelings for the Galatians, many of whom have been turned against him (Cp. 1:6; 3:1; etc.), and so he pleads with a volume that leaps off the page, “before God, I am not lying!” The addition is unnecessary to the context, and so it is parenthetical. If the addition were a necessary part of the context and not parenthetical, the figure is called Ecphonesis (Exclamation; Cp. Bullinger, *Figures*).

1:21. “Syria and Cilicia.” After Paul had spent time with the apostles in Jerusalem, the Grecian Jews tried to kill him (Acts 9:26-29). Paul was stubborn enough to stay in the fight at Jerusalem at the risk of his life, but the Lord was gracious to him and appeared to him in a vision and told him to leave (Acts 22:17-21), so the believers took him to Caesarea (the port of Israel) and sent him back home to Tarsus (Acts 9:30). On his trip to Tarsus the boat would have almost certainly followed the coastline, most did, and thus he would have stopped in Syria, and then gotten off in Cilicia, the province where Tarsus was located.

2:14. We stop Paul’s quotation here at the end of verse 14. The NIV takes the quote all the way down through verse 21, however, it seems unlikely that Paul meant to record this much of the conversation to Peter.

2:15. “Gentile sinners.” The national attitude of the Jews was such that they considered all Gentiles sinners, just as the Greeks considered all non-Greeks “barbarians.” The Galatian Christians would recognize that Paul was speaking of the natural prejudice in the Jewish culture, and not saying that all Gentiles were actually sinners.

2:16. “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.” The Greek text here is stronger than the English. The words translated “but” are *ean me*, and properly mean “except.” Thus the Greek carries the strong sense: “...a man is not justified by the works of the law; a man is not justified except through faith in Jesus Christ...”

“faith in Jesus Christ.” This is the objective genitive.

2:18. If the Christian rebuilds the Law in his life, then by doing so he proves that he was a transgressor by tearing it down (i.e., not living by it) in the first place. We are either justified by works or by faith, not by both.

2:19. “For through law I died to law, that I might live to God.” This is a very difficult verse. Lightfoot (*St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians*) seems to understand it well. First, in the Greek text there is no definite article with “law.” It is not “the Law,” but just “law.” Thus “law” in this verse does not refer specifically to the Mosaic Law, but to law in general, including rules, regulations, and even what we refer to as moral law. To understand why “through law I died to law,” we must understand the progression one is in once there is a law. First, law creates sin (sin is not reckoned where there is no law” Rom. 5:13). Second, law creates in me a knowledge or awareness of sin (“I would not have known was sin was except through the law” Rom. 7:7). Third, I sin. We all have sin nature, and perfect obedience is impossible, so we sin (Rom. 3:23; 8:3). Fourth, law punishes sin. In fact, the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Law creates and reveals sin, but then provides no remedy for it. Man is hopelessly lost with no way to keep the law. How can we escape? The only way is to throw off the law altogether (die to law) and be justified through Christ. We are not justified in God’s sight by law, we are justified by faith apart from law. That is what the context says happens.

3:1. “Foolish.” See study of “Fool” and related words in Appendix A.

3:2. This question is the figure of speech *eironia* (irony; sarcasm), because the Galatians obviously knew the answer. The question was not asked to gain information but rather to make his point. (Cp. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*).

“hearing with faith.” This is a difficult genitive, and the scholars are in considerable disagreement about it, calling it an objective genitive, a subjective genitive, a genitive of possession, etc. For one thing, the Greek word *akoe* (#189 ἀκοή) can mean “hearing or listening to” or that which is heard or listened to, i.e. the message or the news. Thus “listening with faith” and “the news about faith” (and more) are possible. Lenski refers to it as a genitive of possession: being made to hear what belongs to the faith. Wuest says it is the message announcing faith, which is close to Meyer, who says it is the news concerning the faith. Expositor’s says listening in faith. Some say it is faith in the news announced. The context seems to be very helpful, because it refers to God working in the life of a believer, and how does that happen? By faith. In fact, one can hear and not have faith, and thus not receive and be rejected (Heb. 4:2). One must hear with faith.

3:5. “hearing with faith.” See note on 3:2.

3:6. Quoted from Gen. 15:6.

3:8. Quoted from Gen 12:3.

3:10. Quoted from Deut. 27:26.

3:11. Quoted from Hab. 2:4.

3:12. Quoted from Lev. 18:5.

3:13. Quoted from Deut. 21:23.

3:16. Quoted from Gen.13:15.

