

My boast

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[0 : 00] You will find my text this evening in Galatians chapter 6 and at verse 14. Galatians 6 verse 14.

But God forbid that I should glory, or boast, God forbid that I should glory, save on the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom or by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Do you ever boast? The Apostle Paul was a great boaster. Before he was converted, he boasted of his membership of the Jewish race.

He was, he tells us, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and he was proud of his Jewish nationalism. He boasted of his religion. He had been a Pharisee.

He belonged to the strictest of all the Jewish religious sects, and he was so proud of that. He boasted of his respectability, and was proud of that as well.

[1 : 14] He gloried in, he boasted of all those external privileges that were his. He put his confidence in them.

He looked to those outward privileges to commend them to God, to put them into a right relationship with God. But then there came that time when Paul ceased to boast in these things.

Indeed, he tells us that he renounced them, that he counted them lost for the sake of the surpassing excellence of knowing Christ Jesus his Lord.

He regarded all these things as refuse, that he might gain Christ. He was boasting instead, in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the cross of Christ he boasted, God forbid that I should glory, save on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

[2 : 29] To the people of his day, it would have been a most amazing thing, something utterly incredible, that the apostle should boast in the crucified Christ, that he should boast in the cross.

To the Jews, the cross was a stumbling block. To the Greeks, it was foolishness. The Jewish people had been looking for a coming Messiah. They read of his coming in their own scriptures, in what we call the Old Testament, and they were looking for this Messiah, this deliverer whose coming had been foretold.

But this Jesus of Nazareth, why, he was crucified upon a cross. They had been looking for one who would set them free, foolishly looking for one who would set them free from the dominion of Rome.

This was no great conquering political hero. He had been crucified, this Jesus of Nazareth, crucified upon a cross.

And throughout the Greek world as well, throughout the Greco-Roman Empire, the cross was regarded with the utmost contempt and horror and disgust.

[3 : 44] The word cross, the very term cross, was not even used in polite Roman society. When a person was put to death, a criminal was put to death by crucifixion, often they did not even refer to him as having been crucified, as having been put on a cross.

The Roman writer Cicero says that the condemned man was hanged on an unlucky tree. You see, they wouldn't even mention the term cross.

And that would hold throughout the whole of the Greco-Roman world. Here amongst the Galatians, the term would be regarded with the utmost contempt.

But the Apostle Paul says, I glory in it. I make it my boast. Whose cross does he boast in? The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you see how he gives to him this full title? Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is Lord. That's a divine term. It's the equivalent of the Old Testament Jehovah.

[4 : 56] He is God. Worship him. He's Jesus. He's the Savior. The one who is to be loved and who is to be trusted. He is Christ, the great Deliverer.

God's appointed and anointed Deliverer. Our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul gloried on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you? Notice with me then, first of all in our text, the crucified Christ. The crucified Christ. Why did Paul boast in the crucified Christ?

Boast of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why should we make that our boast? There are many reasons why we should do so. First of all, we boast of the cross because it declares the righteousness of God.

It declares the righteousness of God. God set him forth to be a propitiation, a wrath-removing sacrifice, a propitiation through faith in his blood.

[6 : 10] To declare, I say, says Paul in Romans, to declare, I say, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

God is not indulgent, saying that sin doesn't matter. He is the holy God of heaven, the one who is of purer eyes than to behold evil.

The cross tells me of his righteousness. At the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ took upon himself our sins, the sins of all his people.

Our sins were laid upon him. He bore them, and he bore the wrath of God poured out against our sins as he bore them there upon the cross.

And so the cross tells me, as I look at that cross, what God thinks of sin, his action, his reaction to sin, one of holy wrath.

[7 : 16] I look at that cross, and I learn that God is light, and that there is in him no darkness at all. The cross declares to me the righteousness of God, and tells me that therefore God is one in whom I should put my trust.

And so I glory in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. It declares the righteousness of God. But we glory in the cross too, because it declares to us the love of God.

It declares to us the love of God. God commends his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

We are all sinners. All of us, we've broken God's law. We're sinners by nature, and we're sinners by practice. Each one of us deserves his condemnation.

And if we remain in our sin, in that condition, then we'll know separation from God throughout time, and throughout eternity as well.

