

PAUL'S BODILY 'ΤΑΣΤΙΓΜΑΤΑΤΟΥΪΗΣΟΥ' IN GALATIANS 6:17 IN RESPONSE TO PROSPERITY GOSPEL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The current Christian milieu in Nigeria reveals an alluring feature that unfortunately affects faithful Christian ministry. This is the popular prosperity gospel, which teaches that the new covenant enacted by the blood of Christ secures a life of absolute health, wealth and bliss for the Christian. It, therefore, holds prosperity as the appropriate mark for measuring the success or otherwise of Christians, especially 'Men of God' and, by implication, the validity of their calling to ministry. This paper presupposes that this wealth-and-health teaching is 'a different gospel' that has derailed and continues to delude a lot of Christian ministers in Nigeria today. Within this context, it adopts a historical-critical method of hermeneutics to explore what Paul's 'τὰστίγματατοῦΪησοῦ' (the marks of Jesus) in Gal. 6:17 implies for Paul and apostleship in the Early Church and how the same could challenge and address the issues of prosperity gospel and encourage faithful Christian ministry in Nigeria. It discovers that hardship, persecution and other forms of suffering for the gospel of Christ and their attendant scars are equally valid brandings that mark a faithful Christian minister. Without disparaging the place of godly prosperity, it challenges the church to deal decisively with this antichristian gospel of health-and-wealth for what it truly is—a different gospel. It also encourages ministers to faithfully bear up the light of the gospel and its kingdom despite the difficulties and hardships that may come along the way; for these and their accompanying *stigmata* also mark faithful apostles of the gospel.

Keywords: Paul, *Stigmata* (marks), suffering, persecution, health-and-wealth, prosperity gospel.

Introduction

A cursory look at the current Nigerian religious landscape would reveal an interesting feature that has become both popular and alluring in the Christian milieu. This is the very common 'prosperity gospel' or 'prosperity theology' which now bestrides the various

strands of Christian tradition in Nigeria. Citing Jones (1998), Okosun (2018) notes that prosperity gospel is also described as ‘name it and claim it gospel’, the ‘blab it and grab it gospel’, the ‘health and wealth gospel’, the ‘word of faith movement’, the ‘gospel of success’ and ‘positive confession theology’ (p. 84). Although it has received attacks on numerous fronts, this movement continues to wield colossal influence with visible imprints on various Christian traditions in Nigeria. As Kitause and Achunike (2015) observe, Nigeria is among the countries with the largest percentages of adherents to prosperity theology; and these devotees are not only Pentecostals but include members of every other Christian tradition in Nigeria. It can, therefore, be said that even though prosperity theology was originally a Pentecostal movement spearheaded in Nigeria by the founder of Church of God Mission, Archbishop Benson Idahosa (Okosun, 2018), it has now become a part of Christianity in Nigeria.

The prosperity gospel teaches that the new covenant enacted by the blood of Christ procures a life of absolute health, wealth and bliss for the Christian. Ehioghare and Olanrewaju (2015) capture this clearly when they note that one of the central characteristics of prosperity theology is ‘the concept of breakthroughs in diverse areas of life... healing, finance, marital success, promotion in the workplace and other favors from God’ (p. 71). The submission of Temitope (2018) is both succinct and conclusive: prosperity gospel teaches that God's desire is for ‘believers to be physically healthy, materially wealthy, and personally happy’ (p. 314). Thus, it projects the aforementioned as the indices for measuring the spirituality and faith of Christians, especially ministers.

It is significant to observe that although prosperity gospel generally promises success for the believer, it has proved to be true, in most cases, only for ministers. Okosun (2018) notes that research has shown that ‘prosperity theology has not had a positive impact on the economic lives of its poor adherents’ (p. 86). He goes on to submit that ‘unlike majority of their adherents who are poor (especially in Africa), prosperity preachers have been accused of living in undisputed and overt splendor, flamboyance and opulence’. The submission that ‘majority of their adherents’ are poor, may have been a little overstretched, as there is no clear data to validate it. Yet, it appears almost certainly incontrovertible that most prosperity preachers live in affluence. There is visible craze among the preachers to live in exuberant prosperity. Understandably, there is at the root of this obsession an undergirding belief that has been aptly captured by one of the most vocal and evidential leaders of the movement in Nigeria, Bishop David Oyedepo who writes, ‘**Prosperity is our identity. If you don't demonstrate it, then you are a misfit in the kingdom**’ (Oyedepo, 2005, pp. 16-17, emphasis mine).

