

Galatians 5:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

Analysis

And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. Paul addresses false claim. "And I, brethren" (egō de, adelphoi, ἐγὼ δέ, ἀδελφοί)—as for me, brothers. "If I yet preach circumcision" (ei peritomēn eti kēryssō)—if I still proclaim circumcision as necessary. Apparently the Judaizers claimed Paul taught circumcision when among Jews, only omitting it with Gentiles—convenient inconsistency. Paul denies this: if I preached circumcision for righteousness, persecution would cease!

"Why do I yet suffer persecution?" (ti eti diōkomai, τί ἔτι διώκομαι)—why am I still being persecuted? Present tense: ongoing persecution. His suffering proved he didn't preach circumcision. "Then is the offence of the cross ceased" (ara katērgētai to skandalon tou staurou, ἄρα κατήργηται τὸ σκάνδαλον τοῦ σταυροῦ) —then the stumbling block of the cross is removed. Skandalon (σκάνδαλον) is offense, stumbling block. The cross offends because it declares human righteousness worthless—salvation is entirely God's work. Adding circumcision removes this offense, making salvation partly human achievement. Paul won't compromise to avoid persecution.

Historical Context

Paul faced constant persecution from Jews offended by his gospel of grace apart from law (Acts 13:45, 14:19, 17:5, 2 Corinthians 11:24-26). If he'd compromised by

requiring circumcision, Jewish opposition would have ceased—they'd see him as bringing Gentiles into proper Torah observance. His persecution proved gospel integrity. The cross remains offensive: it humbles human pride, declares works useless, credits all to God. Any gospel that doesn't offend human pride probably isn't the biblical gospel. Comfortable, popular Christianity usually involves compromise.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Does your presentation of the gospel retain the 'offense of the cross'—that human righteousness is worthless and salvation is entirely God's work?
2. How do you recognize when you've compromised the gospel to make it more palatable or avoid opposition?
3. What persecution or opposition do you face for holding to the biblical gospel without compromise?

Interlinear Text

ἐγὼ	δέ	ἀδελφοί	εἰ	περιτομὴν	ἔτι	κηρύσσω	τί	ἔτι
I	And	brethren	if	circumcision	yet	I	why	yet
G1473	G1161	G80	G1487	G4061	G2089	G2784	G5101	G2089

διώκομαι	ἄρα	κατήργηται	τὸ	σκάνδαλον	τοῦ	σταυροῦ
do I	then	ceased	G3588	the offence	G3588	of the cross
G1377	G686	G2673		G4625		G4716

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 1:23 (Cross): But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

Galatians 6:12 (Cross): As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

Galatians 4:29 (Parallel theme): But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Acts 21:21 (Parallel theme): And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

1 Corinthians 15:30 (Parallel theme): And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

Galatians 2:3 (Parallel theme): But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:
