

# The Cross of Jesus Christ

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

Galatians 6:14

**The cross of Jesus Christ should be very important to you, not as a piece of wood fastened in a church building or as the crucifixes in purses of superstitious Catholics, but rather as the death by which you were saved and the death to this world and sin that you ought to live every day.**

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## **Introduction:**

1. As we observe the Lord’s Supper tonight, we want to glory in the cross of Christ, as did our brother Paul.
2. There are valuable and wise priorities set in the Word of God, and we are given an important one right here.

## **The Text and Its Context**

- A. The large context is Galatians and its rejection of adding works to grace (Gal 1:6-9; 3:1-7; 5:1-4).
- B. The immediate context is Paul’s concluding summary against the Jewish legalists (Gal 6:11-17).
  1. He wrote this lengthy epistle himself, though usually using others to do it for him, to commend himself and his hard letter to their careful consideration (Gal 6:11; Rom 16:22; I Cor 16:21-24).
  2. He charged the Jewish legalists for physical and outward ambition to promote ritualistic Judaism in order to avoid the persecution of association with Jesus Christ (Gal 6:12; 5:11; Mat 23:15).
  3. These legalists did not, would not, and could not keep the whole law, yet they required Gentiles to be circumcised in order to glory in their outward subjection to the rite (Gal 6:13; Ac 15:1,24).
  4. The text separates Paul from false teachers by devotion to Christ crucified (Gal 6:14; I Cor 2:2).
  5. The true measure of a child of God and the true religion of Jesus Christ is regeneration and a changed life, not merely circumcision (Gal 6:15; 5:6; 3:28; Phil 3:2; Rom 2:28-29; II Cor 5:17).
  6. Paul blessed those who lived by grace in Christ alone (Gal 6:15); and he called them the Israel of God, to condemn merely physical Jews (Gal 6:16; 3:29; John 1:47; Rom 2:28-29; 9:6; Phil 3:3).
  7. Paul condemned his compromising opponents in the gospel and refused any further dealings, for he had proven his devotion to Jesus Christ by persecution (Gal 6:17; 5:11; II Cor 11:23-25).
- C. The text itself is one of the great verses of Scripture and teaches several profound facts (Gal 6:14).
  1. Paul called God’s prohibition down on himself, if he were to glory in circumcision or anything from Moses’ law, though he had more ground to glory than his opponents (Gal 6:13; Phil 3:4-7).
  2. Jeremiah, speaking of God nationally, rejected glorying in man’s accomplishments (Jer 9:23-24).
  3. Paul’s total focus was on the cross of Christ – His death for him (I Cor 2:2; II Cor 5:13-16).
  4. Paul did not care about the world’s opinions of him, nor was he attracted by their baubles; for the world and all his worldly ambitions had been put to death on the cross of Christ (Phil 3:8-11)!
  5. And Paul was a fool, or virtual dead man, to the world for his devotion to the crucifixion of Christ, which was to them either foolishness or a stumblingblock (I Cor 1:17-24; Acts 17:32).
- D. There is nothing else that should even come close to the glory of our Lord’s crucifixion death for us.
  1. The cross of glory is not a piece of wood, either then or now. We despise Catholic crucifixes! It is a metonym, the means of His death being put for His death; we glory in Christ’s death for us.
  2. There is no more accurate proof of eternal life than your glory in the cross and crucifixion to sin.
  3. A glorious Saviour died, under glorious circumstances, out of glorious love, after a glorious life of righteousness, after a glorious testimony before Pilate, with glorious mercy to sinners, for the glorious purpose of redeeming His elect, and rose gloriously from the dead to the right hand of God Almighty, and He reserves a glorious inheritance for you. What keeps you from glorying?
  4. What will you glory in? Your looks, which are fading every day? Your accomplishments, which are nothing at all? Your wealth, which you cannot take with you? Your thoughts, which are deceitful delusions? Your friends, which cannot help you? Your strength, which is nothing to begin with and quickly disappearing? Your wisdom, which is folly in His sight and cannot save you? Your religious devotion, concerning which He will consign many to hell? Your knowledge, which is sorely deficient of truth. Your future, when you cannot even boast of tomorrow?