While prosperity is not and should not be a problem in itself to the Christian faith, the challenge lies in making it the **identity** of Christians and especially the ministers in particular. This is the crux of the problem. Consequently, this paper acknowledges the need to adequately respond to or address this erroneous and misleading gospel that measures the spirituality of ministers, the validity of their calling or their identity by the barometer of material prosperity. Adopting a historical-critical method of hermeneutics, it explores what Paul's ‘τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ’ (the marks of Jesus) in Gal. 6:17 implies for Paul and apostleship in the early church and how same could challenge and address this

particular error of prosperity gospel. The ultimate goal is to encourage faithful Christian ministry in Nigeria; a ministry that does not only glory in the prosperity that comes with the gospel but also in the perils and scars that attend ministry.

Exploring prosperity gospel's prosperity identity

While it is clear that prosperity gospel generally teaches that the new covenant in Christ brings wealth, health, and happiness, one cannot help but ask whether such teaching misrepresents biblical teachings. This rethinking is fundamental, particularly in light of the volume of attack that has been hurled against prosperity gospel from different quarters. One would agree with Temitope (2018) that this concept or understanding of prosperity gospel makes it unfair for one to condemn its teachings or proponents; for nobody can deny that God truly wants his children to enjoy a good life. Indeed, if this were to be the only focus of prosperity gospel, then its teaching cannot be said to be anti-scriptural. The reality, however, is that when one considers a few of the emphases of prosperity gospel and even its overall impact on the Christian faith and influence on ministers in general, one would find it difficult to excuse the movement from the numerous attacks it has received from various angles.

Although prosperity gospel has contributed, in commendable measures, to the growth of the church in Nigeria, many of its teachings are unfortunately misleading, to a large extent. For instance, the teaching that God wants his people to be prosperous in life may seem harmless; yet it has some far-reaching implications for living out a wholesome Christian life. Thus, despite the good intents and contributions of prosperity gospel to the growth of the church, it could still be deluding and destructive to the Christian faith and its disciplines. Again Temitope's view hits the nail on the head when he notes that in the context of 'prosperity theology', wealth 'is used as the measure of one's level of favor with God' (p. 315). The writings of David Oyedepo of Living Faith Church (AKA Winners' Chapel International), whom Mpigi (2017) correctly recognises as a leading figure among the prosperity gospel preachers, go to substantiate the allusion that the possession of material wealth is considered a necessary identifier of a redeemed life in Christ. In one of his many related books, Oyedepo (2005) writes: 'I am redeemed to be **enriched**, so I will be an abuse to redemption if I don't actualize that dimension of my redemption.... **Prosperity is our identity. If you don't demonstrate it, then you are a misfit in the kingdom**' (pp. 16-17, emphasis mine).

While prosperity is not and should not be a problem in itself to the Christian faith, the challenge lies in making it the **identity** of Christians. This is a significant problem. As Ehioghae and Olanrewaju (2015) note with a poignant thrust: Prosperity gospel preachers give 'the impression that material prosperity is a measure of one's spirituality' (p. 73). This is of some serious implications for the Christian ministry in Nigeria. It has entrenched a spirit of unhealthy competition and greed among adherents of Christianity, especially ministers of the gospel, who are now driven by an ungodly quest for upward mobility, in order to showcase their 'identity' as the redeemed of Christ. As Kalu (2018) reveals, 'Nigerian Christianity has been bedevilled... by insatiable materialism' (p. 215). Cataloguing the many visible spiritual and social effects of this identity ideology on adherents may not be necessary at this time. Yet one effect that is crucial to the thrust of

the present work must be observed: Prosperity gospel, in the discerning words of Ehioghae and Olanrewaju (2015), ‘emasculates the formation of Christian character... it leaves no room for brokenness and suffering. The cross and its symbol of denial are disregarded’ (p. 74).

One could see that prosperity gospel teachings need revisiting. This is crucial especially with particular respect to its implication on the identity of Christian ministers. Hanegraaff’s (2003) observation, that prosperity preachers have become dexterous in deluding their followers with a counterfeit gospel that looks genuine, makes this task timely now. In like manner, Mpigi (2017) agrees that these negative impacts of prosperity gospel’s identity ideology demands a vehement refute such as Paul’s in Galatians.