3:19. “because of transgressions.” The Law was not added in order that transgressions would come. See commentary on Rom. 5:20. Hence, the word *xarin* (#5484 χάριν), should be translated as “because,” as most versions do. The word can also be used to show purpose, “indicating the goal” (BDAG, def. a) and could be translated “for the sake of.” But we feel, along with most translators, *xarin* here is “indicating the reason” (BDAG, def. b), that the Law was added “on account of” transgressions.

3:22. “The promise” is metonymy for what was promised.

3:23. “the coming of the faith.” See Robertson, *Word Pictures*.

4:3. In the context, the basic principles of the world is the Law. Note Robertson, who notes Lightfoot.

4:5. The two “in order that” clauses show that the prior condition to being adopted was that Christ redeemed those who were under the law. Without Christ paying the redemption price, no adoption would be possible.

“the adoption.” “adoption.” See note Ephesians 1:5.

4:6. The spirit does not cry “Abba Father” mixing Hebrew and English. It cries out “Abba,” which means “Father.”

4:7. “Since.” The Greek word “if” can be translated “since” if there is no doubt about the subject. Note NIV on Eph. 3:2. Although the KJV reads “heir through God through Christ,” the best texts omit Christ and the reason for its addition is clear. Saying we are heirs “through God” leaves much for the reader to ponder. We are heirs through “*the work of*” God, “*the son of God,*” etc.

4:8. “not gods by nature” (Cp. Wuest).

4:9. “Are turning.” Robertson.

4:11. Paul was not saying that the Galatians were not saved (there is nothing about salvation in the context), but rather that he had spent all that time turning them from the Law, all to no purpose, because they went right back to it.

4:13. “infirmity.” The Greek is *astheneia*, “weakness, illness.” Paul preached where he did for the first time because of an infirmity. Many guesses have been made as to what this was, but the simple fact is that we do not know. It could have been a sickness, or could have been some other incapacity or weakness of the flesh, such as a twisted ankle, that kept him from traveling (BDAG).

4:14. Paul’s sickness in Galatia is mentioned nowhere but here. It was a temptation to the Galatians, because no one wants to attend to a sick stranger, and less so if the stranger heals others but himself is not healed. They were tempted to avoid him.

“treat...with contempt.” From *exoutheneo* (#1848 ἐξουθενέω), See commentary on 1 Thessalonians 5:20.

4:17. “Shut you out.” The Greek is general. The Judaizers wanted to isolate the Galatians from Paul and his companions, and thus from Christ (Gal. 5:4).

4:23. “according to the flesh.” Abraham had a promise from God that he would be the father of many nations. When Sarah got too old to have children, Abraham relied on an old Mesopotamian custom that allowed the husband to have sexual intercourse with a slave or servant, and the child would be considered the child of the barren couple. Thus Abraham had Ishmael through Hagar (Gen. 16). Nevertheless, God clarified His promise, making it clear that Sarah would have a son (Gen. 17:16). This took faith in God and His promise, because Sarah was now beyond the age of childbearing (Gen. 17:17; 18:11).

4:27. Quoted from Isaiah 54:1.

4:30. Quoted from Gen. 21:10.

5:4. “trying to be justified” (Cp. Robertson, *Word Pictures*).

5:5. “the righteousness for which we hope.” The righteousness of hope (literal) is a genitive of apposition. The hope, that is to say, righteousness. The unusual use of the genitive of apposition in English makes a clearer translation important.

5:6. “faith expressing itself through love.” Cp. NIV; BDAG’s translation. Literally, the phrase reads, “faith working itself through love.” The translation “expressing itself”

comes from *energeo* (#1754 ἐνεργέω) in the middle voice. The middle voice means the action is brought on itself, hence, *faith works on itself*. This is important because for faith to count, it need not perform works external to itself—faith works itself out. Hence the translation “faith expressing itself.” Properly translated, this verse says that true faith inside a Christian will express itself in love.

Roman Catholic doctrine takes the verb “works” to be in the passive voice (See discussion in Lenski). In which case it would mean the only thing that counts is faith “having been worked” by love. If this were true, faith would not be complete in itself, it would need love and good works to give it its form. The Roman Catholics teach that it is love that makes faith work. However, this interpretation does not fit with the context. First of all, the verse itself is stating that outward works (circumcision) do not count for anything. And secondly, the thesis of the entire book of Galatians is that works will not gain salvation, but faith alone is necessary (e.g., 2:16; 3:2-11, 22-26).

5:12. “I wish” The Greek word *ophelon* (#3785 ὄφελον) is used to express a fruitless wish. This is the figure of speech *hyperbole*, exaggeration.

