

BRAND-MARKS OF JESUS

Paul closed the Book of Galatians by reminding us of the suffering associated with preaching the gospel of grace salvation to the world – “For I bear on my body the **brand-marks of Jesus.**” (Gal.6:17b)

This began for Paul on his first Missionary Evangelism Trip (M.E.T) of South Galatia recorded in Acts 13-14.

This lesson will study four aspects of what it meant for Paul to bear the brand-marks of Jesus.

This is the only time the Greek word, stigma, is used for brand-marks. It is derived from the Greek verb stizo (to prick as in tattooing). Stigma was used in Greek culture for two types of branding: penal and religious.

In the Greek culture of Galatia, followers of certain gods would brand or tattoo themselves with the name of the god they worshipped. **Unger** tells of slaves who wanted to purchase their freedom would give their temple priest the money to negotiate their freedom. The legal transaction would be kept in the temple of his god.

When Paul healed a man lame from birth, the Galatians declared Paul to be Hermes and Barnabas to be Zeus and tried to offer sacrifices to them (Acts 14:8-20) (Lystra / temple of Zeus).

1. The Judaizer, the enemy of the gospel of grace salvation, prided themselves for the brand-mark of circumcision as proof of salvation (Acts 15:1, 5).

Paul called their gospel a different gospel that distorted the mechanics of grace salvation (Gal.1:6-8). They added circumcision as a necessary step to believing the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to be saved (Gal.2:16-21; 3:24-29; Acts 15:11).

(Gal.5:6) “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love” (Gal.5:1-2; 1 Cor.7:17-19)

(Gal.5:12) “I wish that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves.” (Gal.6:12-15)

2. The problem the Judaizer was experiencing was that the Old Covenant (OC) requirement of circumcision had become religious ritual without any doctrinal reality.

The OC circumcision was Shadow Christology, a shadow of what was to come - the messianic seed (Gen.3:15) the seed of the woman (Isa.7:14); the seed of Abraham (Gen.12-17).

(Gal.3:16) “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to **his seed.** He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your **seed, that is, Christ.**”

(Matt.1:20) “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.” (Luke 1:35; Gal.4:4)

(Col.2:10-12) “**And in Him** you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; **And in Him** you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried **with Him** in baptism, in which you were also raised up **with Him** through faith in the working of God who raised Him from the dead.”

3. As a missionary evangelist, Paul was bearing the brand-marks for preaching a gospel of Grace Salvation.

His brand-marks were Paul's proof of preaching the gospel of grace salvation to the world.

(Gal.6:14) "But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

Paul was bearing the brand-marks of the enmity against Jesus Christ of Gen.3:15 (Gal.6:17).

Paul was being persecuted by the world and by the legalist in the church for preaching the gospel of grace salvation (Acts 15:11; 21:21, 27- 31) (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9; 1 John 5:11-13).

In (2 Cor.11:23-28), Paul listed 22 different brand-marks of Jesus for preaching the gospel of grace salvation.

This covered a period of about 10 years of missionary evangelism to world.