Responding through Galatians 6:17

It is not surprising that one turns to the letter of Paul to the Galatians in seeking a proper response to a misleading gospel that defines a Christian minister by a false identity. As Dunn (2016) notes, Paul’s letter to the Galatians is crucial to understanding what makes one a Christian and what it means to be one. It also makes clear certain significant distinctions on what it means to be an apostle which is predicated on first being a Christian—a life of faith and spirit. In this letter one finds Paul emphasising and insisting that one becomes a Christian simply by believing in Jesus Christ and living by the Spirit, and not by observing the law—certainly not by circumcision. What provoked such insistence by Paul and such harsh rebukes as are found in the letter becomes immediately obvious.

Galatians 6:17 in context

Hansen (1993) reveals that Paul had ministered the grace of God in Christ to the Gentile Galatians by preaching the gospel which they received with faith. By this act of simple believing, they became converts to Christianity. Even though he was a Jew himself, Paul never preached that his audience had to convert to Judaism—circumcision being the basic and most significant sign—first before becoming Christians. Sadly, not long afterward, some other Jewish Christians preached to the Galatians what Paul would call ‘a different gospel’. This gospel insisted that Gentile converts to Christianity could not be saved unless they were circumcised and showed total commitment to Israel’s Torah. The Judaizers, therefore, placed converts to Christianity at *par* with Jewish proselytes. Paul could not stomach such aberration, for Judaism was founded upon an older covenant and expressed by living according to the law, while Christianity was established by the new and perfect covenant and demonstrated by a life of faith and spirit. Thus, he vehemently rebuked the Galatian converts who had allowed themselves to be easily swayed. He also severally declared a curse on any of the circumcision party who persisted in preaching a different gospel.

In addition to reaffirming the gospel and its faith, Paul also writes to defend his apostleship; and this is important to this paper. Lyons (1985) informs that many scholars agree that this letter is a significant defence of Paul’s apostleship. A closer look at 1:1 reveals that directly or otherwise there has been an attack on Paul’s apostleship. As Dunn (2016) insightfully reckons, Paul introduces himself in 1:1 but strikingly disrupts the usual convention of an epistolary introduction. ‘Evidently he felt his apostleship to be at

issue, a status and authority he has to make clear as he determines to call his Galatian converts to account' (p. 2). It seems clear, that Paul's opponents held that his apostleship lacked divine authorisation since he was not among the Twelve or those who worked with Jesus while he was on earth; for that reason, his gospel was ultimately invalid.

Paul, therefore, begins this letter by daringly and vehemently asserting that he was not sent by humans or from humans, but directly appointed by Christ as an apostle. This was an apostleship that he consistently considers in all of his writings to be, as expressed by Harrison (2017), 'a demonstration of divine grace and a call to sacrificial labor rather than an occasion for glory' (p. 73). It is within this context that one finds Paul employing the *stigmata* language in 6:17 as an appeal to the genuineness or validity of both his apostolic authority and the gospel he preached (Carson & Moo, 2005).

Understanding the *stigmata* appeal

Research has shown that Paul's *stigmata* language borrows fittingly from the context of tattooing in the Greco-Roman world. According to Betz (1974) *Stigma* (plural, *stigmata*) refers to letters, numbers or other symbols tattooed on a human body or that of an animal with a hot searing iron for various purposes. Thus, such branded marks were a well-known phenomenon in antiquity, functioning in various social and religious contexts. They were used for the branding of animals, deserters, prisoners of war, robbers of temples, wrong-doers, slaves (for running away, stealing, or sometimes merely for the sake of indicating ownership), army recruits (usually on the hand), members of certain tribes, and devotees of some deities. Rogers and Rogers (1998) affirm that it was a custom to mark slaves by scars. Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker (2000) emphasise that religious tattooing played a great role in antiquity, while Barnes (2005) considers *stigmata* as used mainly in branding slaves.