5:14. Quoted from Lev. 19:18.

5:16. “walk by *the* spirit.” The word “walk” is a Semitic idiom, meaning “live by” (cp. Thayer’s Lexicon). There is no definite article “the,” but we supply it because the verse makes more sense in English that way. The word “spirit” refers to the new divine nature that is born inside each Christian at the time he is saved. This is clear because it is contrasted with “flesh,” which in this case mainly refers to the old nature and the impulses produced by it, although the actual flesh has influences also, such as hunger or sleep, which may need to be interrupted in order to fully do the will of God. God created people in such a way that their will can controls their behavior, and the good Christian learns to live by the new, godly nature created inside him.

5:17. “with the result that.” The spirit and the flesh oppose each other, battling within us, with the result that we do not do what we want. The last clause in this verse is *hina* (#2443 ἵνα), “so that,” with the verb *thelo* (#2309 θέλω), “to want” in the subjunctive mood; this construction is forming a result clause, which expresses the unintentional consequences of an action. The spirit within us does not purpose for us to not do what we want, this is simply the result of our internal struggle. See Matt. 2:15 entry “resulting in...what was spoken being fulfilled.”

There are three “desires” or “wills” involved here. The flesh, the spirit, and “you.” We may desire something, but if it is worldly, we will not be able to participate without becoming slaves to the flesh (we want pleasure without consequences—it won’t happen). We may want the fruit of the spirit (joy, peace, etc.) without disciplining ourselves to walk by the spirit. That will not happen either. We have to realize we need to get to the point we want what the spirit wants if we are to be truly successful and blessed in this life and the next.

5:19. “Obvious” as many versions. Open to all. Lenski even says “public.” Not that someone involved in the works of the flesh works them “obviously, in the open, but that the works themselves openly declare the flesh and its desires.

“Adultery.” Although in the KJV, it was a late textual addition.

“Licentiousness” is an uncommon word, but the perfect word. The Greek means without social or moral restraint, which is exactly what licentiousness is: giving oneself a license to do whatever one wants at the time. Lenski says “unbridled conduct.”

5:20. “selfish ambition.” The Greek is *eritheia* (#2052 ἐριθεία). In Aristotle it “denotes a self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means” (BDAG). It contains tones of selfish ambition, strife, rivalry, etc. Those who attempt to get ahead unfairly, and build rivalries show this. For a more complete understanding, see the note on “selfish ambition,” Romans 2:8.

“dissentions.” The state of being in factious opposition.

5:21. Omit “murder.” If it was added, it was added quite early, but very early and excellent texts and witnesses omit it. It may have been added by a scribe remembering Romans 1:29. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*.

5:22. “fruit of the spirit.” This list refers to the fruit, the things that are produced, in us as we live according to the new nature that has been created inside us (see note on 5:16 above). Producing the fruit of the spirit requires active cooperation between the human will and the new, divine nature. The divine nature cannot grow the fruit of the spirit on its own, the will is simply too powerful. A person who wills to be unloving, or impatient, or without self control, will not be forced to have those qualities by the spirit of God that is born within him. On the other hand, the new nature of holy spirit is constantly at work to produce fruit in the person, and so if a Christian truly desires to develop the fruit of the spirit, even though it may be difficult depending on his or her basic disposition and the way he or she was raised, it can be done.

- Love. The Greek word is *agape* (#26 ἀγάπη). Love is difficult to specifically define. It is the very nature of God, for God is love (1 John 4:7-12, 16b). Love is known from the action it prompts (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 13:1-8). Christian love is not an impulse from the feelings, nor does it always run with natural inclinations, nor is it lavished only upon those things that are naturally liked or naturally found lovely or beautiful.

Agape love is an exercise of the will in deliberate choice, and is why God can command us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44; Exodus 23:1-5). *Agape* love is commanded, showing that it is related to obedience, commitment and action and not necessarily feeling and emotion. “Loving” someone is to obey God on another’s behalf, seeking his or her long-term blessing and profit. Love energizes faith (Gal. 5:6), and empowers us to give and keep on giving. There can be a cost to genuine love. Love is the distinctive character of the Christian life in relation to the brethren and to all humanity. The “loving” thing to do may not always be easy, and true love is not “mushy.” For example, punishing criminals to keep society safe is loving, and asking someone to leave your Christian fellowship because they persist in flagrant sin to is loving, but never easy. (1 Cor. 5:1-5). Christians are to be known for their love to one another (John 13:35).