[8 : 26] we'll be under condemnation. We'll be under condemnation, bearing his wrath forever and forever. But undeserving though we be, Christ has come, God has sent his son into the world to bear the sins of his people and to pay their penalty.

He died there upon the cross. God sent him into the world. God's love for the sinner is so great that he sent into the world heaven's dearest treasure, sent him forth from the courts of glory into a world of sin and of shame, a world where he knew rejection and lowliness and sorrow.

He sent him to the very cross at Calvary, not just to its physical suffering, but also to its spiritual anguish.

The awful spiritual anguish and torment of the Lord Jesus Christ there at the cross is something that none of us can even begin to understand.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And why? What is the explanation? It is because of his great love for sinners, his great love for his people, he sent his son to bear their sins, to bear the penalty of their sins.

[10 : 02] Such is his love for the sons of men that he sent them there to that cross. That's the explanation of it. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

When I look at that cross, it tells me this, that God is love. And so I glory in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It declares the righteousness of God. It declares the love of God. And this also, it puts me right with God. It puts me right with God.

Every one of us is a sinner. I'm a sinner by nature. The heart of every one of us is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. You're a sinner.

I'm a sinner. You're a sinner by practice as well. You and I commit sinful deeds. We speak evil words. We think evil thoughts.

[11 : 06] And the sad thing about it all is there's nothing at all that you or I can do about it. Nothing. Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy laws demands.

Could my zeal know, respite know. Could my tears forever flow, all for sin could not atone. Left to myself, I must perish.

Left to yourself, you must perish. But Jesus died for me. He came into this world and he became my substitute.

He died in the sinner's room instead. There at the cross he stood in the place of the sinner and God laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

He imputed to him. He put to his account. He reckoned his, the sins of his people. Christ answered for them. And so God imputes to the believer in Christ the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus.

[12 : 13] It's counted his and God declares him righteous in his sight. Perfectly righteous in his standing before him.

That is all because of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. There God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

The believer is in contact with God. He's in fellowship with God. Because of the cross he's in communion with God. He has been reconciled to God through faith in his son by God's free grace.

And he will remain reconciled to God throughout all time and throughout all eternity. That is because of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you wonder then that we glory in it? Have you come to the cross of Christ? Have you come to faith in this crucified Redeemer?

[13 : 26] Are you trusting him tonight as your own Savior? Oh friend what is it that keeps you back from such a Savior as this? Will you not come to him even now?

The cross declares the righteousness of God. it declares the love of God. It puts me right with God. And this also it gives me power over sin.

It gives power over sin. A person hears the story of the cross the message of the gospel he hears the gospel and he believes upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

He trusts in Christ and when he does so he discovers not only that his sins have been forgiven but that a new power has entered into his life.

The power of sin has been broken. The stranglehold of sin upon him has been released. He's been freed from its vicious vice-like grip.

[14 : 30] He breaks the power of sin. The enslaving power of sin has been broken. The Holy Spirit has entered into that life and by that spirit the believer seeks to drive sin out.

There are so many who have been the helpless victims of a sinful habit or practice and they've been seeking help in all sorts of places in education in philosophy and psychology.

Some have thought they could overcome their sin by moving to a different environment. There have been those who have said that if you improve people's social conditions that will enable them to overcome sinful practices.

But my friends there is nothing no power in the universe that can boast of the successes in freeing men from sin's grip comparable to the power of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are countless numbers of men and women who have plumbed the depths of evil and of degradation who have been gloriously transformed by this power and have become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and been freed from the sinful practices that have them in their grip.

[15 : 55] Bad men have become good immoral people have become virtuous people slaves have been set free. Every one of us by nature is sin's slave.

And this is the only power that can set us free. He breaks the power of cancelled sin. He smashes the gates of brass and cuts asunder the bars of iron.

It's a power that never fails. The cross declares the righteousness of God. It declares the love of God.

It puts me right with God. It gives power over sin. And this also it makes us holy. It makes us holy. Not only does the cross set men and women free from sin's enslaving power it cleanses also from sin's pollution.

Christ died for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify to himself a peculiar people a people to be specially his own zealous of good works.

[17 : 07] It is Christ's purpose in dying for us to make us holy. In everyone who comes to the cross in everyone who believes upon the Lord who has believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ there has begun that good work the work of making him a or making heart a holy person and that work will be continued until it reaches a glorious completion.

God will continue that work eradicating sin until one day that person will stand in God's presence perfectly holy in character.

God who has begun the good work will perform it until the day of Christ. We glory in the cross because it transforms sinners into saints and we glory in the cross for this reason also that it gives us victory over Satan.

Victory over Satan. Christ spoiled the principalities and powers those evil supernatural powers the powers of Satan himself.

He spoiled the principality. This devil is active in our world tonight going about so active nevertheless he is a defeated foe.

[18 : 38] The decisive victory against him has been fought and won won by our Lord Jesus Christ at the cross and believers in the Lord Jesus Christ enter into the experience of that victory.

The decisive battle has been won it's only the mopping up operations that remain and believers enter into the experience of that victory. We glory in the cross of Christ we glory in it because it declares the righteousness of God it declares the love of God it puts me right with God it gives power over sin it makes us holy and it gives us victory over Satan may no other message be heard from this pulpit but this and may each one of us glory only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ the crucified Christ but let us notice in our text secondly the crucified world the crucified world Paul says God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the

Lord Jesus Christ by which the world is crucified unto me Paul says that to him now a believer the world has been crucified the world is dead the cross has effected a separation between him and the world I have rejected the world is what he is saying it's very important that we should understand the meaning of this term world here in our text by the term world Paul means all that is opposed to the kingdom of God it is human society that is in rejection of in opposition to and in rebellion against God himself all that is in the world the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life these are not of the father but of the world and Paul says now the world is dead to me the world is now the world in that sense is now dead to Paul the cross has effected this separation from the world the friendship of the world is enmity with God

Paul sees the world in that sense that I try to explain as a corpse now upon a gibbet the world the charms of the world what charmed him in the world charms him now no longer the cross takes so takes the love of the world out of us that the world seems to us to be dead Paul rejected the world's values the world's standards as far as he was concerned those values and the standards of the world were crucified at the cross he sees them upon a cross he now views everything differently from the way in which he viewed things before he says now I judge no man after the flesh that is according to the world's values and standards human standards no he's a new creature in

Christ Jesus all things have passed away all things have become new there is always the danger that we should adopt the world standards and the world's values people around us are constantly telling us you mustn't be different from the world around you mustn't stand out you should adapt to the culture in which you're living and be like the world around well this world is bent on self aggrandizement and so people say to us you too whatever it's going to cost you must see to it that you promote your own interests even though it does mean being a bit unscrupulous in the way that you treat your neighbor the world around is concerned about amassing more and more of this world's goods that's the general attitude of people around us you must not be left behind in that race the world will say to you we live in a more permissive society than that of our fathers and so the world comes and the world says there's no need for you to be so narrow no need for you to hold on to those standards of purity of a past age you must be up to date but those views are worldly views that is worldly thinking and the bible issues to every one of us who is a christian the call to be different from the world around we should see the standards and values of this world as crucified on the cross rejected

[24 : 09] Paul rejected the opinions of the world it was of no concern to him at all what the world the people of the world thought of him so long as he was faithful to the lord jesus christ if the world thought him a fool well what of that he says he was considered a fool for christ's sake the people of the world they thought they were so strong but they considered him weak they thought they were so honorable but he was despised and that we are going to be faithful to christ then we too will have to be prepared to be thought fools for christ's sake when all said and done what does the opinion of the world matter what does it count for of what what is his judgment worth this world when all is said and done is constantly making false judgments when god sent his own son into the world the creator and sustainer of the world his own pure and spotless son the son of god the world completely misunderstood him so completely misunderstood him that it rejected him and nailed him to a cross and the world today is no more enlightened in his judgments than it was then we can become terribly upset can't we when the people of the world misunderstand us or say unkind things about us but jesus said woe unto you when all men speak well of you for so spoke your fathers to the prophets you see the world was always making false judgments better of the world's frown than the world's smile the world that crucified the savior despised its judgments to you a christian believer the world should be crucified and paul rejected the world's pleasures he was a man of abounding joy there was no happier man on earth he was constantly urging others to rejoice in the lord but his delight was not in this world's pleasures but in christ jesus is lord and in the fellowship and service of christ the coarse crude pleasures of the roman empire around him meant nothing to the apostle paul all that was crucified to him dead and what of our days popular pleasures are they any better are they honoring to christ do they not constantly trample underfoot the common decencies of life we know joys as believers superior by far to any the world can give and so the world will be crucified to us the crucified world it was crucified to paul is it crucified to you god forbid that i should glory save on the cross of our lord jesus christ by which the world is crucified unto me the crucified christ the crucified world and thirdly notice here the crucified paul the crucified paul god forbid that i should glory save on the cross of our lord jesus christ by which the world is crucified unto me and i unto the world i unto the world what did paul mean as far as the world was concerned paul was crucified he was

