



Sunday School Lesson
Gal. 5:25-6:18
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**Spirit-led Ministry
 and Goodbye**



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In this final study on Galatians we take a look at two important sections of Paul's letter to the churches in the Roman province of Galatia: (1) the third set of admonitions growing out of Christian freedom (5:25-6:10) and (2) the letter Conclusio (6:11-18). The second of these two sections is probably the least often studied section of the entire letter. Yet, it probably should be studied at the beginning along with the Praescriptio (1:1-5) and the Exordium (1:6-10). Originally written in Paul's own handwriting as his verification of the contents of the letter it contains the summary of the letter body, which was written by his unnamed scribe with a different handwriting. This could easily have been of the unnamed "all the brothers who are here with me" mentioned in 1:2 as senders of the letter.



The contents of these two sections are very different from one another and would not ordinarily be studied together. We do this because of the grouping of the material in the Formations Sunday School series in their five week cycle intended to cover the book of Galatians in a summary fashion.

I Context

Just a quick study of these two passages will underscore the critical role that context plays in correct interpretation of both passages. This is especially true for the literary setting of these two passages.

a. Historical

Again, the **external history** of these two passages remains the same as that established in the [beginning study](#). Thus we will follow the pattern of the preceding lessons and merely repeat the summary of that external history here.

Thus, Galatians is Paul's letter of concern written to the churches established on the [first missionary](#) journey (AD 46-47) after he had revisited them on the [second missionary](#) journey (AD 48-51). Somewhere in Macedonia, he received word that teachers had arrived at Galatia from Palestine and were teaching that the apostolic gospel actually demanded that non-Jews must first convert to Judaism (circumcision and Torah obedience pledge) and then put their faith in Christ in order to become Christians. This violated the agreement reached at the Jerusalem Council meeting in AD 48, as well as represented a fatal misrepresentation of the revelation that Paul had received concerning the content of the gospel. Circumstances prevented Paul from traveling back to Galatia to confront these false teachers. So he did the next best thing; he wrote a letter addressing the issues of his authority to preach the gospel as an apostle (1:11-2:21) and a defense of the content of the gospel message that he preached (3:1-6:10).

No major **internal history** issue arises in these two passages, apart from the historical identification of Paul's opponents at Galatia in 6:12-16. This issue was addressed in the immediately preceding lesson on 5:1-24 and I would refer you to [that study](#) for the details.

b. Literary

The literary setting for these two passages is important for the interpretative process. The overall arrangement of the contents of the letter itself forms the basic context. This is reproduced from the outline in the [larger internet version](#) of this study:

HEADING:	STATEMENT:	REFERENCE:
PRAESCRPTIO		1.1-5
PROPOSITIO (PROEM), EXORDIUM	1-7	1.6-10
BODY	8-192	1.11-6.10
CONCLUSIO (ESCHOTOKOLL)	193-204	6.11-18

The formal Conclusio is more than a conclusion to the letter. Its formal elements summarize, lift praises to God, offer a prayer of blessing as a benediction etc. to what has been said in the letter. Thus the formal, Latin title of this part of ancient letters is used, as well as to introduce the reader to terms that are increasingly employed on both sides of the Atlantic in the study of the letters of the NT in relationship to ancient letter writing patterns. This sets the stage for the study of 6:11-18.

In order to understand the literary context of 5:25-6:10 the internal contents of the letter body need to be reviewed. Once again we turn to that rhetorical outline of Galatians for some help:

HEADING:	STATEMENT:	REFERENCE:
BODY	8-192	1.11-6.10
Narratio	8-52	1.11-2.21
Probatio	53-139	3.1-4.31
Exhortatio	140-191	5.1-6.10
Admonition 1	140-159	5.1-12
Admonition 2	160-173	5.13-24
<i>Admonition 3</i>	<i>174-191</i>	<i>5.25-6.10</i>
CONCLUSIO (ESCHOTOKOLL)	193-204	6.11-18

As the above outline demonstrates, 5:25-6:10 comes as the third set of admonitions growing out of the axiom/admonition foundation established in 5:1 on freedom in Christ. In the stair-casing pattern of each of these three sets of admonitions, this third set builds off the principle set forth in 5:25, which draws off the emphasis upon the leadership of the Holy Spirit in 5:13-24, which has built off the foundational principle in 5:1 with the warnings contained in 5:2-12. Freedom in Christ is the only way to overcome the powerful old nature (=the flesh). That freedom means the presence and leadership of the Holy Spirit. The fruits of the Spirit emphasized in 5:22-23 stresses attitudes and dispositions toward other people. These are the products of being led by the Holy Spirit. But what about actions growing out of that leadership of the Spirit? This issue is addressed in 5:25-6:10 with emphases upon ministry to others. But Paul will stress the prior need of getting our attitudes in proper position before we attempt to minister to others. Otherwise, that ministry loses both its helpfulness and its blessing from God. It can even turn into an "occasion for the flesh" that he warned about in 5:13.



