

I was reading about a guy named Joe... who is an executive... and who does a lot of business traveling. ... One day when Joe was on a flight... he commented to himself... *I cannot believe this flight crew. They are the most attentive, responsive flight crew that I've ever seen.*

So... toward the end of the flight... he stopped one of the flight crew members and said... *"Excuse me, I don't mean to bother you, but I fly a lot, and I have never seen a flight crew like this. You are the most engaged, enthusiastic, service-oriented flight crew that I've ever seen."*

The female flight attendant got a little smile on her face as she bent down and whispered to Joe... *"Thank you, sir, but for that you can thank the woman seated back there in 12B."* ... She paused... nodded her head slightly towards seat 12B... and continued: *"You see, sir, the woman in seat 12B is the head supervisor for all of the flight attendants for our airlines. And she's on our flight!"*

Contrast this story... with another one I read quite a while ago... that involved author and famed Dallas Seminary professor, Howard Hendricks. He wrote how he once sat in a plane that was delayed for take off. ... After a long wait... the passengers became more and more irritated. ...Hendricks noticed how gracious one of the flight attendants was as she spoke with them. ... After the plane finally took off... he told the flight attendant how amazed he was at her poise and self-control... and said he wanted to write a letter of commendation for her to the airline. ... The stewardess replied that she didn't work for the airline company... but for Jesus Christ. ...She said that just before going to work she and her husband prayed together that she would be a good representative of Christ.

Doing it for Christ's sake adds a whole different dynamic... to what and how we do things... .. You are submitting not just to your employer or husband or parent... but to the Lord... because of your love and gratitude for Him.

This morning our passage of Scripture deals with the whole area of motivation. (LISTEN) – A good work is spoiled by a bad motive. ... This morning as we conclude our study through the book of Galatians... Paul issues his final warning... and it is a warning to be concerned about what our motives are.

Throughout this entire letter... Paul has been critical of a group of people known as “the Judaizers”... and for good reason. ... They were not good people. They preached a false Gospel... insisting that circumcision was necessary for salvation... and here in our final verses of the letter... Paul describes what their motivation was... for presenting such false doctrine... that damns a lot of people to Hell. ... (1) They were only men-pleasers... seeking **to make a good impression outwardly**. ... (2) They were afraid of persecution... and they proclaimed false doctrine... because it was the path of least resistance... and they did not want to be persecuted. (3) Paul shows us in today’s verses that they wanted to **boast** about the number of Galatians they hoped to win over as followers to themselves... The legalists knew the true message of the Cross would offend... but a message of salvation by works... could claim far more conversions as their followers.

As our passage today is dealing with *motive*... let me say that there is no greater need in our churches today... than for an examination of the

motives for our ministries. ... We know *what* we are doing... but do we know *why* we are doing it? ... A good work is spoiled by a bad motive.

What timing for us to come to this passage! God has just made clear to us His choice for our new “Pastor of Student Ministries.” (Notice I did not call it “youth pastor.” The title of “youth pastor” is being replaced today with the title, “Pastor of Student Ministries.” It is the same job description, however.)

As we move Tyler to our community... we know WHAT we are doing... but do we know WHY we are doing it...? ... Do we have the right motive for launching a new era of youth ministry in our church...?

I don't want to sound offensive... but I would want even less for us to be careless about our motive... because a good work is spoiled by a bad motive. (LISTEN) ... We COULD be doing this... with the same motives that the Judiazers had. Light sense of persecution

Is the reason we are bringing Tyler here and starting a youth ministry... because it will make a good impression outwardly... to our community...? Do we fear... even a light sense of persecution... that when other church youth groups around town are involved in community service... that someone might ask... where is your church's youth group...? Are we doing this so we can increase our numbers... and then be able to boast... *“Look at us – we are the new “Church-Of-The-What’s-Happening-Now” ...?”*

Is there even a smidgen of these motives in ANY ministry that we have at Living Water...? Would we ever alter our message... or tone any of it down... in order to have more people come and join us...? (Now I am

talking about our message and our convictions... **not** our methods that we will change... in order to have our message heard and received.)

