

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

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Galatians

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Galatians

1 I, Paul, write this letter to you. *I remind you that* God
sent me to represent him. That is not because a group
of people appointed me, nor because a human being sent
me to be an apostle. Instead, I am an apostle because Jesus
the Messiah and God the Father have appointed and sent
me to be an apostle—yes, God the Father, who made the
Messiah alive again after he died! 2 All the fellow believers
who are here with me *approve of this message that I am writing*.
I am sending this letter to the congregations that are in the
province of Galatia. 3 *May* God our Father and our Lord Jesus
the Messiah *continue to be* kind to you and *make you* peaceful.
4 The Messiah offered himself as a sacrifice in order that he
might remove the guilt for the sinful things we have done.
He did that in order that he might enable us to not do the
evil things that people who do not know him do. He did this
because God, who is our Father, wanted it. 5 *Because that is
true,* let us praise God forever and ever. May it be so!

6 I am very disappointed that so soon after you trusted
in the Messiah you are turning away from God. God chose
you to be in a relationship that is based on the kindness of
the Messiah. I am also disappointed that so soon you are
believing a different message which some say is "good news."
7 Their message is not a true message. What is happening
is that certain persons are confusing your minds. They are
desiring to change the good news about the Messiah and are
creating another message. 8 But even if we apostles or an
angel from heaven would tell you a message that is different
from the good news that we told you before, I appeal to God
that he would punish such a person forever. 9 As we told
you previously, so now I tell you this once more: Someone
is telling you what he says is good news, but it is a message
that is different from the good news that I gave you. So I
appeal to God that he eternally condemn that person. 10 I
said that because I do not desire that people approve me,
contrary to what some people have said about me. It is God
whom I desire to approve me. Specifically, I do not say and
do things just to please people. If it were still people whom I
was trying to please, then I would not be one who willingly
and completely serves the Messiah.

11 My fellow believers, I want you to know that the
message about the Messiah that I proclaim to people is not
one that some person created. 12 I was not given this good
news by a human being, and no human being taught it to
me. Instead, it was God who revealed Jesus the Messiah to
me.

13 People have told you how I used to behave when I
practiced the Jewish religion. They told you that I continually
did very harmful things to the groups of believers belonging
to God, and they told you that I tried to get rid of those people.
14 I was practicing the Jewish religion more thoroughly than
many other Jews who were my age were practicing it. I was
also trying much more enthusiastically to get others to obey
the traditions that my ancestors kept. 15 Nevertheless, before
I was born God selected me for a special task and he kindly
chose me. When God thought that it was good, 16 he showed
me who his Son really is. He did this so that I would tell others
the good news about his Son in regions where the non-Jews
live. But I did not immediately go to any human beings in
order to gain an understanding of that message. 17 I also did
not immediately leave Damascus and go to Jerusalem *for that
purpose* to those who were representatives of Jesus before I
was. Rather, I went away into the region of Arabia*, a desert
area*. Later I returned once more to the city of Damascus.
18 Then three years after *God revealed this good news to me,* I
went up to the city of Jerusalem in order that I might meet
Peter. *But* I remained with him for *only* fifteen days. 19 I
also saw James, the brother and representative of our Lord
Jesus, but I did not see any other representatives of Jesus.
20 God knows that what I am writing to you is completely
true! 21 After I left Jerusalem, I went into the regions of
Syria and Cilicia. 22 At that time people in the Christian
congregations who were in the province of Judea still had
not met me personally 23 They only heard others say about
me repeatedly, "Paul, the one who in the past was doing
harmful things to us, is now telling the same message which
we believe and which formerly he was trying to cause people
to stop believing!" 24 So they kept praising God because he
had caused me to believe in Jesus and because I was now
telling people the good news about him.