II. Message

The different nature of these two passages has already been addressed because of the literary setting of both these passages. Each of the two passages will have very different internal organization of their content, in part, because of this different role that each is playing in the letter as a whole. These internal structures will be discussed under the study of each topic. One can pick up on this somewhat by studying the [block diagram](#) of the Greek text, that is contained in the larger internet version of this study.

a. Admonition Three, 5:25-6:10

GNT

^{5.25}εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν. ^{5.26}μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι, ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες. ^{6.1}Ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν καὶ προληφθῇ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος, σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῆς. ^{6.2}Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. ^{6.3}εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι μηδὲν ὄν, φρεναπατᾶ ἑαυτόν. ^{6.4}τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καύχημα ἔξει καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον. ^{6.5}ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει. ^{6.6}Κοινωνεῖτω δὲ ὁ κατηχούμενος τὸν λόγον τῷ κατηχοῦντι ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς. ^{6.7}Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, θεὸς οὐ μυκτηρίζεται. ὁ γὰρ ἐὰν σπεῖρη ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει. ^{6.8}ὅτι ὁ σπεύρων εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς θερίσει φθοράν, ὁ δὲ σπεύρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος θερίσει ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ^{6.9}τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιῶντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν, καιρῷ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλύμενοι. ^{6.10}ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως.

NASB

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another. 6.1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one will bear his own load. 6 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

NRSV

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another. 6.1 My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. 4 All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. 5 For all must carry their own loads. 6 Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher. 7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. 8 If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. 9 So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. 10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

NLT

25 If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. 26 Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another. 6.1 Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. 2 Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. 3 If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody. 4 Be sure to do what you should, for then you will enjoy the personal satisfaction of having done your work well, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. 5 For we are each responsible for our own conduct. 6 Those who are taught the word of God should help their teachers by paying them. 7 Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow! 8 Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit

Notes:

Just as has been the case in the two previous sets of admonitions, this third set starts off with a foundational premise that becomes the basis of the rest of the material. Verse 25 stands as the cornerstone to 5:26-6:10. Also like the two previous foundational statements (5:1 and 5:13), this one contains an axiom and an admonition based on the axiom. The distinctive about verse 25 from the two previous ones is its shortness.

Verse 25 emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in ministry and grows out of the central emphasis upon the Holy Spirit in the second set of admonitions in 5:13-24. For the apostle one could not function as a Christian without a clear sense of the leadership of the Holy Spirit. This becomes very clear in this premise assertion here: “If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit” (εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν). The English translations blur the nature of the expression in the Greek text. In this first class Greek sentence construction, the if-clause (=protasis) assumes what is said. Thus it isn’t a possibility that our spiritual existence is found in the Holy Spirit. This is an axiomatic assumption by Paul. Thus the idea is that since this is true, we should carry out the “then” part of the sentence (=apodosis), i.e., being guided by the Holy Spirit. But again most English translations fail to bring out clearly the idea of Paul in the admonition. The Greek verb, στοιχῶμεν, literally means to keep in step with.... This verb had a military background of usage and often was used of soldiers marching in absolute lock-step with one another during a parade. In reality Paul’s emphasis is that since we owe our spiritual existence to the Spirit of God, he then should become our drill sergeant leading us in lock-step unity with him as we move through life.

The question then becomes: Where will that lead us? 5:26-6:10 provides some answers to that question. A variety of responses surfaces in these verses. But one pattern seems to dominate. The connection between attitude and action is made very strongly. Negative attitudes lead to wrong actions; positive attitudes produce positive actions. The role of the Holy Spirit in producing both positive attitudes and positive actions is very clear. When the flesh controls the result is negative attitudes and negative actions. There is also a pattern of stressing both the flesh mindset and the Spirit led mindset in this section.

