

Live on Gospel-Freedom! This News is Relevant!

P3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 December 2023

Preacher: Jim Masters

[0 : 0 0] please take your Bibles as we finish up the book of Galatians this morning Galatians chapter 6 Galatians chapter 6 verses 11 through 18 Galatians 6 11 through 18 I'll read and then we'll jump in and see what God has to say to us this morning from His word Paul says see with what large letters I'm writing to you with my own hand those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ for those who are circumcised do not even keep the law themselves but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh but may it never be that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world for neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision nor uncircumcision but a new creation and those who walk who will walk by this rule peace and mercy upon them and upon the Israel of God from now on let no one cause trouble for me but I bear on my body the brand marks of Jesus the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit brethren amen a mother took her young son

Christmas shopping after a day in the stores the clerk handed the little boy a lollipop what do you say the mother said to the boy to which he replied charge it sometimes we just don't know how much we we can affect how much effect we can have on another person like a child and sometimes it takes a while like Dr. John Getty a Presbyterian missionary to the New Hebrides Vanuatu he went to an island called Anyitium in 1848 and worked there for 24 years on the tablet erected to his memory these words are inscribed when he landed in 1848 there were no Christians when he left in 1872 there were no heathen Getty had a huge influence upon these people by God's grace he affected many and this is what the gospel should do to us it should affect every aspect of our lives it's just not something we give to someone who's not a Christian and then that's it this is what the gospel should do to us in us it should affect every aspect of our lives it should affect our friendships relationships language our thoughts words acts attitudes and this is why we have said over the past couple weeks live in gospel freedom this news of gospel freedom is relevant it's not some theological jargon that we talk about here and there it's relevant news the gospel is relevant you don't need to make the bible relevant the gospel is relevant the news of free grace is very relevant so relevant excuse me it should completely affect us how we live shows what we truly believe how we live shows what we truly believe the gospel determines what we truly believe about life how we live in reference to the gospel determines what we truly believe about life and remember here's the news we're justified by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone so live in this gospel freedom that's the news that's the news that's relevant that's the news that's been portrayed that's been screamed that's been shouted from Galatians these past few weeks and if we truly believe this gospel then it will affect how we live what's important to us and in whom we boast in what we boast and you're going to see two contrasts from the text those who boast in the flesh or flesh boosters and those who boast in the cross cross boosters flesh boosters cross boosters flesh boosters flesh boosters fear human opposition and exalt in human praise the other one here too

I think so yeah they're man pleasers they're merit gainers they're persecution haters and what I mean by that is they don't want to get persecuted they don't want to suffer they don't want to suffer for the gospel so those who boast in the flesh they fear human opposition they exalt in human praise they're man pleasers they're merit gainers they hate persecution notice how this begins verse 12 Paul says those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ they desire to make a good showing he's talking about these Judaizers they pursued their program so they could have fellow Jews accept them and not persecute them because you start talking about free grace you don't have to be circumcised

Jews are going to persecute you you can't do away with the law they don't want to be persecuted pursue their program so they can have fellow Jews be on their side they were only concerned about themselves about their honor about their own ease they didn't care about the Galatians they didn't care about the churches of Galatia they didn't care one ounce about them for them the Judaizers a good show was more important than the basic message of Christianity which is the cross look a Christianity severed from the cross is not true Christianity at all a Christianity that's severed from the cross is not true Christianity at all and that's what they were doing they were severing the cross from Christianity well that's a false Christianity that's a false gospel the cross of Christ the historical crucified

Jesus is the whole doctrine of our salvation I mean you heard it from these two young men Jesus died for my sin as opposed to being justified by our good works God is pleased with us because he is pleased with his son the Lord Jesus Christ that's a promise of the gospel verse 13 for those who are circumcised do not even keep the law themselves the Judaizers do not even keep the law themselves yet they're willing to put that burden on others they could not bear the law's burden but they wanted the Galatians to submit to that yoke of slavery when they couldn't do it themselves they don't even keep the law themselves but notice verse 13 but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh they wanted to boast in the fact that the

[9 : 05] Galatians were circumcised they became true Jews they were counting converts and relaying this information to their Jewish kin they manipulated the Galatians to become their converts not gospel converts and that's a sign of unbelief a sign of unbelief is to boast in ourselves in our endeavors job character proud of your spiritual growth you speak high of your spiritual attainments blah blah blah you see from the text these two verses the motives of the Judaizers they made a good show they boasted in their circumcision and they didn't want to be persecuted they escaped persecution they were merely men pleasers trying to gain merit by the

Galatian converts and divert any kind of persecution like ostracism threats physical torture slander they wanted to bring a compromise between the non-Christian orthodox Jew and the non-Christian Jewish position of Paul they were trying to merge that together merging grace and works but their real motivation was revealed they just didn't want to be persecuted they didn't want to suffer for the sake of the gospel the best way to avoid persecution is to soften the message of the gospel to soften the cross of Christ then we won't offend people so this is what it's about to boast in the flesh this is what it means to be a flesh boaster flesh boasters they fear human opposition the Judaizers did they exulted in human praise exactly where they were at they were man pleasers merit gainers persecution haters that's someone who boasts in the flesh but now let's talk about this the opposite to that cross boasters those who boast in the cross those who boast in the cross cross boasters cross boasters fear

God and exult in Jesus and his cross they deal with themselves and they think about the cross and they fear the Lord think about themselves in the sense of the cross and this is my relationship with Christ and the cross and they don't care about what anybody else thinks you see that in Paul look at verse 14 may it never be that I should boast except in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ Christ Paul wanted nothing to do with any of this stuff with the Judaizers he was driven to boast only in the cross of Jesus to glory in the crucified Savior and he would glory in nothing else the Judaizers were able to avoid the offense of the cross but Paul was willing to bear its reproach living and proclaiming the news of free grace putting his very life on the line