- Joy. The Greek word is *chara* (#5479 χαρά). Biblically, “joy” has two meanings. As it is defined in the Bible and most English dictionaries, it can refer to a feeling, an emotion that wells up within us when something wonderful happens to us. The Bible has many examples of that “feeling of joy,” the emotion that can accompany something good happening to us (Matt. 2:10; 13:44; Luke 15:7; 24:52; John 16:21; Acts 12:4; 2 Cor. 7:13; 2 Tim. 1:4; Philemon 1:7; 3 John 1:4). However, the problem with that emotional kind of joy is we cannot feel it whenever we want to. It has to happen to us, and it does not happen very often.

The second meaning of “joy,” refers to it an inner light and lightness, an inner effervescence or bubbling. This kind of joy is a quality of life, not simply an emotion. It is grounded in our relationship with God and comes from knowing and believing Him,

and what He has given us and what He promises us in the future. It is excited by the acquisition of good or the expectation of good. The “goods” we possess now are the gift of holy spirit, the wonderful Word of God, and many other blessings from God. The goods we will possess include forever being with Christ in Paradise. These things cannot be taken from us by trials of this life, and for that reason true joy is not extinguished by the cares of this world. Joy should be visible so that others can be won by it. Joy was evidenced in Christ’s life and walk (John 15:11). Joy gives us a sound basis for optimism; it helps us look at the future that is desirable and possible (Hebrews 12:2). It strengthens us for the work we are called to do (Nehemiah 8:10). God commands us to have joy, which He can do because it comes from believing His Word and focusing on Him and His promises (1 Thess. 5:16; Phil. 3:1). Joy comes from a choice of our will, based upon how we think about our circumstances. Joy can result from the way we choose to interpret the things that happen to us, especially painful things. The apostles rejoiced after being beaten that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41). Joy is related to an attitude of thanksgiving.

God expects us to learn life lessons from the world around us, and we can learn a great “joy lesson” from the moon. When the moon looks fully at the sun (a full moon), it is lit up with light, and shines brilliant white in the night sky. However, when the moon looks at the earth (a lunar eclipse), it is dark, depressing, and usually has a red tint to it as if it were angry. We are like the moon. When we look at the earth and focus our attention on the things of this life, we become dark-minded, depressed and/or angry. However, when we look at the Son, and focus our attention on the things of God, we become full of light (joy) and shine into the lives of those around us. Let us learn from the moon to focus our attention on the Son. We will have an inner joy that will give us strength for life in this difficult world, and we will shine blessings into the people around us.

- Peace. The Greek word is *eirene* (#1515 εἰρήνη). Peace is peace, quietness, rest, tranquility. It is an inner quietness born of strength, exemption from the rage and havoc of conflict or war, internal or external. It is associated with the elimination of one’s enemies. As influence by the Hebrew word *shalom*, which was the ancient Jewish salutation and formula of well-wishing, it includes the concept of total well-being including security, safety, harmony, prosperity, and happiness. True peace includes the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ and so fearing nothing from God. Peace is not the state of being undisturbed simply because you do not care what happens. Rather, it is the state of quietness that comes from knowing that there will be a righteous end to life and the world. God is a God of peace (2 Cor. 13:11). Christians have peace with God (Rom. 5:1). Jesus is the prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). The peace of God will guard your heart (Phil. 4:7).

- Longsuffering. The Greek word is *makrothumia* (#3115 μακροθυμία). “Longsuffering” is from the Greek *makrothumia*: *makro* = long; *thumia* = passion, anger). Longsuffering is the ability to hold back anger for a long time. It is to persevere patiently and bravely; to be patient in bearing the offences and injuries of others; to be mild and slow in avenging; slow to anger, slow to punish. It is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish. It is to be what happens in difficult circumstances with people instead of getting angry too quickly. It is associated with mercy, and is used of God. However, it is not being a “door mat,” and simply allowing yourself to be used or abused. Similarly, true longsuffering is

not being “too spiritual” or “too holy” to get angry at people, nor is it tolerating sin indefinitely.