The **first** set comes in verse 26: “Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.” (μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι, ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες.). The attitude is κενόδοξοι. Literally, the idea is “empty glory.” This adjective is stated in the plural, which, in Greek, stresses not just the attitude but concrete expressions of attitude. Although the adjective, κενόδοξος, is only used here in the entire NT, the noun form, κενοδοξία, is used one time in Philippians (2:3): “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself.” The resulting actions are specified in the subsequent two participial adjectives: ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες. The first is variously translated as “challenging one another,” (NASB), “competing against one another,” (NRSV), “irritate one another,” (NLT). The verb προκαλόμαι is [another single NT occurrence instance with the typical meaning of either \(1\) “to call forth to one's self, especially to challenge to a combat or contest with one, or \(2\) to provoke, to irritate.”](#) In either meaning the idea is to interact with others in a hostile manner. Of course, the individual with a bloated head is going to interact negatively with others. The second participial adjective is ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες. This is a little easier to understand and is translated as “envying one another” (NASB, NRSV) or “be jealous of one another” (NLT). The verb φθονέω clearly suggests [the idea](#) of expressions of envy or jealousy. Although this verb is only used here in the NT, the noun φθόνος is used [some nine times](#) throughout the NT, with a similar meaning. Envy, especially expressions of it, are strongly condemned in the Bible, as Mark Karlberg shows in his article on “Envy” in the [Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#). One with a bloated self-esteem is going to be especially prone to this sin when others have what he desires. What Paul emphasizes here is the situation where the flesh has risen its ugly head to control the individual. When this happens, disaster follows.

The **second** set of attitudes/actions comes in 6:1: “My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted.” (Ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν καὶ προλημφθῆ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε

will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. 9 So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time. 10 Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone, especially to our Christian brothers and sisters.

τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος, σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῆς.). When the Spirit -- rather than the flesh -- is controlling, ministry to others takes place, rather than hostile actions. One particularly sensitive area of ministry is reaching out to fellow believers who are caught up in sinful actions themselves. Paul sets up such a situation in the “if” clause (the protasis of a doubtful concessive Greek sentence). The impact of this is to pose a hypothetical situation without assuming that it is actually taking place among his Galatian readers. “Even if this is going on,” says Paul, “then here’s what you need to do.” The situation of sinfulness is left broad and not specific: ἐν τινι παραπτώματι (in some sort of transgression). The admonition that forms the main clause of the sentence (the apodosis in the Greek) urges those under the Holy Spirit’s leadership to “mend the nets” of these individuals. The verb used here is often used to describe fishermen mending their nets. The idea is graphic; the wayward Christian is to be helped to put his/her spiritual life back together. This positive action, however, is to be carried out in the spirit of meekness lest the individual fall prey to the temptation to spiritual elitism or pride. Again, the leadership of the Holy Spirit produces both positive attitudes and positive actions.

Spiritual restoration of wayward believers is a topic found in other places in the New Testament. One similar emphasis is found in [James 5:19-20](#): “19 My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, 20 you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner’s soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” (NRSV). When an entire congregation engages in backsliding there is the warning found to the church at Ephesus in [Rev. 2:4-5](#): “4 But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5 Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place, unless you repent.” (NRSV) Paul expressed a somewhat similar concern about the Corinthians in this regard in [2 Cor. 11:1-4](#): “1 I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! 2 I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by its cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you submit to it readily enough.” (NRSV) One of the largest mission fields for most congregations is their inactive membership roll. If we could reclaim just half of these people to sincere commitment to Christ our church attendance would double in most instances. But such work requires very mature Christians following the guidelines of Gal. 6:1 and Jas. 5:19-20.

The **third** set of emphases in this larger section is found in 6:2-5: “2 Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. 4 All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor’s work, will become a cause for pride. 5 For all must carry their own loads.” (^{6.2} Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. ^{6.3} εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι μηδὲν ὄν, φρεναπατᾷ ἑαυτόν. ^{6.4} τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καύχημα ἔξει καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον. ^{6.5} ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει.). Again, the attitude/action structure is foundational to Paul’s words. Verses 2-5 grows out of the emphasis in 6:1, but generalizes the concept to broader applications. It then will lay the foundation for the fourth set in 6:6.

