

Galatians 6:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

Analysis

Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. Paul begins his personal conclusion. "Ye see how large a letter" (idete pēlikois hymin grammasis egrapsa, ἵδετε πηλίκοις ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα)—see with what large letters I wrote to you. Gramma (γράμμα) can mean letters (alphabet characters) or letter (epistle). "Large letters" could mean:

1. large handwriting (possibly due to poor eyesight, 4:15), or
2. lengthy letter, or
3. bold, emphatic writing.

Most translations favor large handwriting.

"With mine own hand" (tē emē cheiri, τῇ ἡμῇ χειρί)—with my own hand. Paul typically dictated letters to a scribe (amanuensis), signing personally at the end (Romans 16:22, 1 Corinthians 16:21, Colossians 4:18, 2 Thessalonians 3:17). Galatians may have been entirely written by Paul himself (unusual) or he wrote the conclusion from verse 11 forward in his own handwriting. Either way, he emphasizes personal authorship, authenticating the letter and underlining its urgency. The personal touch reinforces: this isn't abstract theology but urgent pastoral appeal from one who loves them.

Historical Context

Ancient letter-writing typically involved dictation to trained scribes who could write quickly and neatly. Wealthy, educated persons often couldn't write as beautifully as professional scribes. Paul's trade as tentmaker suggests manual labor, not scribal training. If he had poor eyesight (speculation from 4:13-15), writing would be difficult. Regardless, his personal handwriting (whether the whole letter or the conclusion) authenticated the letter and expressed deep personal concern. The tactile, visual emphasis—"Ye see"—called attention to the physical letter as tangible expression of apostolic authority and pastoral love.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's personal handwriting and emphasis on physical letter-writing speak to the value of personal, tangible communication?
2. What does Paul's willingness to write personally (despite difficulty) reveal about his pastoral heart for the Galatians?
3. How can you personally invest in communicating important spiritual truths to those you care about?

Interlinear Text

Ίδετε	πηλίκοις	ὑμῖν	γράμμασιν	ἔγραψα	τῇ	
Ye see	how large	unto you	a letter	I have written		G3588
G1492	G4080	G5213	G1121	G1125		
ἐμῇ	χειρί					
with mine own	hand					
G1699	G5495					