In contrast to longsuffering, “patience” (*hupomone*) is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope (1 Thess 1:3). Interestingly, while *makrothumia* (longsuffering with people) is used of God, *hupomone*, (patience with things) is not. This may be due to the fact that God has to put up with people, who have free-will, but He never has to put up with the same trials from things and life in general that people do. Trench writes: “We may now distinguish *makrothumia* and *hupomone* in a way that will be valid whenever they occur. *Makrothumia* refers to patience with respect to persons, *hupomone* with respect to things. A man is *makrothumei* if he has to relate to injurious persons and does not allow himself to be provoked by them or burst into anger (2 Tim. 4:2). A man is *hupomone* if he is under a great siege of trials and he bears up and does not lose heart of courage” (Trench, Synonyms; p. 209). Longsuffering (*makrothumia*) and patience (*hupomone*) occur together in Colossians 1:11, 2 Corinthians 6:4,6; 2 Timothy 3:10; James 5:10,11. Longsuffering is an important quality of Christian leaders: 2 Tim. 4:2

- Kindness. The Greek word is *chrestotes* (#5544 χρηστότης). A generous, warm-hearted, friendly, nature. It is sweet, mild, and full of graciousness. It is a virtue that pervades and penetrates the whole nature, that mellows anything harsh or austere. Christ’s yoke is “kind” (*chrestotes*, not “easy” as many translations have), because there is nothing harsh, sharp, or galling about it (Matt. 11:30). You can put on Christ’s yoke without worrying about getting painful blisters, splinters, etc.

“Kindness” is willingly ready to do good, and it expresses itself in deeds towards another. It springs from an inner disposition to benefit others, but is engaged and aroused by their need. True kindness must be distinguished from sentimentality: It can be easy to feel sorry for someone who has gotten themselves into a mess, and begin to “caretake” them, which actually weakens them. In many situations, what a person really needs to become strong is to repent and get busy restoring their own life with the help of the Lord. Those who offer kindness always need to be aware of the line that differentiates kindness from caretaking. God is kind, even to the unthankful (Luke 6:35), and God’s kindness leads people to repentance (Romans 2:4; 2x). It is the responsibility of every believer to be kind to others (Eph. 4:32). Love is kind (1 Cor 13:4).

- Goodness. The Greek word is *agathosune* (#19 ἀγαθωσύνη). “Goodness” is uprightness in heart and life, a moral excellence. The person who exhibits the fruit “goodness” is upright and honorable, and is acceptable to God. “Goodness” can be called the “fruit with teeth,” because goodness, while it has a lot in common with “kindness,” very clearly also contains the idea that it is a *good* thing to uphold standards, enforce the law, and punish wrongdoers. The grammarian Richard Trench writes: “A man may display his *agathosune*, his zeal for goodness and truth, in rebuking, correcting, and chastising.” If there is no “goodness” in the Christian’s life, evil continues without fear of consequences. “Goodness” is usually associated with activity rather than inner nature, although the good actions spring from the good heart: “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart” (Luke 6:45).

Goodness is not self-absorbed or comfort-oriented. Many “good” tasks are uncomfortable to perform. “Goodness” is anchored in God and in His revelation to man. In the Scripture, “good” is often contrasted with “evil” and it is the Word of God that

must define that which is good and that which is evil. Moral relativism leaves both “good” and “evil” up to the feelings and inclinations of the individual. In a system without Godly standards all kinds of “good” things become “evil.” In this kind of system, holding people accountable becomes evil (you may hurt their “self-esteem”), punishment of any kind becomes evil (they were not really at fault, but were victims of society), saying that someone is wrong becomes evil (why be so narrow minded), etc. Also, without godly standards, many “evil” things become “good” (taking advantage of another’s mistake, such as getting too much change back on a purchase but not telling the cashier; living together without being married; not returning something you find even if you could locate the owner if you tried; etc.)

- Faithfulness. The Greek word is *pistis* (#4102 πίστις). The word *pistis* can mean “faith” or “faithfulness,” and here “faithfulness” is the better translation. Faith is trust, and we are to trust God, and thus believe His promises. Faithfulness means continued faith or perseverance. It is a steadfast adherence to God and His will. We trust God because God is *trustworthy*, but more than that, we are to continue in that faith day after day, thus being “faithful” toward Him. Many people have “faith” for a short time. The true fruit of the new nature is being full of faith day after day after day. Those given a trust must be faithful (1 Cor. 4:2).

5:23. • meekness. The Greek word is *praotes* (#4236 πραότης). The quality of humility that recognizes one’s own frailty and neediness, causing a willingness to listen to reproof and correction, as well as to help others without unduly asserting one’s authority or overpowering others. Meekness is a submissive attitude toward the will of God. It is coachability, the ability to take coaching, teaching, and even reproof from others without any resistance or temptation to seek revenge and retaliation. Meekness is first and foremost toward God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. It must be clearly understood that godly meekness is a mental posture of power, not weakness. The common assumption is that meekness is synonymous with “mousy” or “cowardly,” but the Lord was “meek” because he had the infinite resources of God at His command (Matt. 11:29). Someone who is meek can afford to be so because his strength and confidence allows him to listen to others. Moses was the meekest man on earth at his time, but his walk was a walk of powerful signs and wonders (Num. 12:3). Meekness is a way of being, opposed to boldness of manner, and is to be the default manner for leaders in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 10:1).