2 After fourteen years passed, I went up again to Jerusalem
with Barnabas. I also took Titus. 2 I went up there because
of what God revealed to me. *It was not because someone asked
me to come.* I told people the content of the good news that
I preach to non-Jews. But I spoke privately to those whom
your new teachers highly respect so that what I was doing
and what I had done might not become useless. That could
have happened if people rejected my message because they
thought that I was teaching falsely, *which could have happened
if the leaders in Jerusalem would have disagreed with my message*.
3 But those leaders did not even require Titus, who was with
me and was an uncircumcised Gentile, to be circumcised.
4 But this problem occurred because *some people demanded
that Titus be circumcised* after they had successfully pretended
that they were fellow believers and associated with the true
believers. They associated with the true believers in order
that they might observe closely what we do because we are
free from having to obey all the Jewish laws and rituals
because of our close relationship with the Messiah Jesus.
Those people wanted to make us like slaves of those rituals
*by convincing us that we cannot trust the Messiah solely but that
we must also obey all the Jewish laws and rituals*. 5 But not even
briefly did we do what they wanted regarding circumcision.
We resisted them in order that you might continue to have,
and benefit from, the true, correct, and unmodified good
news. 6 The leaders in Jerusalem, whom your new teachers
respect, did not add anything to what I proclaim. And I would
add that what status those leaders had did not influence me,
because God does not favor important and powerful persons
more than others. 7 Instead *of those leaders adding to the
content of the message that I tell people,* they understood that
God had given me the good news so that I might proclaim it
to the non-Jews, just like God had given the good news to
Peter so that he might tell it to those who are Jews. 8 That is,
just like God had authorized and empowered Peter in order
that he might be a representative of Jesus to take God's
message to the Jews, he also had authorized and empowered
me in order that I might be a representative of Jesus to take
God's message to the non-Jews. 9 Those leaders knew that
God had kindly given to me this special mission. So James,

Peter, and John, the ones whom your new teachers respect because they are leaders of the believers, shook hands with us to show that they agreed that Barnabas and I are serving the Lord just like they are, and that we are preaching the same message that they are preaching. They also agreed that we are the ones whom God was sending to tell his message to non-Jews, but that God is sending them to tell his message to Jews. 10 They only urged us to still remember to help the poor among the fellow believers who live in Jerusalem. That is exactly what I have been eager to do.

11 But later, Peter became guilty of doing wrong things. This happened while he was visiting us in the city of Antioch. So I confronted him directly about those things. 12 This is what happened: Peter had been eating with the non-Jewish believers there. But then some men came who were from *the group of Jewish believers in Jerusalem that* James *was leading*. These men said that believers should keep the Jewish laws. Peter was afraid of what people who want Jewish believers to keep the Jewish laws might do, and so he began to withdraw from the non-Jews and eat with only the Jewish believers. 13 Also, the other Jewish believers who were in Antioch acted in a way that they knew was not right, along with Peter*, when they separated themselves from the non-Jewish believers*. The result was that *they convinced* even Barnabas to stop associating with the non-Jewish believers! 14 I had realized that they were not acting forthrightly and in a manner that was consistent with the correct facts and teachings of the good news about the Messiah. *So when all the fellow believers had come together,* I told Peter *the following:* "Although you are a Jew, you often conduct yourself like non-Jews do by disregarding Jewish laws about food. When you are among non-Jews, you do not customarily conduct yourself at all like Jews do. So, now it is wrong that you are causing non-Jews to think that they must obey all the Jewish rituals and customs! 15 We were born as Jews. *We were* not *born* as non-Jews. We Jews have always considered non-Jews to be 'sinners' because they do not obey the Jewish rituals and laws. 16 But we Jewish believers now know that it is not because some person obeys those things *that God commanded* in the laws *he gave the Jews* that God makes a person righteous. *God makes a person righteous* only if that person trusts in the Messiah Jesus. So even we Jews have trusted the Messiah Jesus. *We did that* so God would declare us good in his sight, because we trust the Messiah, and not because we try to obey the laws that God gave to Moses. We did that because God has said that he will not declare anyone good in his sight just because they obey those laws. 17 Furthermore, because we *Jewish believers* desired that God would make us righteous because of our relationship with the Messiah, it means that we ourselves, like non-Jews *whom we called sinners,* also disobeyed the laws and rituals that God gave Moses. But we certainly cannot conclude that it is the Messiah who causes us to sin. No, the Messiah certainly does not cause anyone to sin.

18 If I again believed that God would make me righteous because of my obeying the laws that he gave to Moses, I would be like a man who rebuilds an old building that he had torn down. If I did that I would show that I was guilty of acting wrongly. 19 I realized that God would not regard me as righteous because I tried to obey the laws that he gave to Moses. So I have decided not to respond to what those laws demand, just like a dead person does not respond to anything. *I decided to do this* so that I may now live to serve God. It is as though I was with the Messiah when he died on the cross. 20 My old way of living ended since I began believing in the Messiah. No longer am I directing the way I behave as I did before *I believed in the Messiah*. Now the Messiah is directing how I behave. And whatever I do now while I live in my earthly body, I do it by trusting in God's Son. He is the one who loved me and offered himself as a sacrifice for me. 21 I am not rejecting as useless what God kindly did for me*, as my opponents are doing*. If God considers people to be righteous because they obey the laws that he gave to Moses, then the Messiah died needlessly!"

3 You *fellow believers* who live in Galatia are acting mindlessly! Someone must have put an evil spell on you! I clearly explained to you what Jesus the Messiah accomplished when he died on the cross. 2 *So,* I want to tell you this one thing: God did not give you his Holy Spirit because you obeyed the laws that he gave Moses. Surely you must know that the reason he gave you his Holy Spirit is because when you heard the good news about the Messiah you believed it. 3 You are acting very foolishly! You first became Christians because God's Spirit enabled you. So, you should not now think that it is because of what you do by obeying the laws God gave Moses that you will continue to grow spiritually. 4 *Keep in mind that if* what God has done for you *was because of your obeying the laws that God gave to Moses and not because of trusting in the Messiah then* you suffered many things needlessly! I certainly hope that you did not suffer like that needlessly. 5 So then, when God now generously gives to you his Spirit and performs mighty deeds among you, it is not because you obey the laws that God gave to Moses? Surely you know it is because when you heard the good news about the Messiah you believed it!

6 *What you have experienced is* just as *Moses had written in the scriptures about Abraham. He wrote that* Abraham trusted God, and *as a result,* God considered Abraham as being righteous. 7 You must realize, therefore, that it is those who trust in what the Messiah has done who are like Abraham's descendants *because they trust in God as Abraham did*. 8 Furthermore, God planned beforehand that it was when non-Jews trusted him that he would consider them righteous. Moses wrote in the Scriptures this good message that God told Abraham: "Through you, I will bless people in all nations." 9 So, we can conclude that it is those who trust in what the Messiah has done whom God blesses along with Abraham, the one who trusted him *long ago*. 10 That is, God will eternally punish all those who mistakenly think that God will consider them righteous as a result of their trying to obey the laws that God gave to Moses. What Moses wrote in the Scriptures is that God will eternally punish everyone who does not continuously and completely obey all the laws that God instructed him to write in the Book of the Law. 11 God does not regard any person as righteous as a result of their trying to obey the laws that he gave to Moses. This is evident since *the Scriptures say*, "Every righteous person lives *spiritually* as a result of their trusting *God*." 12 But when God gave his laws to the Jews, he did not make them dependent upon a person believing in him. Instead *God said that* it is those who obey *all* God's laws, continuously and completely, who will live through obeying them.

13 Even though we humans have not continuously and completely obeyed God's laws, the Messiah rescued us from God punishing us eternally. The Messiah rescued us by his being the one God condemned instead of God condemning us. What Moses wrote in the Scriptures shows that this is

true. He wrote, “God has cursed anyone whom people have executed *for his crimes* by hanging his body on a tree.” 14 *The Messiah rescued us* in order that as a result of what he has done, God might bless the non-Jews, in a way similar to the way God blessed Abraham. The reason for this is that as a result of our trusting in the Messiah, we all might receive the Holy Spirit whom God promised to give to us.