In summary, *stigmata* in antiquity can be classified into five contexts: tribal marks, branding of slaves and prisoners of war, tattooing as punishment, tattooing of soldiers and cultic/religious tattooing. A few things are clear about *stigmata* in the Greco-Roman world. First, it was a well-known phenomenon and popular practice. Second, the marks were physically burned on the body of their objects. Third, such brandings could be positive or negative depending on the purpose for which they were marked. For instance, in the case of runaway slaves or prisoners of war, *stigmata* functioned negatively; they were, in fact, demeaning. On the other hand, in those cases where people yielded themselves to receive and bear such brandings voluntarily, for example, to indicate tribal affiliation, devotion to a particular deity or membership to an army/loyalty to a particular military general, people regarded *stigmata* with a positive inclination. Fourth, in any case, a common denominator with *stigmata* in the Greco-Roman world is their function as a means for clear and unmistakable identification. Whether positive or negative, *stigmata* served as marks of religious or social identity on whoever bore them. Those marks visibly identified those who bore them and very significantly revealed where or to whom they belonged and where their allegiance and commitment rooted.

In what sense and to which end did Paul, therefore, adopt the *stigmata* language in defending his apostleship?

Paul's stigmata

That Paul adapts and adopts a common custom of his day in referring to *stigmata* is, at this point, beyond doubt. However, what he does not make very apparent is what his *stigmata* are, how he acquired them and to what degree they reflect or relate to the practice of the time. A few things, though, are quite visible from his statement and would serve as a good foundation for understanding his *stigmata* appeal: Τοῦλοιποῦ κόπους μοιμηδεῖς παρεχέτω, ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματί μου βαστάζω (Gal. 6:17, NA 28). (Henceforth, let no one make trouble to me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.)

Some persons have troubled Paul. It is painful that those who earlier believed his gospel without reservation have now turned to a different gospel. But what is more disheartening is that by this act of deserting him his apostleship is under threat. Those who preached this other gospel—believed to be Christian Judaizers—directly attacked Paul as one whose claim to apostleship was not valid (Dunn, 2016). They contended that Paul's apostleship was false and lacked authority since he was never with Jesus Christ and also was never physically commissioned by him. This is indeed great trouble for Paul, and he would refute his opponents and warn that such trouble was both unfair and not deserved.

The motivation for his rebuttal is crucial: 'for I bear the marks of Jesus branded on my body'. In a swift twist, Paul appeals to physical resultant evidence of his call than to merely being present with Jesus on earth. It is significant for the understanding of Paul's identity or otherwise as an apostle. It makes clear that the marks were physical upon his body, not just theoretical. What deserves further probing, however, are what constituted the *stigmata* he bore and how he acquired them. Das (2003) notes that the marks were the bodily scars that resulted from the sufferings he encountered in the course of his service to Christ. They were scars that resulted especially from persecution by fellow Jews, as recounted, for instance, in 2 Corinthians 11:24. They are scars of the wounds which he received in the course of his ministry. He has been scourged, stoned, maltreated and persecuted in diverse ways for the sake of the gospel of Christ. Those marks are visibly branded on his body. They were, for Paul, infallible proof and descriptor of his identity as a true apostle of Jesus Christ, whether or not he had been with the Twelve.

Nevertheless, while it is true that the marks were physical, it ought to be acknowledged too that they were not purposely branded—not by himself nor by his master. As Longenecker (2016) notes, Paul merely uses the *stigmata* language in a figurative sense to depict the persecution he has undergone for the gospel, without implying that he received a deliberate branding as would be the case with *stigmata* in the Greco-Roman context. It is equally probable, as Bligh (1969) suggests, that Paul's *stigmata* language was a 'metaphorical description of the circumcision of heart or new creation which he and the other Christians received through faith and baptism' (p. 496). This would be in contrast to the circumcision of the flesh which the Judaizers had insisted that Gentile converts to Christianity must undergo. It is also believed that Paul's marks of Jesus further allude to the cross since victims of crucifixion were scourged before being hanged on the cross. Thus, Paul informs of his identification with the sufferings of Jesus. Thiselton (2009) corroborates this idea, and submits that Paul invariably 'expresses a

participatory dimension often in terms of sharing the death and resurrection of Christ' (p. 88). Significantly, Paul uses the scars as emblematic of his identification with Jesus Christ.

