

**An Invitation and Calling:  
Learning to Live in the Grace of Christ  
September 16 – November 11 2012  
“Living What Counts: The New Creation through the Cross of Christ”  
Study Helps: Week Nine of Nine  
Galatians 6:11-18, Nov 11 2012**

**Focus for Week Nine**

Over the last eight weeks, we have been opening together an invitation, a calling, which all people have received from God. It is the invitation and calling to “live in the grace of Christ.” We have

- Explored how one enters this grace through Jesus;
- Marveled at the freedom into which God calls us;
- Been challenged by how the Holy Spirit leads us to walk in this grace of Christ.

It has been a transforming journey.

We conclude this series by looking at what Paul writes about “What Counts.” When it is all said and done, what is the living that counts?

**Summary of “Time of Reflection” and Message**

1. Time of Reflection: **“Living What Counts”**

- When God created the world, he made it very good. There was freedom connected to relationship with God, satisfying love experienced and shared, perfect shalom (i.e. delight, enjoyment in relationships)
- When humans chose freedom separate from relationship with God, their sin impacted not only them but generations after them; we know this because death now infects every human life as does the fear of being unloved, the lack of shalom amongst individuals, families and society.
- Jesus came to address all that is wrong. Through his death, resurrection, and present rule, **Jesus is making all things new.**
- It is not a surprise then that Paul concludes his letter by saying that the **ONLY** thing that counts is the “new creation” (see Galatians 6:14-16).
- This new creation may never be separated from the cross of Christ; by dying for our sin and overcoming death, he alone can make all things new. What grace we are offered through Jesus!!!

2. **Summary of Meditation**

- **Paul ends his letter by contrasting what one should and should NOT boast about;** the concept of boasting combined with “what counts” embraces “daring;” therefore, the focus of meditation is on what Paul says about two opposites: “How dare you” (i.e. What doesn’t count) and “I dare you” (i.e. What counts)

- **“How dare you. . .” (i.e. What doesn’t count) (6:12-13)**
  - a. Live to impress people by means of the flesh (6:12a); either things done TO the flesh or BY the flesh (5:13)
  - b. Waste time trying to add to grace and pressuring others to do the same (6:12b)
  - c. Try to avoid persecution for belonging to Jesus (6:12b)
  - d. Pretend that selective obedience is good enough to please God (6:13a); if one wants to add to grace, one must obey ALL of God’s perfect requirements (see Galatians 5:2-12)
  - e. Take credit for the work of grace in another (6:13b)
  
- **“I dare you. . .” (What counts) (6:14-16)**
  - a. **The Cross of Christ (6:14)**; through the cross, the world is crucified to me and I to the world (see Galatians 2:19-20, 5:24).
  - b. **The New Creation**; that is, the present and future reality that Jesus is making all things new, which we come to discover by the grace of Christ and see as we “live in the grace of Christ” through the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **For Further Study**

1. Read Galatians 6:11-18 in light of the rest of Galatians. What are themes from the book re-emphasized in this conclusion?
2. In light of Galatians 6:11 and what follows, scan the endings of some of Paul’s other letters (e.g. Colossians 4, Romans 16) to see how he usually concludes his letters. Also read Romans 16:22 and II Thessalonians 3:17 to see the practice of Paul to dictate most of his letters.
3. Compare and contrast the two times Paul says, “What counts” (Galatians 5:5-6, Galatians 6:14-15). How are they the same? How are they different? Why does Paul call 6:14-15 a rule (6:16)?
4. The “Israel of God” refers back to Galatians 3:26-29. Note the particulars (i.e. details) to this general statement.
5. From what you know of his letter, why might he have worded the greeting (1:3-5) and closing blessing (6:18) as he did?
6. Take Away Question: In light of the understanding God has brought me through this series and from Galatians 6:11-18, do I dare live what counts “in the grace of Christ?”