Let's use today's passage to guide us in an evaluation... of our motives for doing ministry... here at Living Water.

Galatians 6:11

In the first century... when they wrote letters and other important documents on parchment... which was expensive... it was very common to hire a special secretary... who was trained to write quickly... neatly... and in the limited space that parchment had. Such a secretary was called an "amanuensis." ... There is very little doubt that Paul wrote his letters (probably all of them) by dictating them to an "amanuensis." But then Paul had his own custom where he would take the pen from the secretary and write the final greeting to close the letter.

Romans 16:22 (ESV)

I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

Here we are even given the name of Paul's amanuensis who wrote as Paul dictated his letter to the Romans. (Tertius threw his own greeting in...)

1 Corinthians 16:21-22 (ESV)

I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.!

Colossians 4:18 (ESV)

I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

2 Thessalonians 3:17 (ESV)

I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.

But as Paul closes his letter to the Galatians... he apparently does something different. He writes his final warning... the last paragraph... about motives... with his own hand.

Why did Paul write this paragraph... and why did he use such large letters? The Holy Spirit inspired him to add these closing words... to give one more contrast between the legalists and the Spirit-led Christians... to show that the Spirit-led believer lives for the glory of God... not the praise of man. And he wrote in large letters for emphasis: "DON'T MISS THIS!"

Galatians 6:12-16

Verse 12... *"It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh."*

The perpetrators of circumcision in salvation were wanting to impress others. They were not interested in pleasing God but in pleasing men.

Their main purpose was not to win people to Christ... or even to help the believers grow in grace. ... Their chief purpose was to win more converts so they could brag about them. ... They wanted to "make a fine impression outwardly" even though they did no good inwardly. ... Their work was not done for the good of the church or for the glory of God... ... it was done for their own glory.

While it is certainly not wrong to want to win people to Christ... or to see the work of the Lord increase... it is definitely wrong... to want these blessings for the glory of man.

We want to see more people sharing in our ministries... not so that we can count people... but because people count.

But we must be careful not to "use people" to further our own selfish programs for our own glorification.

Legalists always stress the outward things... like numbers in attendance... and baptisms... and buildings. ... Outward things are more important to them than salvation and liberty in Christ. ... Legalist aren't concerned for the real needs of people. ... They don't care that people are hurting and broken. ... Their main concern is that they make **a good showing in the flesh**. ... Legalism always puts more emphasis to the outward than to the heart. ...However... a believer's focus... must be... from the inside out.

Verse 12 also says that they... *"would force you to be circumcised."* They coerced folks to conform to their belief. ... They put a lot of pressure on folks to be circumcised... making them believe that "Now they are saved."

Many evangelical churches do the same thing! They use coercion... with lots of emotion... to get people to walk down an isle at the end of a service. *"Come on... get out of your seats... walk down this isle... and pray a simple prayer... THEN... for sure... you will be saved!..."* Sadly... countless numbers of people have walked an isle... since the mid-1800's when Charles Finney (who... by the way... had a lot of un-Biblical theology) brought it into mainstream Christianity... and after walking the isle... these people even prayed the sinner's prayer... and through that... were given the false impression that now they are saved.

We see in verses 15... that it is NOT such external rituals... that saves people. We are not to be all wrapped up... greatly excited... by such rituals. ... Galatians 6:15 could not be any more clear... there is only **one**

thing that matters... and it is what happens internally – becoming a new creation.

Now... I know that there are also THOUSANDS... maybe hundreds of thousands... who began a very real relationship with Christ... when they walked the aisle of some church... or evangelistic crusade such as Billy Graham's... or Dwight L Moody... or Billy Sunday. But it wasn't the walk... or even the prayer. ... Those are just external rituals. It was what was happening inside of them... as they walked ... or as they prayed.