rejected the world rejected him the world treated him as it treated his master before him if they have rejected me they will reject you jesus and if they have persecuted me they will persecute you the world treats him as it treated his master rejected him and crucified him paul is identified with his master identified with christ in his rejection crucifixion the world despised paul wherever he goes he meets with opposition rejection and persecution his apostleship is called in question and denied the judaizers dog him wherever he goes and contradict his teaching the jews whose hero he once was are now bitterly opposed to him and want to slay him the heathen people stone him and throw him into prison the jews flog him with that cruel leather lash with the metal thongs the romans beat him with their metal rods the sophisticated intellectuals of

Athens mock him and ridicule him what is this babblers saying they laugh he's just a setter forth of strange gods the world rejects paul and jesus said if they have persecuted me they will also persecute you he calls upon us his followers to take up our cross daily and follow him faithfulness to christ will mean rejection it will mean crucifixion a measure of rejection by the ungodly hostile world around if you have come to the cross if you have been converted to christ if you are a true believer in the lord jesus christ then there will certainly come opposition and persecution in some form or other it's inevitable if we are faithful to christ in a hostile and godly world we are living in a way entirely different from the way in which the people around us are living all who will live godly in christ jesus shall suffer persecution the bible says and if we don't meet it in some form or other from time to time then we may well question whether we are being faithful to the lord whom we profess as long as you go with the world and follow the world's pursuits you will get on tolerably well but take a clear unashamed public stand on christ's side and the world will cold shoulder you they will no longer be so keen on your company they will regard you as narrow and as extreme it may even be that you meet with opposition in your own home jesus said a man's foes shall be they of his own household but don't forget this that it is the person who refuses to compromise it is a person who takes his stand unashamedly on christ's side it is that person the person who is willing to bear the reproach who knows in full measure the joy of the lord you cannot on the one hand shirk the bearing of the reproach compromise and on the other hand still know the joy of the lord surely you're not going to be ashamed to take your stand on the side of the one who died for you who purchased you with a shedding by the shedding of his own precious blood and remember this too that all the strength you need to take that bold and unashamed public stand on christ's side is available to you god comes and he says my grace is sufficient for you if you fail to take that stand you are without excuse for the grace needed is available be strong in the grace of the lord jesus christ my son be strong in the grace of the lord jesus christ said paul to nervous timothy and don't forget this either that it is a person who is willing to take a stand and refuse who refuses to compromise a person who is true to christ that is the man that is the woman who will influence others whose witness will influence others even those who oppose him whose influence whose witness will be blessed to those others to the bringing of them

to a saving knowledge of the lord jesus christ that has happened time and time and time again and remember this also the apostles say i am persuaded that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us your salvation is entirely of grace of undeserved mercy and favor yet a clear unashamed faithful stand for christ will not go unrewarded in this life or in the life to come the crucified paul to the world paul was crucified are you crucified to the world what does the cross mean to you do you glory in it is it that by the cross the world is crucified to you and are you crucified to the world do you boast in the cross of the lord jesus christ in the crucified christ is your faith in christ and him crucified are you resting relying only upon him alone for your salvation tonight if not i urge you to come in faith to him delay no longer he is able to save you he is willing to save those who come to him he lovingly invites you to come come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and i will give you rest surely you don't doubt his word he has promised that if you come he'll receive you him that cometh to me i will in no wise cast out oh my fellow sinner won't you even this very evening come by god's grace to the crucified christ that you might be saved henceforth if you do the cross of christ will be your boast you will go on your way rejoicing in god's great salvation god forbid that i should glory save on the cross of our lord jesus christ by which the world is crucified unto me and i unto the world and i want to to var to