**INTRO:** There is a common pitfall that accompanies any discussion of works – a temptation to count our good works. We know we are not justified by our works, but some of us struggle to even think about doing good works without using the word “enough” - as if we could do “enough” - as if we could earn anything from God. When it comes to good works, it is not the number of our works, but the nature of our works. That idea is captured in this quote “Don’t count the things you do, do the things that count” – Zig Ziglar. That quote makes a lot of sense – readily resonates with us. But long before Zig Ziglar came along, the apostle Paul had something to say about the things that count. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision count for anything, he said, but…

**BODY:**

1. **A New Creation (Galatians 6:11-15)**
   1. Paul’s postscript (11) ESV heading: “Final Warning and Benediction”
      1. *“I am writing”*- Paul has personally picked up the pen
      2. *“… large letters”* – nearly blind/thorn in the flesh? (4:15) or for emphasis?
   2. Boast in the cross, not in the flesh (12-14)
      1. Judaizing teachers want you to be circumcised to *“make a good showing of the flesh”*
      2. not what I’ve done, but what God has done through the cross – the instrument upon which He die, the world dies, and I die
   3. *“a new creation”* (15)
      1. Born again - Jesus to Nicodemus (John 3:5)
      2. Re-created in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) – and with a purpose…
         1. *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* (Eph. 2:10)
2. **Faith Working Through Love (Galatians 5:1-6)**
   1. Freedom, justification, and grace (1-4)
   2. The hope of righteousness (5) - through the Spirit (not flesh) by faith (not works)
   3. *“… faith working through love”* (6)
      1. Good works are the validation (James 2:22)
      2. Love, not law, is the motivation for our works (Gal. 5:18)
         1. Neither under the realm nor compulsion of Law, a desire to do God’s will
         2. Not in fleshly pursuit of self-justification, but to prove our faith is real
3. **Keeping the Commandments of God (1 Corinthians 7:17-19)**
   1. Remain as you were called (17)
      1. Not required to break social ties or relationships that aren’t inherently sinful
   2. But change how you think of yourself (18) - no moral virtue in being Jew or Gentile, instead be one…
   3. *“… keeping the commandments of God”* (19)
      1. Not for justification
      2. In demonstration of your love and faith
      3. In response to His grace (Titus 2:11-14)

**CONCLUSION:** The things that count: Becoming **a new creation** – re-created from one who serves my own flesh and transformed beyond one who simply serves God outwardly. Through a **faith working through love** – love becomes the motivation for good works, and good works are the demonstration of our love and faith. Who is **keeping the commandments of God** - renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age. Let’s be eager to do good works. But let’s not be consumed by counting the things we do. Instead, let’s let our lives become consumed with doing the things that count.