The measurement of success for any church or evangelistic crusade... is never how many baptisms they have had... or how many people walked down their aisle... or how many people prayed the sinner's prayer. ... If a ministry has a lot of people doing these things... GREAT! ... Perhaps many of those who respond ARE real conversions. ... But the very important message Paul makes in his closing paragraph of Galatians... that he wrote with his own hand... is that the only thing that matters... is evidence of new creation. ... And you hardly ever see that right away. Usually evidence of new creation is shown over time.

Baptisms and numbers of people who walk down aisles have been used by MANY churches to boast and glory in themselves... for many years. There are also other external factors of misfocus.

When I go to pastor's conferences... or pastor's meetings... the number one question that I HATE... is "How many people attend your church?" ... I would much rather answer a question along the lines of... "What is the evidence of new life in your midst that you are seeing...?" "Is there vitality of faith in the lives of your people... even the ones who are experiencing

hardship and trials...?” “Do they run from the truth... or try to soften it... to avoid hardship... or if they are ever threatened with persecution...?”

In Paul’s final warning here in Galatians... he contrasts a Spirit-led life... with the life of a legalist. ... The legalists who had infected the churches of Galatia were cowards. They knew that if they embraced the difficult message of the cross... they would suffer persecution from their peers. Their motive was to avoid difficulty... so they ran from the truth of the Gospel.

Right now... our church has a strong motivation to usher in a new era of youth ministry. ... But what about when the real work gets under way...? What about when difficulties arise... and they will! ... Challenges will come... obnoxious things will happen... kids with messy lives may start hanging out here. ... Will any of us have a different motivation – then...? ... Will there be a new motive come front and center...that is not so apparent now... one that wants to avoid difficulty...? ... Will avoidance of difficulty become primary... over getting the truth of the Gospel into lives to change them forever as a new creation...?

And since we are back on having the right motivation... look at verse 13 again with me...

Galatians 6:13

Some of the Judaizers were emphasizing circumcision as proof of holiness, but were ignoring the other Jewish laws. ... Today... people often choose a certain principle or prohibition and make it the measure of faith. ... Some may condemn drunkenness - but ignore the sin of gluttony in their own life... Others may despise sexual promiscuity - but tolerate prejudice. ...

Some who are adamant against homosexuality and/or abortion - ignore the physical or emotional spouse abuse... or child abuse that they commit secretly in their own home. ... The Bible in its entirety is our rule of faith and practice. ... We cannot pick and choose the mandates we will ignore in our own life... and demand that others follow mandates where we might have a lesser struggle.

We will perhaps be seeing a lot more... of the hormonally-challenged folks coming through our doors. ... Let's not make their struggles (which may not be our own) be the proof of "true holiness." Lets not be motivated to crusade against the sins of others... while we hide in our own. *"Here... let me help you overcome your addiction to internet pornography... so I won't have to deal with my problem of gossip and grumbling..." "We've had 11 young people this past month ask for help to gain victory over drugs and alcohol... just don't ask me about my own struggles with an impure thought-life... but... we had 11 young people getting help... isn't it just wonderful... how many we are working with...?"*

Galatians 6:14

The cross changes lives. It changed Paul's relationship to the world to the extent that he said he was crucified or dead to the world... as a result of his acceptance of the message of the cross.

Would you say... like Paul here... that you are dead to the world...? Is the world with all of its enticements on TV... on the radio... in conversations with friends... is it all dead to you...? ... We need to ask God every day...

and many times throughout the day... to crucify our interest to the world's enticements.

The reason Paul mentions his rejection of the world and the world's rejection of him... is to begin to describe what a new creation is. A new creation is a new reason to live... a new passion for life... a new source of strength. ... New life in Christ crucifies our interest in wrongful attractions... even religious rituals that can be used for our boasting to others.