15 My fellow believers, I will now illustrate by referring to human relationships. After two people have signed an agreement, no one can reject it or add to it. 16 God declared to Abraham and his descendant that he was promising to give blessings to Abraham. The words that God spoke were not “and your descendants.” He was not referring to many persons. Instead, he was referring to one person, who is the Messiah, because the words that God spoke were, “and your descendant.” 17 This is what I am saying: God established an agreement with Abraham that the laws which he gave to the Jews 430 years later could not cancel. 18 I want you to know that if it is because we obey the laws God gave to the Jews that he gives to us what he has promised to give to us, then he would not be giving it because he had promised to do so. However, God kindly gave to Abraham what he had promised to give to him, just because God had promised that he would give it to him. *Similarly,* it is not because we obey God’s laws that God kindly gives to us what he has promised to give to us.

19 So, if someone should ask, “Why did God later give his laws to Moses?” I would reply that it was in order that people might realize how sinful they were. Those laws were valid until Jesus came. He was the descendant that God was referring to when he made the promises to Abraham. God gave his laws to Moses by God’s causing angels to speak to him. Moses was the mediator, the one who told the laws to the people. 20 Now, when a mediator functions, one person is not speaking with another directly; but God himself made his promises directly to Abraham.

21 If someone should ask, “When God gave his laws to Moses long after he told Abraham what he was promising to give to him, was he changing his mind?” *I would reply that* God certainly did not change his mind when he did that! If God had given a law that could enable people to live *eternally and spiritually*, then it certainly would be because of people obeying that law that God would consider people righteous. 22 But, *in fact, it is impossible for the law to enable people to live eternally or spiritually.* Instead, the law given in the Scriptures caused all people to be unable to escape being punished for their sins, just like people in prison are unable to escape. *God did that* in order that he might give what he promised to those who trust Jesus Christ, just because they trust him. 23 Before God revealed the good news about trusting in the Messiah, the laws that God gave to Moses were confining us, as a prisoner in jail is confined. This happened until the time we might believe the good news concerning the Messiah, the good news that God was about to reveal *and now has*. 24 Like a father supervises his immature child by appointing a servant to take care of that child, God was supervising us by his laws until the Messiah *came*. *He did this* in order that he might now declare us righteous in his sight *only* because we trust in the Messiah. 25 But now that God has revealed the message about trusting in the Messiah, the laws that God gave to Moses no longer supervise us.

26 Now all of you *Jews and non-Jews* are *as though you are* God’s children because you trust in the Messiah Jesus. You are *now* in close spiritual union with the Messiah Jesus *because you believe in Him*. 27 That is, you who *began a relationship with the Messiah when you* were baptized identified yourselves with Christ. 28 If you believe in the Messiah, it does not matter to God if you are Jews or non-Jews; slaves or ones who are not slaves; males or females, because all of you are as one sort of person because of your relationship with the Messiah Jesus. 29 Furthermore, since you belong to the Messiah, you are *like* Abraham’s descendants because you trust God as Abraham did, and you will possess what God promised Abraham.

4 Now, I will further discuss children and heirs. An heir is a person who will later possess and control all that his father has. But as long as that heir is a child, others control him, with the result that he is just like a slave. 2 Until the day that his father has *previously* determined, other persons supervise the child and manage his property. 3 Likewise, when we were spiritually immature *because we did not yet believe in the Messiah*, we submitted to the rules that everyone in this world lives by. Those rules controlled us like masters control their slaves. 4 But exactly at the time that God had previously determined, he sent Jesus his Son, into the world. *Jesus was* born to a human mother, and he had to obey the laws that God gave to Moses. 5 God sent Jesus to rescue us who had to obey God’s laws he gave to Moses from being condemned for not obeying these laws. God did this so that we might all receive from him the status of being his children. 6 Furthermore, God sent the Spirit to live in our inner beings because we are now in such a close relationship with God it is as though we are his children. It is his Spirit who enables us to fervently call out *to God*, “Father, Father!” 7 So, because of what God has done, no longer is each of you like a slave. Instead, each of you is like a child of God. Furthermore, since each of you is now like God’s child, God has also made each of you his heir, one to whom he will give all that he has promised.