The initial admonition to bear one another’s burdens is a general encouragement to reach out in ministry to others, especially those in the community of faith. In some ways the preceding section of 6:1 stands as a specific example of this general principle. But only as an illustration of it. The admonition of 6:2 is much broader in its scope than just reclaiming wayward Christians. In a limited fashion it is similar to Paul’s declaration in Rom. 15:1 ([NASB](#)): “Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.” Adherence to this admonition is seen as a fulfillment of “the law of Christ” (οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ). This unnamed principle most likely is Christ’s application of Lev. 19:18, “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but *you shall love your neighbor as yourself*; I am the LORD,” which Jesus frequently quoted from the second part of this OT scripture (Mt. 19:19; 22:39; Mk. 12:31; Lk. 10:27) and is also labeled the “royal law” in Jas. 2:8. Paul also cites it in Rom. 13:9. Thus loving our neighbor is applied when we bear one another’s burdens.

In a rationale undergirding this command/promise admonition, Paul stresses in verses 3-5 the critical nature of proper attitude for doing this ministry to others correctly. Before we can help others we must have “our heads screwed on right.” If we have an inflated self image, “For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves”, we won’t be able to help others constructively. A self-inventory needs to

be carried out, before attempting to help shoulder someone else's burdens. Once we take stock of ourselves and discover "there but for the grace of God could I be" then we will have the right sense of humility and realization of God's grace as the solution to everyone's problems. Paul reminds his readers in verse 5 that each one must shoulder his own responsibility. This statement seems at first to be in tension with that in verse 2. Each must bear his own burdens; bear one another's burdens. To be sure different Greek words are used for the idea of burden: τὰ βάρη (v. 2) and τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον (v. 5). But as Richard Longenecker in the *Word Biblical Commentary* (vol. 41) observes, "φορτίον is, of course, synonymous with βάρος." The different words provide stylistic effect. Common sense clarifies the point. Individual accountability for one's actions is the point of verse 5, while ministry obligation to others is the point of verse 2.

The **fourth** point is made in verse 6: "Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher" (Κοινωνεῖτω δὲ ὁ κατηχούμενος τὸν λόγον τῷ κατηχοῦντι ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς). This instruction seems to break the thought flow somewhat, but perhaps not as much as is often understood. In ministry to others, taking care of spiritual leaders serves as an important part of that ministry. One needs also to remember the early Christian pattern, unlike modern church patterns, where most of the leaders of the Christian communities grew out of the local community itself. Plus occasional traveling missionaries like Paul would pass through helping the churches. The latter group especially would be dependent upon the generosity of the various communities of faith to provide hospitality and financial support. Paul, elsewhere, affirms the importance of helping these individuals: [1 Cor. 9:3-14](#), which he summarizes in verse 14: "So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel" and [1 Tim. 5:17-18](#): "17 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, 'YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,' and 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.'" This Paul affirmed, even though he personally did not claim anything from the churches while establishing them. Afterwards some of them helped undergird his ministry elsewhere, such as the church at Philippi as is indicated in [Phil. 4:14-18](#): "14 In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress. 15 You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. 16 For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account. 18 I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God." The conceptual link of verse 6 to this section is the obligation of ministry to others.

The **final** point of this section is verses 7-10: "7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. 8 If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. 9 So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. 10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith." (^{6.7}Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, θεὸς οὐ μυκτηρίζεται. ὁ γὰρ ἐὰν σπείρη ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει· ^{6.8}ὅτι ὁ σπεύρων εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς θερίσει φθοράν, ὁ δὲ σπεύρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος θερίσει ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ^{6.9}τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιῶντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν, καιρῷ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλυόμενοι. ^{6.10}ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκειοὺς τῆς πίστεως.). The summary nature of these verses is clearly apparent, and serves to wrap up this section on ministry to others, as well as the entire Exhortatio in 5:1-6:10. He begins with a reminder that you cannot deceive God about whether or not you have reached out to others. His sowing and reaping principle is the foundation for this. This agricultural axiom is very common in ancient literature both inside and outside the Old Testament, in both Jewish and Greco-Roman sources. In verse 8, Paul applies it to the issues of the flesh and the Spirit which have been the underlying theme of his discussion since 5:1, at least. Which ever orientation one adopts, the consequences are commensurate with the orientation. And one does not escape the consequences! In verses 9-10, he concludes on the positive side with a couple of admonitions to remain steadfast sowing to the Spirit, which in turn means doing good to others.