Galatians 6:15-16

Paul might have written... “to those who believe this rule”... “to those who agree with this principle...” “If you will see it the way I do...” ... But he didn't. Notice what he wrote: “As for all who...” (what?) “...walk by this rule...” “All who live it step-by-step in their daily life... these will have mercy and peace upon them...” Those who are focused on living moment-by-moment making the new creation primary... living as though crucified to the world and all of its attractions... ALL who walk by this rule... Gentiles from Galatia... and Jewish born believers... Israelite Christians... peace and mercy will be upon them.

Suppose I had the power to hold out to you two hands for your choosing. In the one hand is the mercy of God to forgive all your sins and the peace of God for your eternal enjoyment. And in the other hand was every desirable thing the world could offer you (money, leisure, health, popularity, big business savvy, a spouse—you name it)—but no mercy from God and no final peace with him. Which would you want?

"What does it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your soul?"

Only in the grip of a great satanic delusion... do people choose the world over the mercy and peace of God. ... But surely the Holy Spirit is here this morning to break that delusion... and to help us feel the utter foolishness of desiring the pleasures of the world for a season... at the expense of God's mercy and peace.

Talk to the Lord every day... all through your day... recognize that you are a new creation... and ask Him to crucify the interests of the World in you. ... Leave the road of foolishness and get on the road of God's mercy and peace... and stay on it.

Now... verses 17 and 18 close Paul's letter to the Galatians...

Galatians 6:17

Here at the very end of his letter... in essence Paul writes... *"I don't want to hear anymore about it. Don't cause me any more trouble. I have shown where you are wrong. I have made myself clear... and I have the proof of my authority on my body. ... End of discussion about these matters."*

Notice the word "marks." ... Paul is saying... *"I bear in my body the 'marks'"* -- the Greek word is **stigmata** -- meaning 'scar marks. ... In Paul's day **stigmata** was used in three ways. ... When a runaway slave was found and brought back to his master... he was branded on the forehead. Also soldiers who belonged to famous companies... had the names of their commanders tattooed on their foreheads. ... Then, too, devotees of a pagan

goddess (and there was much of this in Asia Minor and throughout the Roman Empire in Paul's day) had her name branded on their foreheads.

Paul says, "*I have on my body the stigmata of the Lord Jesus.*" He is saying this in effect, "*I have written to you out of deep emotion and with great conviction. If you want to know if I truly believe what I have written and if these things are real in my own life, read my body -- look at my scars.*"

It will cost you... and it will cost me to serve Christ. ... A preacher from the 1800's... J. Howard Jowett once said: "*Ministry that costs nothing... accomplishes nothing...*" Elders... Deacons... Deaconesses... "*Ministry that costs nothing... accomplishes nothing...*"... ... AWANA workers... KIDS Church workers... Kitchen staff and Bible Study leaders... "*Ministry that costs nothing... accomplishes nothing...*"

Vance Havner (the former chaplain to the US Senate) has added... "We have a lot of metals today... but not many scars..."

Paul began (in Galatians 1:3) and ended this epistle with an emphasis on grace. That is a contrast to the legalists who push works (keeping the law) instead of grace.

So, Paul comes to the end of his letter; and he closes just the way he began: GRACE! That is what it is all about! Not "the Law of Moses," but THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Galatians 6:18

As we come to the Lord's table this morning... to commune with Him... perhaps the close of Galatians has given you several things to talk with Him about. Would you discuss your motives for serving Him...? ... A good work is spoiled by a bad motive. ... Do you have any element that wants to boast...? ... Have you been trying to please or impress man...? Or... is the fear of man... any part of your motivation...? Are you living your Christianity with an avoidance motivation... of any kind...? Are you stalled by fear... or do you scars...? ... Have you focused more on the sins of others... so you won't have to deal with your own...? ... Do you want to ask the Lord to crucify your interest in the world...?

Come and commune with Jesus. Fellowship with Him. Come to the Table of the Lord... where His grace... and peace... and mercy... is made available.