

Glorying in the Cross

Gal. 6:14

Paul in carrying out the commission he received from Christ encountered strong opposition from his countrymen. It came from a group we refer to as the 'Judaizers.'

Proposition: The cross is the Christian's only ground for boasting.

- **What is it to boast in something?** To rejoice in a thing as good, exult in it as honorable, to revel in it.
 - **What is the Cross?** A symbol of shame and the means of salvation.
 - **What is it to boast in the cross?** To revel in it as the only means of salvation.
1. **The Cross Exposes Every Human Pretension. (Except!)** It condemns the old life and calls us to a New. We are either leaving the old to embrace the new life or trying to maintain the old and conform the cross to it. *Illstr. Nicodemus.*
 - a. **It means you no longer boast in yourself or your privileges or attainments.**
 - b. **Attempts to compromise reveal cowardice.** **V. 12.** The agitators want to make a good impression outwardly, while avoiding persecution for the cross. Their divided allegiance is hinted at in the word, "**force.**" **Cf. 1:14; 4:17-20.** 'Zealousness' for the law

was the mark of a faithful Jew. For a sense of ethnic privilege they would pervert the gospel making the rest of God's people second class. These men played the game out of fear. This is ethical heresy. **Cf. 3:26-29.** *Illus. Peter*

- c. **Attempts to compromise reveal hypocrisy.** **V. 13.** These people were powerless to keep the law, but hid it. They were throwing people back on the flesh, because they were afraid of being ostracized. **3:3.** It was destroying them. **5:15.** A compromised gospel is a gospel of flesh and produces the works of the flesh. **5:19-21.** Boasting in anything other than the cross of Jesus Christ will result in this kind of life and fellowship. It is guaranteed! It may be covered up for a season but it will be there.

Trans. We know God through the cross, because...

2. **The Cross is the Deliverance of God.** **V. 14.** It is the **cross** of Jesus Christ. Christ crucified is God's way of delivering sinners. Nothing else could do it. **Cf. 1:3-5.**
 - a. **It is God giving Himself for us.** Note that it is a work of the Father and the Son. God pities us. Is it any wonder the hymn writer could say, "*In the cross of Christ I glory, Towering o'er the wrecks of time; All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.*"

b. It is God's way of coming to us, personally.

V. 14. Through the cross we receive God through the Spirit, He tells us something of what that means in **3:13-14; 4:4-6.**

Trans. We needed our relationship to this sinful world changed so that we can enjoy God. **Cf. Ja. 4:4; 1Jn. 2:15.**

3. The cross exposes the world. Isaac Watts puts it well, *"When I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. Forbid it Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my God: all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood."*

i. By the cross the world is proven to be evil. It is utterly opposed to God. **Cf. 5:17.** It is under the condemnation of God. **Cf. 5:21d.**

ii. By the cross the riches of this world become worthless. **Cf. Phil. 3:7, 8.**

b. The Cross separates us from the world.

Through the cross our ties with the world are severed. *"by which..."* We share in the death of Christ. **Cf. 1:4; Col. 1:13-14.**

c. The power of the cross breaks the power of the world over us. By the cross the controlling power of the world is broken. It

marks the decisive victory of Christ. **Cf. 2:20; Col. 1:13-14.**

Last and Supremely:

4. The Cross Establishes an Entirely New World.

V.15. Christ not only condemned the present evil age, He set up a kingdom that shall never be moved. This is Paul's main concern. He starts and ends with it.

a. Therefore the ultimate issue is which world do you live in. Whether you are outwardly compliant to a particular religious culture is irrelevant. Paul considers such things as of "the world." Renounce whatever you previously 'boasted' in.

b. Faith alone (simple child-like trust) is the only requirement. In this way God alone is 'boasted' in; and only through the cross, by which we condemn ourselves (admitting we were wrong) to receive grace. *"Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling."*

a. Only the New Creation transforms. This is why we boast in cross alone. From the *cross alone* comes forgiveness, healing and glory.

**I take the cross of Jesus for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by, to know no gain or loss:
My sinful self my only shame, My glory all the cross.**