

Galatians 6:17-18

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/gal/gal-6/galatians-617-18/>

Paul says goodbye, and appeals to the Galatians to remain in the truth. He has suffered for Jesus, which shows his sincerity, so Paul hopes they will follow his teaching again.

Paul's letter ends with a request to the Galatians, or perhaps a statement that he has had his final say, and now it is up to the Galatians to decide what they do: *From now on let no one cause trouble for me.* He has expressed much surprise and sadness that the Galatian believers were led astray so quickly by competing Jewish "authorities." He has feared that he labored in vain for them (4:11). Here, he asserts himself as someone who has suffered persecution for Christ's sake, *for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.* This is another contrast to the cowardly competing Jewish "authorities" (Galatians 6:12). Paul has bled and been scarred for teaching the gospel of faith in Jesus. He hopes this issue has been put to rest, the truth has been written down, and the Galatians should go live it.

But Paul is completely consistent with his message about choosing. Never does he state that the Galatians "must." He has insisted that the Galatians have a free choice. They can either walk in the flesh, or they can walk in the Spirit. They can listen to false teachers, or they can listen to the truth. Paul exhorts. He does not control.

Despite his "stern father" language throughout, Paul blesses his readers with a prayer that the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.* He calls them *brethren* once more, reemphasizing that this is his spiritual family for whom he has labored and suffered. Paul never rejects the Galatians. He never threatens to stop seeking their best. Paul has never told the Galatians they aren't "really saved." In fact he has insisted that they are foolish for seeking to be justified, because they are already justified.

Paul has simply exhorted his spiritual children to have a truthful view of reality. Of who they are. Of what is true. Of what constitutes their true self-interest. And of the reality of Jesus, and the amazing gifts He gave them. One of those gifts is the ability to freely choose. And Paul exhorts them to choose well, for their own sake. *Amen.*

Biblical Text

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.**