

Galatians 6:11–18 — Leader / Learner Guide

Teaching the Truth · TheGospelVault.com, @iJohn.316 (Instagram)

Big Idea and Context

Big idea: Only the cross of Christ produces the new creation. The grace gospel must be presented persuasively, precisely, plainly, positively, and personally — with nothing added and nothing taken away.

Paul takes the pen himself for the closing. He adds nothing new, but he leaves nothing out — the whole letter in miniature.

- **Ch. 1–2:** Paul's gospel came from God.
- **Ch. 3–4:** justified by faith, not law.
- **Ch. 5–6:** liberty lived by the Spirit — and here, boasting only in the cross.

The Cross Alone — Three Anchor Verses

Verse	What it says	Teaching point
6:14	God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ	The cross is an offense to the world, and adding works to it empties it (Rom 11:6; 1 Cor 1:22–24).
6:15	Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation	Circumcision doesn't get you in or keep you out. In Christ we are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).
6:16	Peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God	A blessing on all who walk by the grace rule, and on Jewish believers — the Israel of God.

Four hidden motives (6:12–13): the approval of people, avoiding persecution, the appearance of law-keeping, and pride in numbers.

Religion or relationship: religion is man trying to bring God down to himself. The gospel is God coming down to lift man up to Him.

Teaching Flow

1. **Persuasively (11).** "See with what large letters" — Paul's own hand, likely for emphasis (1 Cor 16:21; Col 4:18; 2 Thess 3:17).
2. **Precisely (12–15).** The legalists' hidden motives versus Paul's upper motives: the cross (14) and Christ's new creation (15). When works come in, the cross goes out.
3. **Plainly (16).** Walk by this rule — faith alone in Christ alone — and receive peace and mercy, along with the Israel of God.
4. **Positively (17).** "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" — real scars proving his dedication.
5. **Personally (18).** He ends where he began (1:3): grace, to brethren.

Clarify While Teaching

- **Lystra:** Luke says they stoned Paul "supposing him to be dead" (Acts 14:19). The text doesn't say he died.
- **The Luther quote:** "Saved by faith alone, but not by faith that is alone" is popularly attributed to Luther or Calvin; neither source is certain.
- **"He came down to my level":** the song's authorship is uncertain; it may not be a Gaither song.
- **"Israel" in the New Testament:** it appears about 70 times, and none clearly means the church. Your Vault 5 study "The Israel of God" gives the full case.
- **6:17:** "let no one trouble me" is firm, but the "pathetic lives" paraphrase is sharper than Paul's words.

Discussion and Close

1. Which of the four hidden motives — approval, safety, appearance, or pride — is the biggest temptation for you when sharing the gospel?
2. How would you explain the gospel in one sentence, with nothing added and nothing taken away?
3. Paul's scars proved his dedication. What has following Christ cost you?

Close: Galatians ends where it began: grace. Review the whole letter — the gospel came from God, it justifies by faith, and it is lived by the Spirit. Boast only in the cross.

Full study: [Teaching the Truth — Galatians 6:11–18](#) · Source: Dr. C. Norman Sellers, [SellersBibleInstitute.com](#)