What lessons can we learn from 5:1-6:10? There are many! The importance of true Christian freedom is central. Our Christian life has to flow out of a profound sense of indebtedness to Christ and His gift of redemption. Outside imposed rules and regulations will prove to be disastrous to authentic Christian living. Instead, our outward behavior must stem from within as an expression of the leadership of the Holy Spirit. When we stand in lockstep obedience to Him, our lives are driven by faith energized by love. This means

the focus is upon positive actions toward others, and away from self-centered personal spiritual achievement. This is the result of fleshly motivation coming out of external rules and regulations. Thus the role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life is enormous, and critical. He is the source of the required spiritual power to live right; He is the source of the proper leadership guiding our behavior. Through Him alone we are able to "see beyond the tips of our nose" in order to reach out to others in ministry. This ministry works off a healthy self-image and touches the lives of others all the way from wayward believers to spiritual leaders.

What a disaster then to neglect the importance of the Holy Spirit in our lives! Often times, Baptists have been guilty of doing this very thing. We let the excesses of our Pentecostal brethren over the Holy Spirit make us afraid of the presence of God's Spirit. The issue, as W.T. Conner from Southwestern Seminary used to say to his students in the 1920s and 30s, is not how high you jump when the Spirit takes over control. Instead, it is how straight you walk when you hit the ground! That certainly is Paul's point here in Galatians.

GNT

^{6.11} Ἴδετε πηλίκοις ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ. ^{6.12} ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμεσθαι, μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται. ^{6.13} οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοῖ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχῆσωνται. ^{6.14} ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ κόσμῳ. ^{6.15} οὔτε γὰρ περιτομὴ τί ἐστίν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. ^{6.16} καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, εἰρήνη ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ. ^{6.17} Τοῦ λοιποῦ κόπους μοι μηδεὶς παρεχέτω· ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματί μου βαστάζω. ^{6.18} Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί· ἀμήν.

NASB

11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. 12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. 14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. 16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. 17 From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus. 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

NRSV

11 See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! 12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. 14 May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! 16 As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. 17 From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body. 18 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

NLT

11 Notice what large letters I use as I write these closing words in my own handwriting. 12 Those who are trying to force you to be circumcised are doing it for just one reason. They don't want to be persecuted for teaching that the cross of Christ alone can save. 13 And even those who advocate circumcision don't really keep the whole law. They only want you to be circumcised so they can brag about it and claim you as their disciples. 14 As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead. 15 It doesn't make any difference now whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people. 16 May God's mercy and peace be upon all those who live by this principle. They are the new people of God. 17 From now on, don't let anyone trouble me with these things. For I bear on my body the scars that show I belong to Jesus. 18 My dear brothers and sisters, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

b. Conclusio, 6:11-18

Notes:

This part of Paul's letter stands as the Conclusio, that is, a formal closing to the letter. In ancient letters this section could contain the wide variety of distinctive materials. In Cranfordville.com under [NT Letter Genre](#) I have a fairly detailed discussion of these elements that show up in the letters of the NT at this place. These include partly, but not completely, Greetings, Sender Verifications, Doxologies, Benedictions.

In the Conclusio of Galatians we find (Sender Verification, vv. 11-16; and a Benedictio, v. 18). Verse 17 is distinctive and doesn't fall into any identifiable pattern. The absence of both a Doxology and Greetings, in addition to the lengthy Sender Verification, are consistent with the serious, tense tone of the entire letter.

Sender Verification, vv. 11-16. In the ancient world, due to a variety of reasons, most long, formal letters, and other kinds of documents, were not written directly by the identified sender of the letter (Superscriptio, 1:1-2a). Instead, they were dictated to a writing secretary (an *amanuensis* in Latin; a γραμματεὺς in Greek). Also, depending upon different circumstances, the dictation process could take on different patterns. These ranged from a virtually word-for-word dictation pattern to a loose sketching out of basic topics that gave the writing secretary freedom to flesh out in detail the way he assumed the sender would do had he been writing the letter himself. That Paul followed this pattern is indicated in [2 Thess. 3:17](#): "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the mark in every letter of mine; it is the way I write." and [1 Cor. 16:21](#): "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand." The clear implication of these passages is that a writing secretary has written the letter, then Paul writes part or all of the Conclusio in his own handwriting, which would be recognizable to the readers, as a verification that the entire letter represented his thoughts. In Rom. 16:22 in writing secretary identifies himself as Tertius: "I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord." This is the only Pauline letter where the writing secretary identifies himself by name, but in 1 Peter 5:12, Silvanus (the Latin name for Silas in Greek) is identified by name as the writer of 1 Peter: "Through Silvanus, whom I consider a faithful brother, I have written this short letter to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it."