8 When you did not have a relationship with God, you served gods that really did not exist. You were like slaves at that time, because you were in spiritual bondage. 9 But now you have come to intimately know God. Perhaps it would be better to say that now God intimately knows each of you. So now you are acting foolishly! You are again believing that by obeying rules and rites you will benefit spiritually! Those rules are ineffective and inadequate! You are wanting to obey them again like slaves obey their masters. 10 You non-Jews are carefully practicing Jewish rules and rituals regarding what you should do on Jewish special days and at special times in certain months, seasons, and years. 11 I am concerned about your mistaken ideas! I do not want to have so strenuously served you in vain. 12 My fellow believers, I strongly urge you that you do as I do. *Stop thinking that you have to obey the Jewish rules and ceremonial laws prescribed by the law of Moses.* When I was with you, I did not obey all the Jewish rules and ceremonial laws, just like you did not obey them. At that time you treated me entirely as you should have.

13 You remember that I originally told you the good news because I was physically weak *and was recovering*. Because of the opportunity which that sickness provided I was able to tell you the good news. 14 Although you might have treated me contemptuously because of my physical malady, you did not treat me contemptuously or reject me. Instead, you welcomed me like you would welcome an angel that came from God. You welcomed me like you would welcome the

Messiah Jesus himself! 15 I am disappointed that you have
forgotten that then you declared that you were pleased with
me. I know for certain that you would have done anything
to help me. 16 So I am very disappointed that you now act
as though I have become hostile to you because I have kept
speaking the true message about the Messiah to you. 17 Those
who are insisting on obeying the Jewish laws are eagerly
showing interest in you, but they are not doing this because
they have good motives. They are doing this because they
want you not to associate with me and others who teach
what is true about the Messiah. They desire that instead of
you associating with us, you will eagerly show interest in
them, not in us. 18 But, it is an honorable thing to eagerly
desire to do the right things at all times. I would like you
to eagerly desire to do the right things, both when I am
with you and when I am absent. 19 You who are like my
children, once again I am very concerned about you, and I
will continue to be concerned about you until you become
like the Messiah in your thinking and in your conduct. 20 But
I do wish that I could be with you now and that I might
talk more gently with you, because right now I do not know
what to do about you.