- Self-control. The Greek word is *egkrateia* (#1466 ἐγκράτεια). Self control is mastery over oneself. The root word is *kratos*, which means power in action; strength exerted, and the derivation of *egkrateia* may be *en kratos*, or power within, thus the power over oneself and one’s desires (Kittel; Theological Dictionary). As used by the Greeks, *egkrateia*, self control, is the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites. God designed the human will to control the human mind and body. The concept of “self-control” implies that there is a standard to conform to, and the Word of God provides that standard. Godly self control is not trying to reform the flesh by self-discipline (although self-discipline is important), or overcoming sinful tendencies by outward religious practices. True self-control comes from a combination of free-will decisions and the new nature inside that is trying to reproduce itself in outward

man. It is, after all, a “fruit of the spirit,” not a “fruit of the will.” A commitment to self-control without being motivated by love for others feeds prideful ambition and self-glorification. Christians are not to live like unbelievers who indulge the flesh (Eph 2:3). Christians are to control themselves (1 Cor 9:24-27).

5:25. “Since.” Even as the NIV, NJB. The word “if” can be understood as “since” if the condition is not in doubt.

“keep in step with.” Although many versions say “walk,” this is not the standard word for walk, which has the cultural connotation of “live by,” but rather it means “to march in a line” (as in the military), to march in rank and file, “to be in line with a person or thing considered as standard for one’s conduct, hold to, agree with, follow, conform” (BDAG). In other words, the spirit is setting the pace and moving forward, and now it is up to us to match its pace and keep in line.

5:26. “conceited.” Greek is from *kenos* (empty) and *doxa* (glory). It is vain or empty glory. Thinking something has merit when it does not. “glorying [bragging, boasting] without reason, conceited, vain-glorious, eager for empty glory” (Thayer).

6:1. “gets.” Punctiliar aorist, “gets to be” (Lenski).

6:2. “Hardships.” *Baros* (#922 βάρος) is hardship which is regarded as particularly burdensome and exhausting—“hardship, burden.” In Matthew 20:12 *baros* refers not to difficulties in general but to the specific hardship of working for the entire day. In a number of languages hardship resulting from work may be expressed in terms of the effect upon the workers, for example, 'to get tired from working' or 'to become weak as the result of working.' (Louw Nida).

Baros refers to the load, but also, by context, the hardship produced by the load. Because of verse 5, the “hardship” makes more sense here than the load itself. People carry their own loads, but other Christians are to help with those loads and with the hardships produced by them.

6:5. Each person will (future) have to bear his own load. There are loads that each of us have that cannot be shared and must be carried alone. Cp. RSV.

6:6. This verse has been hotly debated by commentators. Many of them think that the verse is telling those instructed to “share with,” i.e., give to, those who instruct them. This is clearly expressed in the New Living Translation, which is a very free translation: “Those who are taught the Word of God should help their teachers by paying them.” However, there are some serious problems with this interpretation.

First, if Paul was asking for the believers to pay their teachers, the verse is worded in a very unclear and unusual manner. The word “κοινωνέω” (*koinoneo*) would not be the natural way to say that the people should give to ministers. It seems totally unlikely that Paul, having reproved the Galatians for their return to the flesh, would, at the close of the epistle, ask for money. Nevertheless, money is such a “sacred cow,” to so many people, and there are so many commentaries that say that the verse means that people should pay their ministers, that we feel it is appropriate to quote extensively from commentaries that make the point that this verse is not about money.

Expositor’s Greek Testament, Vol. 3, p. 189:

“The word *koinwnein* contains the key to the true meaning of the verse. Our versions [i.e., the KJV, RV, ASV, etc.] understand it here, and in Romans 12:13, Phil. 4:15, in the sense of *communicating* [giving] to others; but I find no warrant for this in Greek usage.

In Romans 15:27 it signifies distinctly to *receive* a share, and elsewhere to become a partner and share in common with others (1 Tim. 5:22; 1 Pet. 4:13; 2 John 11; Heb. 2:14). Here in like manner it enjoins upon the leaders of the Churches the duty of admitting all the members to participation in any spiritual blessing they enjoy. It continues, in fact, the protest against the arrogant pretensions and selfish exclusiveness of the Judaizing leaders”

R. C. H. Lenski, Galatians, pp. 302-304:

Lenski’s translation: “Moreover, let him who is being instructed in the Word be partaker with the one instructing him in all good things.”