Thus, we are confident that a writing secretary did the actual writing of Galatians, but he remains anonymous. Perhaps, he was Timothy, or Silas both of whom were a part of the traveling group of missionaries by this point in time. Were it Silas, then this Christian leader has two documents in the NT that he actually wrote, one each for both Paul and Peter.

This lengthy section of the Conclusio stands as the most detailed Sender Verification in any of Paul's letters: "11 See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! 12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. 14 May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! 16 As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." (6.11) Ἴδετε πηλίκους ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ. (6.12) ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται. (6.13) οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχῶσινται. (6.14) ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ κόσμῳ. (6.15) οὔτε γὰρ περιτομὴ τί ἐστίν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. (6.16) καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, εἰρήνη ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ.).

It begins with an indication of Paul's distinctive style of handwriting for the Conclusio: large letters. This was perhaps due to a health problem that the apostle suffered. He mentions a "thorn in the flesh" in [2 Cor. 12:7](#). If his mention of a health problem in [Gal. 4:13-14](#) is related to this 2 Cor 12 reference, it could possibly have connection to this Gal. 6:11 reference: "13 You know that it was because of a physical infirmity that I first announced the gospel to you; 14 though my condition put you to the test, you did not scorn or despise me, but welcomed me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus." Often this has been understood to be a problem related to Paul's eyes, but there is no clear indication of this.

Verses 12-15 stand as a summation of the basic theme of the entire letter. The new aspects of these verses is to make explicit what has been implicit in earlier accusations against the Judaizing opponents.

Verse 12 accuses them of pressing the issue of circumcision out of cowardice: “only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.” They were willing to compromise the gospel for the sake of avoiding hostility. This was motivated by the desire “to make a good showing in the flesh.” Perhaps the background of this is the Zealot revolt in Palestine that promoted a fanatical Jewish nationalism, and treated any Jew with sympathetic attitudes toward Gentiles as guilty of treason and deserving to be executed. But Paul did not find in any of this a justified basis for compromising the core of the gospel of faith apart from works of law.

In the second charge against the Judaizers (v. 13), he accuses them of hypocrisy: “Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh.” They were pressuring the Gentiles to commit to something that they did not personally live up to. Besides, they were looking for “spiritual trophies” to give them bragging rights about the number of new converts they had achieved.

Paul’s stance is pitted against that of the Judaizers in verses 14-15: “14 May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything!” In repeating his arguments in 2:18-21 and of 5:24, in verse 14 he affirms his unconditional commitment to Christ as an action of death. Thus any glory that comes must go to Christ and not to the apostle. In verse 15 he repeats his declaration of 3:28 and 5:6 but adds a summation of those earlier declarations that what matters before God is a new creation.

Then verse 16 pronounces a prayer of blessing upon all those who walk in lockstep adherence to these points: “As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” What is not entirely clear is whether “the Israel of God” is to be taken as a new name for those following the apostolic gospel, or whether this refers to Jewish Christians walking in agreement with the apostolic gospel. In either case God’s blessings are invoked upon all who adhere to this faith once revealed to the saints of God.

Verse 17 does its own thing without following a clearly defined literary pattern as do verses 11-16 and verse 18: “From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.” Paul asks that everyone from this point on leave him alone. He doesn’t need any more criticism from inside the community of believers. The credentials for validation of his ministry and message are the scars received from beatings etc. delivered already by opponents to the gospel from outside the community of faith. Assuming our understanding of time and place, this letter was written after his suffering in Philippi on the second missionary journey. The Galatians, especially at Iconium, would have remembered how he was beaten into unconsciousness and left for dead there during the first missionary journey. These were all endured for the sake of Jesus and by preaching the gospel message of salvation exclusively through Jesus.

Verse 18 brings the letter to a *Benedictio* prayer of blessing upon his readers: “May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.” Of the traditional letters of Paul only 2 Corinthians doesn’t contain such a closing prayer. This pattern of a closing prayer of blessing was not uncommon for ancient letters with no Christian connection. For Paul, the opening prayer found in the proem -- except for Galatians -- together with the closing prayer, the *Benedictio*, echoed early patterns of Christian worship, which had been borrowed from Jewish synagogue patterns of opening and closing prayers. Modern patterns of Christian worship still follow this tradition of opening and closing prayers. The formal nature of Paul’s prayer here suggests an established prayer pattern found in early Christian worship tradition. This pattern began and concluded Paul’s letters with an invoking of God’s presence and blessing upon his readers.