21 Some of you desire to obey all the laws that God gave
Moses. I say that you should consider the implications of what
Moses wrote in the Scriptures. 22 He wrote that Abraham
became the father of two sons. His female slave, Hagar, bore
one son, and his wife Sarah, who was not a slave, bore the
other. 23 Also, the sons differed. Ishmael, the son born by
Hagar, the female slave, was conceived naturally. But Isaac,
the son born by Sarah, his wife who was not a slave, was
conceived miraculously because God intervened in order
to fulfill what he had promised Abraham. 24 I am telling
you this as an illustration. These two women symbolize two
agreements. God made the first agreement, which involved
obeying the laws that God gave to Moses at Mount Sinai.
Because that agreement forces those who accept it to keep
obeying all its rules, it is like a slave mother who gives
birth to slaves. So Hagar, the female slave, symbolizes this
agreement. 25 Also Hagar symbolizes the agreement, with its
laws and rituals, that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai, in
the land of Arabia. Hagar also symbolizes the Jewish religion.
The Jewish religion is like a slave mother, and those who
practice the Jewish religion are like slave children because
they all must obey the laws that God gave to Moses. 26 But
there is a heavenly Jerusalem, and because we belong to the
heavenly Jerusalem, it is like a mother to all of us *who believe
in the Messiah*. Those who belong to the heavenly Jerusalem
are free from having to obey the laws of Moses and free from
being condemned for failing to obey those laws. 27 Our new
city will have more people than those who live in Jerusalem
now. It will be just like Isaiah foretold *about the people
whom he expected would come back to Jerusalem from exile*.
*He expected that they would be more numerous than those who
were taken into exile.* He wrote: You who live in Jerusalem,
you will rejoice! Now you have no children, like a barren
woman who does not give birth to children! But some day
you will shout joyfully, as loudly as you can, even though
now you are few in number, like a woman who cannot give
birth to children, and you feel deserted. You will be very
happy because you will have many children who will come
to you. Those children will be more than the children any
woman with a husband could have borne. 28 Now, my fellow
believers, you have become children of God because God
has fulfilled what he promised to Abraham. You are like
Isaac*, who was born because God fulfilled what he promised
to give Abraham*. 29 Also, long ago Abraham's son Ishmael,
the one who was conceived naturally, caused trouble for
Abraham's son Isaac, who was conceived supernaturally.
Similarly, now those who think that we must obey the laws
that God gave to Moses in order that God will save us
are causing trouble for those who are trusting Abraham's
descendant, the Messiah. 30 But Moses wrote these words
in a scripture passage in Genesis: "The son of the woman
who was not a slave will inherit what his father owns. The
female slave's son will certainly not inherit those things. So
send away from this place the female slave and her son!"
31 My fellow believers, Hagar symbolizes the laws that God
gave to Moses. But we are not those who must obey all the
laws that God gave to Moses. So we are not the female slave
Hagar's spiritual descendants. But Sarah's descendants are
those who were born as a result of God fulfilling what he
promised to Abraham. So we are the spiritual descendants
of Sarah, the woman who was not a slave.

5 The Messiah freed us *believers from having to obey the
laws God gave the Jews* in order that we would not have
to obey *them*. So continue to be steadfastly committed *to the
Lord*. Do not let anyone force you to obey *those laws* again
as if you were slaves *to those laws*. 2 I am Paul. Pay attention
to what I am telling you! If you let anyone circumcise you,
what the Messiah has done for you will not help you at
all! 3 Once again I solemnly declare to every man who has
someone circumcise him, that he must obey all of the laws
God gave the Jews in order to be righteous. 4 You who are trying
to make yourselves righteous by *obeying* the laws *God gave
the Jews* have separated yourselves from the Messiah. God
will no longer act kindly toward you. 5 *This is so* because we
believers are confidently expecting by trusting *in Jesus* that
God will make us righteous. The Holy Spirit enables us *to
do this*. 6 *This is so* because *when* God has united *us* with the
Messiah Jesus, whether people are circumcised or not is not
important. Rather, only whether we trust *in the Messiah* is
important. We show we trust *in the Messiah* by loving others.

7 You were spiritually progressing so well! You should
never have let someone stop you *from progressing*, so that
what is true does not convince you! 8 God is the one who
calls you. He is not the one who is persuading you *to think
like this*! 9 *This false teaching might deceive all of you, just like* a
little yeast *in some dough* makes all of it swell up. 10 Because
God has united *us* with the Lord *Jesus*, I am certain that you
will believe only *what I have told you*. By contrast, God will
certainly punish everyone who is confusing you *about these
things*, whoever they are. 11 Fellow believers, as for me, were
I to still declare that men must have someone circumcise
them *in order to be righteous*, surely no one would still be
persecuting me! *This is because* declaring that would abolish
how offensive *Jesus dying on* the cross is. 12 O that those who
are upsetting you would just castrate themselves!

13 Fellow believers, God has called you to free you *from
having to obey the laws God gave the Jews*. But he did not
free you *from those laws* so you could sin. Instead *of sinning*,
serve each other by loving *each other*! 14 *Do this* because one
command summarizes all the laws *God gave the Jews*. That
command is, "Love each person as much as *you love* yourself."
15 Now if you keep attacking and harming each other *like
wild animals*, beware that you might completely destroy each
other.