The verb *koinonew* is seemingly not properly understood [by most commentators]. When this is regarded as meaning “communicate,” “all good things” become material, and somehow or other it is thought that Paul says that pupils should reward or pay their teachers... This idea is also put into *koinonia*, the noun which is thought to mean “contribution” in Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:3; Heb. 13:16; and this view has gotten into some of the dictionaries [lexicons]. The noun always = fellowship, and in the case of alms a fellowship that is exercised by means of alms. ... The verb means... to be or to make participant, the latter, however, in the sense “to share something with somebody, thereby not making him a fellow with *oneself*, but making oneself a fellow with *him*.... The one who instructs has the “all good things; the one being instructed is to proceed to participate in them, in “all” of them. The riches are with the teacher of the Word, the poverty is with the pupil, and the pupil is to institute “fellowship” with the teacher so that he, the pupil, may be enriched. ... With those [teachers] who have the burdens and with those who have these good things we should keep fellowship, making *ourselves* fellow with *them*.

This is just about the opposite of the common view. ... Could Paul tell the Galatians in this letter that they owed material contributions to him and his helpers? Could he do such a thing with no further word of explanation? Paul never took money for his work. When he speaks of this subject in 1 Cor. 9 he does so with the fullest and clearest explanation. See the same thought in 2 Cor. 11:7-12....

We ought also not to forget the Judaizers who also came as teachers, on whose greediness 2 Cor. 11:20 enlightens us. When such greedy fellows were working in Galatia, Paul could scarcely write the Galatians to share “in all good things” (material) with their teachers. ... We need not discuss “the one instructing.” Paul had not left the Galatian churches in an unorganized state; he had them elect elders and pastors who were qualified to teach. ... “In all good things” that were possessed by their instructors, Paul and his assistants among them, the Galatians should ever cultivate fellowship for their own enrichment. Then all would, indeed, be well with them. Pay for these teachers? There is no reason to mention it in this epistle. Sowing for the flesh and sowing for the spirit deal with a subject that is far greater, namely with the desire for all good spiritual things in which the Galatians should seek to share.

Kenneth W. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies*, Vol. 1, pp. 169-171:

Wuest’s translation: Moreover, let the one who is being taught the Word, constantly be holding fellowship with the one who is teaching in all good things.

The word *communicate* [in the KJV] means “to share, to be a partner in a thing with a person,” here “to hold fellowship with another person.” ...The one who is taught should hold fellowship with his teachers in all good things. What the good things are is defined by the context. ...the good things of verse 6 refer to spiritual things, since they are contrasted to the evil things just spoken of.

Now, the Judaizers had precipitated a situation in the Galatian churches in which those who followed their teaching broke fellowship with the true teachers of the Word. Paul is exhorting these to resume their fellowship with their former teachers and share with them in the blessing of grace which their teachers were enjoying.

...The interpretation that makes the one taught assume the responsibility for the financial welfare of his teacher is not possible in this instance of the use of the word *koinoneo*. This is the word Paul uses in Phil. 4:15, where he speaks of the obligation of the one taught to make the financial needs of his teacher his own, thus sharing his earthly goods inasmuch as the teacher has shared with him is heavenly blessing. But Paul does not use it so here, and for the following reasons: *First*, the context which speaks both of the evil (6:1-5) and the morally good (6:9,10) is against the interpretation that financial support is in the apostle’s mind here. *Second*, the context defines the good things as being of a spiritual, not a material nature. Third, it would be the height of folly for Paul to inject such a delicate subject as the pocket book of the saints...into the already discordant atmosphere of the Galatian churches. ...Fourth, if Paul were exhorting the saints to contribute financially to the support of their former teachers, the Judaizers would be quick to say that the apostle was attempting to win the Galatian saints back to grace for financial reasons.... He [Paul] would not lay himself open to this charge by such an unwise act.”

The one comment we would make about Wuest is that when Paul used the term *koinoneo* in Phil. 4:15, he did not expect that it would communicate the meaning of money, but rather he said, “no church fellowshipped with me in regard to giving and receiving.” Thus, even in Phil. 4:15, “fellowship” was defined in the context as fellowship in the financial arena. Vincent agrees with the commentators above, stating that *koinoneo* means “hold fellowship with...not impart to” (*Vincent’s Word Studies*; Vol. 4).