What can we learn from 6:11-18? For one thing, Christianity done for outward show is very suspect. The focus must always center upon Jesus, and never upon our own spiritual achievements! Secondly, we must never compromise the heart of the gospel. There should be a willingness to suffer and die for it. Though few, if any, of us in the US can point to physical scars on our bodies as validation marks of our commitment, many Christians in our world today can do so. We should be praying fervently for those who have to pay such high prices for their faith. Finally, the importance of prayer, and especially prayer in public worship, should be gleaned from these verses. For Paul it played a very important role, in large part because he recognized the critical importance of God’s blessing upon His people. If the Galatians were to stand firm in the gospel, they would need God’s blessing. Paul could make powerful arguments to them for doing this. But ultimately God’s blessings would be the decisive difference in persuading them which way to go.

Appendix 5:¹
STRUCTURAL OUTLINE OF GALATIANS

HEADING:	STATEMENT:	REFERENCE:
PRESCRIPTIO		1.1-5
Superscriptio		1.1-2a
Adscriptio	1.2b	
Salutatio		1.3-5
PROPOSITIO (PROEM)	1-7	1.6-10
BODY	8-192	1.11-6.10
Narratio	8-52	1.11-2.21
Thesis	8-11	1.11-12
Evidences	12-52	1.13-2.21
1 Conversion	12-16	1.13-17
2 1st Jerusalem Visit	17-20	1.18-20
3 Return Home	21-24	1.21-24
4 Later Jerusalem Visit	25-35	2.1-10
5 Antioch Confrontation	36-41	2.11-14
Conclusion	42-52	2.15-21
Probatio	53-139	3.1-4.31
Conversion (1)	53-59	3.1-5
Abraham (2)	60-69	3.6-14
Law (3)	70-78	3.15-18
Excursus A	79-89	3.19-25
Baptism (4)	90-104	3.26-4.7
Experience (5)	105-108	4.8-11
Friendship (6)	109-121	4.12-20
Allegory (7)	122-139	4.21-31
Exhortatio	140-191	5.1-6.10
Admonition 1	140-159	5.1-12
Admonition 2	160-173	5.13-24
Admonition 3	174-191	5.25-6.10
CONCLUSIO (ESCHOTOKOLL)	192-204	6.11-18
Seal	192	6.11
Synopsis	193-201	6.12-16
Request	202-203	6.17
Benediction	204	6.18

¹Taken from Lorin L. Cranford, A Study Manual of Paul's Letter to the Galatians: English Text (Fort Worth: Scripta Publishing, Inc., 1982), 159. All rights reserved.

GNT

^{5.25}εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν.

^{5.26}μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι, ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες.

^{6.1}Ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν καὶ προλημφθῆ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος, σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῆς. ^{6.2}Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. ^{6.3}εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι μηδὲν ὄν, φρεναπατᾷ ἑαυτόν. ^{6.4}τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καύχημα ἔξει καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον. ^{6.5}ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει. ^{6.6}Κοινωνεῖτω δὲ ὁ κατηχούμενος τὸν λόγον τῶ κατηχοῦντι ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς. ^{6.7}Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, θεὸς οὐ μυκτηρίζεται. ὁ γὰρ ἐὰν σπεῖρη ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει. ^{6.8}ὅτι ὁ σπείρων εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς θερίσει φθοράν, ὁ δὲ σπείρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος θερίσει ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ^{6.9}τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιοῦντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν, καιρῶ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλύομενοι. ^{6.10}Ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκειοὺς τῆς πίστεως.

^{6.11}Ἴδετε πηλίκους ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ. ^{6.12}ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὔτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, μόνον ἵνα τῶ σταυρῶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται. ^{6.13}οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουν ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχῆσονται. ^{6.14}ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῶ σταυρῶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ ἐγὼ κόσμῳ. ^{6.15}οὔτε γὰρ περιτομὴ τί ἐστίν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. ^{6.16}καὶ ὅσοι τῶ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, εἰρήνην ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ.

^{6.17}Τοῦ λοιποῦ κόπους μοι μηδεὶς παρεχέτω· ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῶ σώματί μου βαστάζω.

^{6.18}Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί· ἀμήν.

