

I. Introduction.**II. Peace and mercy be upon those who walk according this rule. v. 16a**

- A. What is this rule (canon/standard of measure) according to which we walk? v. 16a
1. Our *rule* is the cross which inaugurates the new creation into which we enter by faith alone. 6:14-15 2:16 Phil. 3:16
 2. How do we keep in step with this rule? 5:25,6,22ff Phil. 3:16
- B. Those who walk by this rule are blessed.
1. Through the cross we have received mercy from God. 3:10,13 Eph. 2:1-4,11-13 Titus 3:5 Luke 1:50,54,72,78 Heb. 4:16 1 Pe. 1:3 1 Tim. 1:15-16 Rom. 9:23
 2. Through the cross we have peace – objectively, subjectively and relationally. Col. 1:20 Ro. 5:1 8:6 10:15 15:13 Jo. 14:27 16:33 Phil. 4:6-7 Eph. 2:14,15,17
- C. Those who reject this rule are excluded from God’s mercy and peace -- they are cursed. 1:8-9 3:10 5:12 Acts 4:12 15:1 John 14:6 Isa. 48:22
- D. We who have been blessed with peace can make peace and show mercy. 5:22
Mt. 5:9,7 9:13 23:23 Js. 3:13,17-18 2 Tim. 2:22 Ro. 12:18 Heb. 12:14 Luke 10:37

III. Who is the Israel of God? v. 16b

- A. *Israel* cannot refer to unbelieving Jews because the blessing is only for those who walk according to this rule (the cross). Rom. 2:28-29 9:6 Phil. 3:2-3 Gal. 3:10
- B. Some think Paul refers to believing ethnic Israelites – *and upon the Israel of God*.
1. The Greek word *kai* usually means *and (in addition)*.
 2. They argue that *Israel* must refer to ethnic Israelites as a second group.
 3. In this case Paul would be speaking of the elect *Israel* within ethnic Israel.
 4. This understanding of *Israel* seems to be consistent with Paul’s use elsewhere. Ro. 9:6 11:1-2,26 2:28-29
 5. This view doesn’t fit this context – outward Jewishness is irrelevant, having passed away with the coming of the new creation. 6:15 3:28-29
- C. Others believe that Paul is referring to all believers in the church as the true Israel – *even upon the Israel of God*.
1. The Greek word *kai* can be translated *even (that is/namely)* as a further description of the same group.
 2. This interpretation best fits the context in Galatians.
 - a. Believing Jews and Gentiles are united into one people in the new creation – externals and ethnicity no longer matter. 6:15 3:28,2 Ro. 10:11-13
 - b. To make a distinction between Jews and Gentiles at the very end of the letter would appear to contradict Paul’s whole purpose/argument.
 - c. We are all children of Abraham and heirs of God’s promises through faith. 3:7,29,26,16 4:4-7,26,28
 3. The work of Christ forever breaks down the dividing wall between believing Jews and Gentiles – there is one true people of God. Eph. 2:11-17,4
 4. Believing Jews and Gentiles are grafted into one (olive) tree. Romans 11:17ff Jer. 11:16 Hos. 14:5-6
 5. New Covenant believers are often spoken of in terms used of Israel. 3:7,29,26 4:26 1 Pe. 2:5,9 Eph. 2:21 Heb. 8:8ff Phil. 3:3 Ro. 2:28-29 8:14,33 Ex. 19:5-6

- D. What then is God's plan for ethnic Israelites? Romans 9-11**
1. How could Israel, with all her privileges, fail to embrace the gospel of Christ? Romans 9-10
 2. God's rejection of ethnic Israel is not total – God is still saving a remnant among Abraham's earthly children. Rom. 11:1-10
 3. God's rejection of ethnic Israel is not final – He will save a great number of Abraham's physical offspring in the last days. Rom. 11:11-32
 4. God's plan displays His magnificent wisdom. Rom. 11:33-36
- E. What is the relationship between Israel under the Old Covenant and the church under the New Covenant? Continuity and discontinuity.**
1. Old Testament Israel is not the church, but is a type or picture of what the church would one day be.
 2. The church is not merely Israel but it is the fulfillment of what Israel was to be – a new creation. 6:15 Heb. 8:8ff 1 Pet. 2:9 Eph. 2:15
- F. What about the land?**
1. Whatever God has promised to Abraham is ours in Christ. 3:29
 2. The land of Israel under the Old Covenant is a type or picture of the new heavens and earth. Romans 4:13,16 Heb. 11:13-16

IV. Paul has faithfully followed in the rule/way of the cross. v. 17

- A. Paul again contrasts himself with the false teachers.**
1. The false teachers wanted to boast in scarring others with the mark of circumcision. v. 13 6:12
 2. Paul bears scar marks in his own body because of his persecution for the cross. 5:11 Acts 14:19 2 Co. 11:23-25 Col. 1:24 Acts 9:16
 3. Paul's longs to see the Spirit's inward work in his converts as opposed to the false teachers who want to make an external mark on their flesh. 5:12 6:13 4:19
- B. Paul's wounds are the authentic brand-marks of the new creation.**
1. As opposed to the false teachers who are marked by the old creation.
 2. Paul's scars establish His true apostolic authority.
 3. He is the true servant/slave of Christ. Ex. 21:6 Rom. 1:1
 4. Paul glories in His sufferings for the Savior. Rom. 5:3 Acts 5:41 Mt. 5:11-12 2 Cor. 1:5 2 Co. 4:8-12 6:4
- C. Therefore, it is Paul's gospel which should be received as authoritative, not the twisted gospel of the false teachers. Acts 20:28ff 2 John 1:10-11 2 Tim. 1:13-14**
- D. Some of us bear marks/scars because of our allegiance to the cross of Christ. 2 Tim. 3:12 1 Co. 1:18,23 4:10 Jo. 15:18-20 Mt. 5:10-12 10:38 1 Pet. 4:12,4**

V. Conclusion: Paul ends where he began – with grace. v. 18 1:3

Questions

1. What is the rule by which we must walk? v. 16
2. Who is the "Israel of God"? v. 16
3. How should we reflect the peace, mercy and grace we have received through the gospel?
4. How do you experience suffering because of your commitment to Christ?
5. If you had to sum up the message of the whole book of Galatians in a few words what would you say?