16 I am telling you to let the Holy Spirit lead you. *If you do that,* you will definitely not do what your *sinful* selves want to do. 17 *This is* because your sinful selves *want to do what* is contrary to what the Holy Spirit *wants to do*. Also, *what* the Holy Spirit *wants to do is contrary to what* your sinful selves *want to do*. *This is* because they are always against each other. The result is that you do not *always* do the *good* things that you *truly* want to do. 18 However, if the Holy Spirit leads you, the laws *God gave the Jews* do not control you.

19 You clearly know what people do because of their sinful selves. *They* do sexually immoral acts, impure acts, *and* unrestrained immoral acts. 20 *They also* worship false gods, do witchcraft, repeatedly act in hostile ways, quarrel with people, act jealously, behave angrily, act ambitiously, act divisively within a group of people, and make divisive groups of people. 21 *They also* envy others, get drunk, celebrate drunkenly, and do other *sinful* things like these. I warn you now about *doing these sinful things*, just like I warned you previously: anyone who regularly does these *sinful* things will not participate in God's kingdom. 22 Yet the Holy Spirit enables *us believers in the Messiah* to love others and be joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, 23 gentle, and to control ourselves. There is no law that prohibits people from doing these *good* things. 24 We who belong to the Messiah Jesus have stopped doing *what* our sinful selves feel and want *to do*.

25 Since the Holy Spirit has made us spiritually alive, we must let the Holy Spirit lead us. 26 Do not boast. Do not make each other angry. Do not envy each other.

6 Fellow believers, if you discover that another believer does something wrong, those of you who are spiritually mature should gently correct that person. *While doing so,* you should be very careful so that you do not sin as well. 2 Help each other overcome the problems you have. By doing that, you will obey what the Messiah commands. 3 *I say this* because people who wrongly think that they are better than others trick themselves *into believing what is not true*. 4 Instead, each of you should constantly evaluate what you do. *Only* then might you be able to rightly boast about *what* you *have done* on your own instead *of wrongly boasting* about *what* someone else *has done*. 5 *I say this* because each one *of you* must do what God has given you *to do*.

6 If fellow believers teach you what God has said, then you must share what you have with them. 7 Do not trick yourselves: No one can scorn God! *This is* because*, just like* a farmer will harvest exactly the kind of crop that he plants*, people will experience the results of what they have done*. 8 Those who do what their *sinful* selves want to do will experience the result *of doing so*. God will punish them forever. But those who please the Holy Spirit will experience the result *of doing so*. The Holy Spirit will enable them to live forever *with God*. 9 Let us not tire of doing what is good, because at the right time we will experience the *good* result *of what we do*. *This will happen* if we do not stop *doing these good things*. 10 Therefore, let us do what is good to everyone whenever we can. *Let us* especially *do what is good* to all our fellow believers *in Jesus*.

11 I am writing *this* to you in my own handwriting. Notice how large the letters are! 12 Everyone who wants to impress *the Jews* with how they appear outwardly is trying to force you to have someone circumcise you. *They* only *do this* in order to prevent the Jews from persecuting them for *believing that* the Messiah Jesus died on the cross *to save us*. 13 *I say this* because not even those people whom someone has circumcised obey the laws *God gave the Jews*. Rather, they want to circumcise you in order to boast because of how you appear outwardly. 14 As for me, I will ever only boast about our Lord Jesus the Messiah dying on the cross *to save us*! Because Jesus died on the cross, the *sinful* world has become *like* a dead person to me, and I have become *like* a dead person to the *sinful* world. 15 *I may boast about Jesus dying on the cross* because whether people are circumcised or not is not important. Rather, *the Holy Spirit* making them new people is important. 16 I pray that God will make peaceful everyone who behaves in this way and will act kindly to them. *I* also *pray these things* for those Israelites who *trust in Jesus and* belong to God!

17 I have scars on my body because I declared the truth about Jesus. So do not let anyone bother me *about these matters* again!

18 Fellow believers, *I pray that* our Lord Jesus the Messiah *will* be gracious to all of you! May it be so!