NASB

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

6.1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one will bear his own load. 6 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. 12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. 14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. 16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. 17 From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus. 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

NRSV

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

26 Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

6.1 My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. 4 All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. 5 For all must carry their own loads. 6 Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher. 7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. 8 If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. 9 So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. 10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

11 See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! 12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. 14 May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! 16 As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. 17 From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body. 18 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

NLT

25 If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

26 Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another.

6.1 Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. 2 Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. 3 If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody. 4 Be sure to do what you should, for then you will enjoy the personal satisfaction of having done your work well, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. 5 For we are each responsible for our own conduct. 6 Those who are taught the word of God should help their teachers by paying them. 7 Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow! 8 Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. 9 So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time. 10 Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone, especially to our Christian brothers and sisters.

11 Notice what large letters I use as I write these closing words in my own handwriting. 12 Those who are trying to force you to be circumcised are doing it for just one reason. They don't want to be persecuted for teaching that the cross of Christ alone can save. 13 And even those who advocate circumcision don't really keep the whole law. They only want you to be circumcised so they can brag about it and claim you as their disciples. 14 As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead. 15 It doesn't make any difference now whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people. 16 May God's mercy and peace be upon all those who live by this principle. They are the new people of God. 17 From now on, don't let anyone trouble me with these things. For I bear on my body the scars that show I belong to Jesus. 18 My dear brothers and sisters, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Block Diagram of Greek Text

5.25 εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι,
173 πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν.

174 5.26 μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι,
ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι,
ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες.

6.1 Ἄδελφοί,
175 ἔὰν καὶ προλημφθῆ ἄνθρωπος
ἐν τινι παραπτώματι,
ὕμεις οἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον
ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος,
σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν
μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῆς.

176 6.2 Ἄλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε
καὶ
οὕτως
177 ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

6.3 γὰρ
178 εἰ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι
μηδὲν ὄν,
φρεναπατᾶ ἑαυτὸν.

6.4 δὲ
179 τὸ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος,
καὶ
180 τότε
τὸ καύχημα ἔξει
εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον
καὶ
181 οὐκ (τὸ καύχημα ἔξει)
εἰς τὸν ἕτερον·

6.5 γὰρ
182 ἕκαστος τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει.

6.6 δὲ
183 Κοινωνεῖτω ὁ κατηχούμενος τὸν λόγον
τῷ κατηχούντι
ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς.

6.7 Μὴ πλανᾶσθε,
184 θεὸς οὐ μκκτηρίζεται.
185 γὰρ
186 ὁ ἐὰν σπείρη ἄνθρωπος,
τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει·

6.8

ὅτι ὁ σπείρων
εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ

ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς
θερίσει φθοράν,

δὲ

ὁ σπείρων
εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα

ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος
θερίσει ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

6.9

δὲ
τὸ καλὸν ποιοῦντες

187 *μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν,*

γὰρ

188 *καιρῷ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν*

μὴ ἐκλυόμενοι.

6.10

ἄρα οὖν
ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν,
189 *ἐργαζόμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν*
πρὸς πάντας,

δὲ

190 *(ἐργαζόμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν)*

μάλιστα

πρὸς τοὺς οἰκειοὺς τῆς πίστεως.

191

6.11 *Ἴδετε*

πηλικοῖς ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα
τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ.

6.12

192 ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί,
οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμεσθαι,
μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται.

6.13

γὰρ

193 *οὐδὲ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουν*

ἀλλὰ

194 *θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμεσθαι,*

ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ

ἵνα... καυχῆσονται.

6.14

δὲ

195 *ἐμοὶ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι*

εἰ μὴ -----

ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
δι' οὗ

ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται

κάγῳ κόσμῳ -----.

6.15

γὰρ

οὔτε

196 *περιτομή τί ἐστίν*

οὔτε

197 *ἀκροβυστία* --- ----

ἀλλά

198 *καινή κτίσις* --- ----.

6.16 καὶ

ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν,
ἐπ' αὐτούς

199 *εἰρήνη...καὶ ἔλεος* ----

καὶ

200 ---- . . . ----
ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ.

6.17 Τοῦ λοιποῦ

201 *κόπους μοι μηδεὶς παρεχέτω·*

γὰρ

ἐν τῷ σώματί μου

202 *ἐγὼ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ...βαστάζω.*

203 6.18 *Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* ----

μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν,

ἀδελφοί·

ἀμήν.