



## “Inside Out”

### Galatians 6

#### — Small Group Plan —

Paul’s letter to the Galatians is filled with tense emotion:

- 1:6 “I am astonished”
- 3:1 “Who bewitched you?”
- 4:9 “How is it that you are turning back?”
- 4:15 “What happened to your joy?”
- 4:20 “I am perplexed about you.”
- 5:7 “Who cut in on you?”
- 6:7 “Do not be deceived ... A man reaps what he sows.”

#### **OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...**

- Why did Paul express such deep feelings and concern?
- What is the difference between an outward and an inward faith?

#### **LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...**

#### — THE MARKS OF THE LEGALIST —

##### Galatians 6:12-13

<sup>11</sup> See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand! <sup>12</sup> Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Not even those who are circumcised obey the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh.

- **THEY BOAST ...**  
Why is pride dangerous to faith?  
What is wrong with a coercive, demanding, pushy style of ministry?
- **THEY COMPROMISE ...**  
What is the difference between admiring the cross and living by it?  
How can the cross of Jesus make life uncomfortable for the Christian?
- **THEY PRETEND ...**  
What do we mean when we say, “they don’t practice what they preach”?  
Why is it important to admit that none of us have it exactly right?

## — THE MARKS OF JESUS —

### Galatians 6:14-16

<sup>14</sup> *May I never boast except in **the cross** of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been **crucified** to me, and I to the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a **new creation**.* <sup>16</sup> *Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God.*

- How did Jesus' enemies want the Roman crucifixion to define or mark him?
- What was there about Jesus' life and character that not only thwarted this plan, but actually changed the meaning of the cross?
- Jesus is mentioned 45 times in this letter. One third of the verses refer to Him. With this in mind why did Paul "boast ... in the cross" (v. 14)?
- What does he mean, "the world has been crucified to me" (v. 14)?

## — THE MARKS OF PAUL —

### Galatians 6:17-18

<sup>17</sup> *Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the **marks of Jesus**.* <sup>18</sup> *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.*

- The word "mark" is στίγματα (stigmata) from which we get the word "stigma." In other words, Paul carried a reputation created by Jesus.
- Paul was a marked man. How would you describe the marks of Paul? How had his life changed? Why had he changed?
- Why is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" essential for someone who bears the mark, the stigma, the reputation of Jesus?

### USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- How did the world of Paul, that praised human effort and boasting, lose its appeal to Paul?
- Today the spectacle of the cross does not carry the meaning of shame that it had in the ancient world. How has this hurt the Christian faith? Explain.
- Why is transformation that occurs on the inside so important to Jesus?
- How can confidence in my own efforts and achievements dilute and eclipse the work and achievements of Jesus on the cross?
- Close in prayer, asking God to give you a clearer sense of the marks, the stigma, the reputation of Jesus on the cross.