The point of Galatians 6:6 is that the true teachers have the “all good things” and the pupils are to fellowship with them, participating in all the good things that the teachers have. The context then follows suit. God is not mocked, if we sow sparingly (by not having fellowship with those who have all good things) then we will reap sparingly (we will not partake of those good things). If we sow to the flesh (circumcision) we will reap corruption, if we sow to the spirit (freedom in Christ), we reap everlasting life (“life” in the more powerful sense of “life indeed,” not just being alive).

6:7. The verb *mukterizo* (#), “mocked,” is literally, to turn up the nose at, treat with contempt, and thus to mock.

6:8. “Corruption.” Robertson points out that the meaning of the Greek word depends on the context, which is certainly the case here. It can mean (cp. BDAG):

- breakdown of organic matter: dissolution, deterioration, corruption,
- destruction of a fetus: abortion.

- ruination of a person through an immoral act (i.e., the *seduction* of a young woman)
- inward depravity
- total destruction of an entity: hence, destruction in the last days.

If a person sows to the flesh, it can result in many types of corruption. His deterioration, corruption, ruination, depravity, and if he is unsaved eventually his total destruction in Gehenna. Given the wide range of meaning, “corruption” is a good translation.

6:10. There is some debate about whether the verse should read, “while” we have opportunity, or “as” (i.e., “when”) we have opportunity. The Greek can go either way. We believe that God is pointing out that we always have opportunity to do good (you can always pray for someone) so let us be doing good. The verse does not seem to be saying that we should be waiting for an “opportunity” to arise and then do good. However, when a special opportunity for good arises, and those occasions do occur, then we can and should take advantage of those times also.

“work that which is good.” It is easy to say, “do good,” like so many translations, but the Greek uses the word “work,” and we believe that is because doing good so often involves work. We must be willing to “work” to help others, not just “do” good when it is convenient for us.

6:11. It was common for Paul and other Romans to use an “amanuensis,” a professional scribe, to write down dictation, but then at the end of the letter write something in personal handwriting, which, not being written by a professional, often had larger letters not as clean and neat. We do the same kind of thing when we type a business letter but sign our name. Paul’s own handwriting at the end of Galatians had big letters. It is also possible that Paul wrote the entire epistle by himself, and the entire autograph had large letters.

6:12. Make a good showing. Not, as the NIV, a good impression, but rather to show off, an ostentatious display of their religion in a way people could see it.

“are trying to compel” present active.

6:14. The opening is an idiom, thus the versions all differ as to exactly how to translate it. Most of them get the sense. We more closely agree with Lenski.

6:15. Great example of the power of an ellipsis. The “is everything” is demanded by the context, but in ellipsis, the words that are present receive the emphasis. Thus, the phrase would read like, “For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a NEW CREATION is everything.”

6:16. The word “standard” is the Greek word *kanon* (#2583 κανών) from which we get the “Canon” of Scripture. Originally, a *kanon* was a rod for measuring, then other meanings developed. Cp. BDAG:

1. a means to determine the quality of someth., *rule, standard*
2. set of directions or formulation for an activity, *assignment, formulation* for public service. Others (incl. NRSV, REB) emphasize the geographical component and render *sphere (of action), province, limit*.
3. In the second century in the Christian church κ. came to stand for revealed truth, *rule of faith*.

We felt that “rule” did not communicate properly, because knowing that it was not circumcision or uncircumcision that was important but rather the new creation is not a “rule,” but rather a standard.

“even upon the Israel of God.” This verse defines “the Israel of God” as those who will keep in line with the standard that neither being a Jew or being a Gentile means anything, but the new creation means everything.

6:17. “From now on, let no one cause trouble for me.” Paul was not saying that from now on he did not want to be troubled by people, but rather that his fighting with the Galatians about law and grace was done. The issue was settled.

“the marks.” The Greek word “stigmata” can refer to marks, tattoos, or brands. Slaves were sometimes branded, but usually only when they were runaways or rebellious. Also, sometimes devotees of a pagan Temple branded themselves, but does this fit Paul? Probably not. Sometimes men in the army tattooed the name of their commander on their flesh, but that was self-inflicted and probably not what is being referred to here. The best way to translate seems to understand that the “marks” were real, scars of past floggings, and there were some parallels in the Greco-Roman world people would identify with. The idea that the “stigmata” were the same as the scars of Christ is a modern idea with no biblical foundation.

6:18. “your spirit.” This is a synecdoche for “you,” with the emphasis on the spiritual side of life. Paul could have said “your body,” and meant “you,” or “your soul” and meant you, but the fact that he said “spirit” emphasizes the spiritual side of life, and the things which “spirit” can mean such as attitude. It is not our “spirit” that needs grace, we need grace.

