PAUL’S CLOSING THOUGHTS

**DATE: 4/27/2016 Wed.**

**TEXT: Galatians 6:16-18**

**INTRODUCTION**

As Paul concludes his letter, he not only expresses the Grace of God in his heart toward the Galatians believers,

But also closes with the final reminder about God’s wonderful Grace

Paul wrote this epistle with a deep concern for the Galatian believers who were being confused by false teachers and being drawn away from the Gospel of Grace

Throughout the Book of Galatians,

Paul emphasizes the Pure Message of the Gospel

That it is by Grace through Faith and not works

Paul emphasizes 3 imperatives in the closing of his letter to the Galatians

Let’s stand to read these last 3 remarks made by Paul

And then pray and think on this thought

**“PAUL’S CLOSING THOUGHTS”**

**Read vs. 16-18 …**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First we see …

**I. THE “PRE-REQUISITE FOR PEACE” – v. 16**

***“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God”***

***Pre-requisite –*** *something that needs to happen before*

I don’t know anyone who doesn’t want to experience more Peace in their life

Paul tells the Galatian believers how to have it

First we see …

**A. A ‘Walk of Peace’**

Paul begins **v.16** by saying - ***“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them”***

The pre-requisite here is that those who walk according to ***“this rule”*** (We will see what it is in a minute)

But first, the word ***“walk”*** means *to proceed in a row; go in order*

This same word is used throughout the NT referring to an orderly life and to our relationship with others

Paul is addressing those who have been careful not to be persuaded by the Legalist

Those who were mindful of their walk with the Lord

**Philippians 3:16, 17 –** ***“Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, (learned, understood) let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing” “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample”***

**Colossians 2:6, 7 –** ***“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him:” “Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving”***

If we are to truly experience the Peace of God …

We must Walk with God

**Philippines 4:7 *– “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”***

**Colossians 3:15 *– “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful”***

**B. A ‘Walk of Order’**

3 thoughts here …

**1.** By a ‘Rule’ **– *“according to this rule”***

The word ***“rule”*** means *from kane*

A Kane was a measuring instrument

Something like a yard stick

Rather than talking about a literal device …

Paul is talking about a principle for judging, a standard for living or behavior, a rule

This ***“rule”*** by which Paul want the Galatian believers to live are those principles of Grace which mark the believer's position in Christ

**2.** With God’s ‘Reward’

***“peace be on them, and mercy”***

Peace and Mercy can come only by way of the Cross

Not through man’s efforts to keep the Law or to live by good works

**Romans 5:1 –** ***“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”***

**Quote:** Someone once wrote – *“Jesus is no security against life’s storms, but He is perfect security IN them”*

**3.** The Blessing of God

Paul closes out **v.16** by wishing a blessing ***“upon the Israel of God”***

Who are the ***“Israel of God”***?

This blessing was especially intended for all the saved Jews who were teaching salvation by Grace apart from circumcision

This was the same doctrinal conclusion reached by the Jerusalem council we see in **Acts 15**

**THE “PRE-REQUISITE FOR PEACE”**

**II. THE “PLEAD OF THE APOSTLE” – v.17**

The word *plead* means to *beg earnestly, an urgent entreaty*

Notice Paul’s Plea here and the reason

First, it is …

**A. An ‘Immediate’ Plea**

***“From henceforth let no man trouble me:”***

The word ***“henceforth”*** means *hereafter, for the future*

We might say, *from now on*

The phrase ***“let no man trouble me”*** means *to bring someone something favorable or unfavorable*

What Paul is saying is that *“from now on, this is my stand”*

This letter to the Galatians, will now be the point of reference concerning Paul’s official position for all future questions that might arise about Law and Grace

They would not have to ask him about it again

Not only is it **An ‘Immediate’ Plea**

But also …

**B. An ‘Earned’ Plea**

***“for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus”***

The reason Paul could make this Plea is that he bore the literal scars and marks he had received for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ

He has suffered at the hands of both the Jews and Gentiles

**II Corinthians 11:23-28 …**

**Illustration:** It is said that on a wall in Charles Spurgeon’s house hung a plaque inscribed with **Isaiah 48:10**. It read – ***“I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction”*** “*It is no mean thing to be chosen of God”* he wrote. *“God’s choice makes chosen men choice men…” “We are chosen, not in the palace, but in the furnace. In the furnace, beauty is marred, fashion is destroyed, strength is melted, glory is consumed; yet here eternal love reveals its secrets, and declares its choice”*

If Paul had any Right, it was this …

To declare his authority to speak for God

We have every Right to speak for God

He has given us that responsibility

We are his ambassadors

**II Corinthians 5:20a** ***– “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ”***

As His official Representatives, we are to speak up!

**THE “PRE-REQUISITE FOR PEACE”**

**THE “PLEAD OF THE APOSTLE”**

Lastly, let’s look at …

**III. THE “PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE” – v.18**

***“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen”***

Paul closes his letter with a simple prayer

**A. The Grace of Christ**

As Paul closes, his final reminder is of the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ

He reminds the Galatians one last time that salvation is all of Grace with no works necessary

**II Corinthians 8:9 *– “For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich”***

**Quote:** John Bunyan wrote – *“Thou Son of the Blessed, what Grace was manifest in Thy condescension! Grace brought Thee down from heaven; Grace stripped Thee of Thy Glory; Grace made Thee poor and despicable; Grace made Thee bear such burdens of sin, such burdens of sorrow, such burdens of God’s curse as are unspeakable”*

Then finally he says …

**B. That Grace is Ours**

Paul reminds them that the same Grace that Christ saved them with, also is theirs

The ***“spirit”*** is a reference to the human spirit which is regenerated by the Holy Spirit

**I Peter 1:2 *– “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied”***

**CONCLUSION**

As the Apostle Paul closes his letter to the Galatians,

He reminds them once again of the Grace by which they were saved, thereby bringing his letter full circle

It is as if he wants to remind them that the Grace of God that was sufficient for them in times past without the works of the Law

Is still sufficient for them today and into the Future

You and I can also be assured that God’s saving and keeping Grace will forever be sufficient for living Grace

It’s our responsibility now to share this message with a lost and dying world

**THE “PRE-REQUISITE FOR PEACE”**

**THE “PLEAD OF THE APOSTLE”**

**THE “PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE”**