## **The Power of the Cross**

- A. When Jesus died, the sun was darkened, the rocks were rent by a great earthquake, graves were opened, and the veil in the temple was torn wide open from top to bottom.
- B. It crushed the devil and his angels; it destroyed their hold on men (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14; I John 3:8).
- C. It took the Law of Moses out of the way and delivered men from the claims of the law (Col 2:14).
- D. It united Jews and Gentiles into one body, which had been greatly divided (Eph 2:11-17; Gal 3:28).
- E. It gathered together all the elect of God in every nation (Genesis 49:10; John 10:16; 11:51-52).
- F. It displayed to the angels the incredible wisdom of God in redeeming the church (Eph 3:10).
- G. It brought in the everlasting covenant by the death of the testator (Heb 9:15-17; 10:10-14).
- H. It sealed the salvation of all those in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain (Rev 13:8)!
- I. It reconciled us to God, even when we were His enemies (Romans 5:10; II Cor 5:18).
- J. It allowed the Lion of the tribe of Judah to open the book from Almighty God (Rev 5:1-7).
- K. It brought the casting out of Satan from accusing the brethren (John 12:31; Rev 12:9-11).
- L. It fulfilled the Word of promise of the living God (Gen 3:15; II Tim 1:10; Titus 1:2; etc.).
- M. It opened the way to God directly, so no high priest or priests would be needed (Heb 10:19-22).
- N. It earned the spoils of the Holy Ghost for the church (John 7:37-39; Acts 2:33-36; Eph 4:8-11).
- O. It paid the legal price of adoption, atonement, glorification, justification, reconciliation, redemption, propitiation, sanctification, etc.,
- P. It earned the Lord Jesus Christ the most exalted position in the universe, far above all His competitors and enemies in any sphere (Phil 2:5-11; Eph 1:20-23).
- Q. It set an example for humanity that has never been touched by any man or woman (I Pet 2:18-23).

## **The Enemies of the Cross**

- A. You do not have to wear a crucifix or desecrate one to be an enemy of the cross (Phil 3:18-19).
  - 1. There were many, and there are still many, who are enemies of the cross among Christians.
  - 2. Minding earthly things is an offensive and profane rejection of the cross of Jesus Christ.
  - 3. Such men are belly worshippers, for the pleasing of carnal appetites is more important to them.
- B. Any addition to the gospel of the cross is to be an enemy of the cross, whether it is Jewish works of Moses' law, sacramentalism of Rome and her daughters, or decisional salvation (Gal 2:21; 5:1-4).
  - 1. Jesus Christ saved sinners by His life, death, and resurrection alone (Rom 4:25; 5:19; Heb 1:3).
  - 2. Adding any conditions whatsoever, even faith, makes His work ineffective and you a Saviour.
- C. Eloquence and modification of the preaching of the gospel is to be its enemy (I Cor 1:17; 2:1-5).
  - 1. The plain and simple preaching of uneducated fishermen turned the world upside down.
  - 2. Modifying the presentation or the content of preaching will draw false professors and liars.
  - 3. It does not matter that most "Christians" want entertainment and fables instead (II Tim 4:1-4).

## **The Mentality of the Cross**

- A. The choice of the Lord Jesus Christ to die on the cross should surely affect our minds (I Peter 4:1-5).
  - 1. We should follow the example of our Lord's suffering by denying ourselves the pleasures of sin.
  - 2. The rest of our time in this world should be lived to the will of God, not the pleasures of sin.
  - 3. We have had enough sin to last a lifetime in the activities of the world, so we should stop.
  - 4. The world will think us strange and charge us with strangeness for not going to past excesses.
  - 5. But they will soon give account for their thoughts and words to our glorious Redeemer and King.
- B. The Lord Jesus gave a perpetual example of humility and obedience for us to follow (Phil 2:5-11).
  - 1. He humbled himself to death for the sins of others, and we should be willing to do the same.
  - 2. God will take care of those who humble themselves under His mighty hand (I Peter 5:6).
  - 3. Note the context of this passage – Paul used these verses to illustrate brother love (Phil 2:1-4).

- C. The Lord Jesus gave a perpetual example of having a heavenly perspective during life (Heb 12:1-4).
  - 1. We have a race to run to match the illustrious heroes of the faith before us (Hebrews 11:1-40).
  - 2. We should look to the death of Jesus Christ and how He looked past it to eternal glory.
  - 3. The character and conduct of Jesus Christ facing the cross should help us run our race well.
- D. The Lord Jesus gave a perpetual example of suffering persecution unjustly (I Peter 2:18-23).
  - 1. The difficulty of submitting to froward masters can be beat by looking at His great example.
  - 2. He did not sin, did not lie, did not revile, and did not threaten. He committed Himself to God.

**Conclusion:**

- 1. As we approach the Lord's Table, let us have the glory and power of Christ's cross vividly in our minds.
- 2. As we leave the Lord's Table, let us have the enemies and mentality of Christ's cross vividly in our minds.

**For Further Study:**

- 1. The sermon outline, "[The Glory of the Cross](#)," which gives 30 points of reference to the glory of Christ's cross.
- 2. The sermon outline, "[Take Up Your Cross Daily](#)," which applies crucifixion to our daily self-denial of fleshly lusts.
- 3. The sermon outline, "[Seven Sayings of the Cross](#)," which deals in detail with each of our Lord's crucifixion sayings.
- 4. The sermon outline, "[World's Greatest Lover](#)," which shows the superiority of Jesus Christ to any lover in this world.