Those bodily scars on Paul have also been viewed to refer metaphorically to his religious identity. Stott (1968) records that some scholars believe that Paul links his scars to symbolic markings at baptism, such as symbolic brandings with the letter X, the first letter of the word 'Christ' in Greek. He also observes that some others believe that Paul's use of the *stigmata* concept is an auto-suggestive reaction to the sufferings which Jesus experienced on the cross. Such scholars hold that Paul experienced his mystical unity with Christ to such an extent that he developed bleeding wounds on his hands and feet. While such views might not be dismissed with a wave of the hand, it ought to be noted that they do not seem to be fact. First, there is no known record that Paul had any marks deliberately engraved on his body at baptism to show his allegiance to Christ. Second, the idea that Paul had a 'mystical unity' with his master that he 'developed bleeding wounds on his hands and feet' sounds not just mystical, but also mythical. It is, to say the least, unfounded and implausible; perhaps the very reason it has become currently antiquated. What can be reasonably inferred is that Paul rather uses this *stigmata* language in recognition of the contextual realities of his day to metaphorically refer also to his religious affiliation as a Christian. Thus he calls the scars the *stigmata* of Jesus.

Most importantly, perhaps, Paul uses the *stigmata* notion to affirm himself a slave to Christ. Thiselton (2009) acknowledges this, and writes that in employing the *stigmata* language, 'Paul refers to the brandings by which a slave was made recognizable as his master's property' (p. 89). Alpha-Omega Ministries (1991) agrees with this and maintains that the apostle here transforms a slave's brand mark into a symbol of his sufferings on behalf of the gospel, thereby being evocative that he is a slave of Christ. Accordingly, Paul 'could say that the marks upon his body were the branding marks of Christ—the marks that proved his slavery and service to Christ' (p. 99). Barclay (2002) offers further insight along this line. He elucidates that in antiquity a master branded his slaves with a mark that showed them to be his. Yet as far as is clear, Paul was never physically a slave and so was never branded by anyone to show ownership. Invariably, Paul merely means that the scars on his body were brands that figuratively identified him as a slave of Jesus Christ.

Ultimately, Paul uses this *stigmata* appeal to reflect his persona and identification with Christ. He employs it to show that he is both a slave and a possession of Christ. Garlinton's (2007) conclusion is apt, as he notes that Paul makes his appeal believing that his 'bodily stigmata of Jesus' should be enough proof of the authenticity of his calling as an apostle and the integrity of his devotion to Christ. Kruse (1993) substantiates this view by affirming, concerning Paul and his *stigmata*, that 'far from regarding his suffering as something which disqualified his claim to apostleship, he actually appealed to them as legitimizing evidence' (p. 607). On further probing, it becomes clear that Paul rather boasted about his sufferings not only as validating proof of his apostleship, but also, according to Das (2003), to 'serve as a foil for other Jewish Christians who, from his vantage point, were seeking to avoid persecution for their adherence to the cross of

Christ' (p. 28). Likewise, Boice (1994) recognises Paul's bodily *stigmata* as 'genuine and honorable marks' that 'contrast strikingly with the ritualistic mark of circumcision the legalizers wished to impose on the Galatians' (p. 747).

This indeed is both convincing and of serious implication to the understanding of authentic ministry and ministers both in the early church and, by extension, in the present dispensation. While some wished to have it the easy way, Paul was willing to identify with whatever accompanied the cross and its gospel, whether negative or positive. In all cases, he had a way of viewing his experiences from a positive perspective. In the case of his bodily *stigmata* of Jesus, as Alpha-Omega Ministries (1991) notes, Paul argued they offered him 'strong evidence that he was a true minister of the Lord Jesus' (p. 99).

Implications to ministry in Nigeria today

The aberration of using prosperity as the identifying index for ministers continues to hold sway as prosperity gospel has pervaded the nooks and crannies of the Christian atmosphere in Nigeria such that the climate is now saturated with its different guises and varying flavours. Even though it began with the Neo-Pentecostals it is now a common practice that is at home with the various Christian traditions. Mpigi's (2017) work reveals that prosperity gospel's impact on the contemporary Nigerian church has become colossal. Of course, so many good things have been observed with this new movement. Yet the negative aspects seem to remain overwhelming, especially regarding material wealth and continuous upward mobility being viewed as the litmus test to demonstrate the authenticity of one's Christian calling and ministry. While this may not be the only emphasis of prosperity theology, it is at its centre, with its attendant effects on the church and society. It is in this context that this study on Paul's '*stigmata* of Jesus' responds to this current trend of ministry in Nigeria.

