

Context

- 1] Received the Spirit by faith not Law (3:3)
- 2] so.....
 - a) Be humble if
 - 1) seeking to restore a brother (6:1-5)
 - 2) being restored (6)
 - b) Be realistic (7-10)
- 3] Therefore – do good to all ... (10)

MP *It is not 'religion' that matters but a new life by grace through faith in Jesus*

KV *What counts is a new creation (15b)*

The authority (11)

- 1] My own hand
Cf 1 Cor 16:21
Ie prevention forgery (2 Thess 3:17)
Invest yourself fully in the Lord's work
- 2] Large letters
Nb Large letters = bad eyes? (4:13-15; Acts 23:1-5)

The 'circumcisers' (12,13)

- 1] Compel circumcision
cf Circumcision group (2:12)
ie unless you are circumcised you cannot be saved (Acts 15:1)
Don't try and constrain people into religious conformity
- 2] Outward response (12a)
Cf Matt 23:25
Don't worry about outward impression
- 3] Reason? – avoid persecution for cross of Jesus (12b)
Ie Crucified with Christ (2:20)
Persecuted for the cross (5:11)
Nb inevitable (2 Tim 3:12)
Beware reasoning that may simply be to avoid persecution
- 4] flawed (13)
Nb Flesh = same word as 'sinful nature' (Gk sarx) (5:16)
not able to obey the Law / unable to gain righteousness through it (2:21)
No one obeys the Law completely / sufficiently
Beware pride in numbers conforming

Paul's response (14-16)

- 1] boast in cross of Jesus (14a)
Cf Boast = same word as 'take pride' (gk kauchaomai)
Be proud only of Jesus! The power of temptation has been broken through the death of Jesus.
- 2] Lord Jesus Christ
Jesus is Lord (1 Cor 12:3), Messiah/King
- 3] world and I – crucified (14b)

Cf crucified with Christ (2:20)

4] Circumcision irrelevant – new creation all important (15)

Ie *Circumcision of the heart* (Rom 2:29)

Cf *New Creation* (2 Cor 5:17)

Religious practice counts as nothing before God.

What counts is what God has done through Jesus' cross*

5] Peace and mercy (16a)

Cf *Peace and mercy of grace and peace* (1:3)

We have peace with God through Jesus (Rom 5:1)

6] Israel of God / those who lay hold of him (16b)

Nb *Unique phrase. Israel means 'he struggles with God'*

Cf *Israel of God – Abraham's offspring* (3:29)

Ie *true circumcision* (Phil 3:3)

Nb *Israel (He struggles with God. Gen 32:28)*

to those who contend with God He gives peace.

His warning (17)

1] Don't mix it with me

Don't belittle the Apostles or their witness (Scripture)

2] Bear marks of Jesus

ie *From stoning in Lystra (one of the places written to) (Acts 14:11) Cf (2 Cor 11:23-25)*

Nb *more than marks of persecution? (Jn 20:27; 2Cor 4:10)*

The prayer (18)

1] Grace

Cf *in the grace of Christ* (1:3,6)

Cf *by grace through faith you are saved* (Eph 2:8)

2] Lord Jesus Christ

God graciously gives himself to us in Jesus as the Messiah. GRACE

3] Your spirit

your spirit Phil 4:23; 2 Tim 4:22; Phmn 1:25

Our spirit must be separate from Holy Spirit.

4] brothers

Cf 1:11; 3:15; 4:12, 28, 31; 5:11, 31; 6:1)

Conclusion

1] *To Listen to Paul / the Word of God*

2] *To trust in Jesus alone to be set right with God*