

8/1/21

Galatians 6: 1-2; 12-18

Title: Is it Inclusion or Exclusion?

Introduction: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:30 ESV.

Context: The event that made Paul to write this letter of Galatians was a visit to the community of Galatia by a group of Messianic Jewish leaders from Jerusalem. They went there to correct what they believed was lacking in the doctrine of that community. Messianic Jewish leaders in the Galatians church were teaching that in order to become a Christian, first the Gentiles have to conform to the Law of Moses in such a way that they follow Jewish dietary practices, festivals, and circumcision.

“It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.” (Galatians 6:12 NRSV).

What is Paul saying to us in the 21 first century with this passage in Galatians? The issue that Paul was dealing with in the first century of Christianity is no different from an issue we deal with here in the 21 first century. It is an issue of inclusion versus exclusion. It is an issue of outwards practices such as baptism, holy communion and attending church just to make a good showing for others to see.

What does it mean to be inclusive? I suppose a good way to put it is that to be inclusive means to accept all people as God’s children or accept ideas as completely equal in a given situation.



Inclusion and exclusion always relate to people and ideas. There are times when being inclusive is the right thing. At the same time, there are situations where exclusion is desirable. How about biblical Christianity?

1. Inclusive

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” John 3:16

2. Exclusive

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also.” John 14:6-7a