As Ehioghae and Olanrewaju (2015) rightly submit, 'prosperity gospel preachers give the impression that material prosperity is a measure of one's spirituality' (p. 73). This can no longer be dismissed as unfounded; common expressions and pursuits in the life and work of many congregations and ministers go to prove this. As already observed, there seems to now be an innate quest in many preachers and churches to show themselves as rich, in keeping with the teachings of prosperity theology. As is also noted elsewhere, many of those in the prosperity gospel circle employ all manner of lies and underhanded moves to meet up with this ungodly quest for material prosperity at all cost (Kalu, 2012). They do this, most likely, to prove that they are truly called of God and so not misfits in the kingdom.

When this ideology and its resultant craze for wealth are considered vis-à-vis the appeal of Paul to his *stigmata* as the legitimising proof of his calling, it becomes clear that such notion and demand of prosperity gospel as enunciated above is misleading. While prosperity is not bad in itself, it is deluding to underscore it as the index for identifying the spirituality of a Christian/minister or the authenticity of one's calling.

A concomitant error of prosperity gospel that is also crucial for this paper borders on the formation of Christian character. As Ehioghae and Olanrewaju (2015) observe, prosperity gospel 'emasculates the formation of Christian character', leaving 'no room for brokenness and suffering. The cross and its symbol of denial are disregarded' (p. 74). Of

course, it must be acknowledged that Paul's *stigmata* appeal does not in any way suggest that one must be physically scarred to be an authentic minister. It merely surmises that true apostles of Jesus are willing to suffer various kinds of hardships for the sake of the gospel. Some scars are left indelible on the lives of faithful ministers of the gospel as they go about spreading the message of the kingdom of Christ. These scars—not material prosperity—are the legitimising proof of authentic ministry.

Anyone who claims to have been called of God and commissioned as a herald of the gospel of Christ must bear in mind that the calling is not simply to a life of absolute prosperity. Sadly, the ministry has largely been abused. Nwankwo (2015) observes that in the past ministers of the gospel were seen as embodying poverty, living out a calling that involved extreme self-denial, while these days, many pastors live in wealth and flamboyance. Whereas one should not encourage preachers of the gospel to embody poverty, it should also be acknowledged that to be identified with flamboyance is, in most part, a misrepresentation of the calling of ministers. Yet that is what has become the order of the day with ministers in the contemporary Nigerian Christian milieu.

There are, indeed, 'opportunities' for persecution and sufferings which place pastors in position to physically identify with Christ and his cross—the emblem of humiliation, torment, and shame. These would result in scars with overbearing *stigmata* implication as slaves or properties of Christ. Anyone who preaches a different gospel from this or who desires to be identified by other measures stands the danger of anathema, as declared by Paul in Galatians 1:8-9. On the contrary, those who hold on to this true gospel are truly the called of Christ, and are encouraged to remain resolute, unswerving and not deluded in serving Christ as his apostles, whether rich or poor; for, just like Paul, they too bear upon their bodies the *stigmata* of Jesus.

Conclusion

It has been amply demonstrated that while prosperity is not bad in itself, it ought not to be regarded as the key for measuring the authenticity of one's calling as an apostle of Christ, as is currently being taught in Nigeria today by leading prosperity gospel teachers. Such a notion is unhealthy and leads to the peddling of a different gospel. It has deluded and continues to mislead many. Those who are yet to be favoured with material possessions that are worth reckoning with now begin to feel inferior, intimidated or even unspiritual. This study on Paul's *stigmata* of Jesus shows that the scars that result from identifying with Christ in diverse forms of persecutions and sufferings for the gospel of the cross are the true legitimising proof of one's identity as a Christian/minister. They identify one as being truly called and commissioned of God and ultimately belonging to Christ. The scars might have resulted from negative experiences, but they have positive emblematic significance worth more than silver and gold. Faithful Christian ministers must courageously declare like Paul, and despising shame too: Τοῦλοιποῦ κόπους μοιμηδεῖς παρεχέτω, ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματί μου βαστάζω (Gal. 6:17, NA 28). (Henceforth, let no one make trouble for me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.)

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