I mean what is there to gain for Paul there was nothing for him to gain I mean what do you gain by telling people about the truth of the gospel you have nothing to gain from this I mean think about it you have nothing to gain when you're telling somebody the gospel of Christ and the cross there's nothing for you to gain it's everything that you can lose I boast and nothing except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ you know remember in that time period the crucifixion was a horrible despicable loathing thing you didn't want to die this way I don't want to be crucified I'm going to go with that you didn't do you didn't want that you didn't do that so to boast in this in Paul's day would be unspeakable horror

I mean people hated this you know now today I mean people walk around with a chain with a cross on it I mean you didn't do that you didn't do that in the first century you walk around with a chain with a cross people would be like you're crazy what are you boasting of the cross you want to die that way nobody wants to die that way for Paul though the cross was central so it must be central to us everything we refer back to all that we should think about all that we focus on should be the cross it should be central to our thinking we take pride in the cross because it empties our own pride pride we take pride in the cross because it empties our own pride it shows us our unworthiness and pours contempt on all our pride as the song goes since we see the wonder of

[14 : 58] God's love we see the wonder of God's love and because we see this it shows we're so unworthy and it pours contempt on all our pride we don't take pride in ourselves we don't take pride in our works we don't take pride in our merit we don't take pride because I prayed enough today oh cool I read the bible enough today awesome I went to church I got baptized today so cool I'm right up there with Jesus it means nothing we take pride in the cross because it empties your pride I mean we celebrate Jesus taking on flesh being born as a baby I mean talk about something that just kills our pride what an act of humility and yet we get bent out of shape and someone offends us and Jesus did it to glorify the father in saving sinners so we would be trophies of grace trophies of his mercy trophies of his love trophies of his compassion the only way to be made right with God is through the cross of Christ are you a boaster in the flesh or do you boast in the cross and now if we are cross boosters then it will affect us in four different ways if you boast in the cross this is what you see in Paul he's going to show us this if you boast in the cross it affects you in four different ways and there's probably more ways than that but from the text there's four okay number one the world is dead to me and I'm dead to the world verse 14 through which he's talking about the cross of Christ through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world through the cross of Jesus

Paul died to this present evil age and this present evil age was dead to him too and when he says world he means all those things he once boasted in and all those things meant nothing to him now and if you remember Paul Philippians chapter 3 talked about that for him of the tribe of Benjamin Pharisee I mean zealous for the law all these things he could boast and I mean all these these points on his resume he could point out hey this is what I was all about I don't boast in that that's of the world the world all that's outside of Jesus that people seek glory and into which they put their hope and trust that stuff's dead to me and I'm dead to them this world system with all its allurements fleshly shows religious human effort to gain

God's acceptance earthly pleasures and treasures honors values all of what people make more important than the Lord Jesus Christ throw in that drugs alcohol friends relationships career church Paul died to this whole way of living now he lived in a whole new way of existence we're set free from the law as a means of justification and the old life was the law curse that's condemned so the world is a refuge to me and I to the world that's how it affects you when you're boasting in the cross the historical event of the life and death of Jesus ends the old world and ushers in the new world order and not what they're talking about at the world economic forum the new world order

God's new world order has the world become a refuge to you and have you become a refuge to the world see this is why this is why the cross is a huge stumbling block people need to humble themselves before God and see that their good works means nothing to God your good works don't add or take away anything from your salvation it means nothing you can't gain God's acceptance like somebody said to me Friday you know I'm a really good person I am such a good person it means nothing you can't merit from God by the good things that you do or in the movie it says you know at Christmas time good works count double it's in a Christmas movie the person says that good works they count for double on Christmas the kid says really no way I didn't know that yeah it does

Jesus is in Santa Claus it's not your good outweighing your bad and this is why the cross is a huge stumbling block for people because they need to humble themselves and see your works mean nothing to God nothing to embrace the cross is to be stripped naked and bare of all your merits and you see your utter desperation and complete dependence on God's mercy and grace if you miss anything in the sermon don't miss that don't miss that statement when you embrace the cross it means you're stripped naked and bare of all your merits and you see your utter desperation and your complete dependence on God's mercy and grace which is shown at the cross when Jesus died as your substitute where you should be condemned remember the water is judgment where you should be killed and you should face

[21 : 33] God's judgment Jesus did it for you and then he changes you and transforms you and he's going to mold you more into the image of his own son that's what the father's going to do that's amazing nothing else to glory in but the cross of Christ this is how valuable the cross must be for us and when it is it affects you in this way the world's dead to me and I'm dead to the world it's a refuse it's excrement to me second way it affects you the new creation is my focus the world's dead to me I'm dead to the world and now the new creation that's my focus verse 15 for neither circumcision anything nor uncircumcision it doesn't matter it doesn't matter if you have that piece of skin on you or not in the kingdom must I be graphic

I will in the new created order in God's new world order in the age to come in the plan of redemption circumcision is nothing uncircumcision is nothing what matters is a new creation notice he says but a new creation God's new world order was inaugurated as a result of Jesus atonement and his resurrection the new creation is not my focus the new creation is now my focus what matters most is a new creation not being circumcised not following some law what matters most is I'm a new person I mean we did that this morning these young men they're testifying to you I'm a new person I'm a new Isaiah I'm a new Nathan this is what

God's done in me we as followers of Jesus belong to this new world order the new humanity this new creation is not relegated to our subjective experience per se it's the reality of God's kingdom ushered in by the life and death of Jesus and his resurrection from the dead the new creation has begun it's here now God's new world order is here because people are getting saved being transformed being changed so so the law as a means for salvation it's useless the law merely points out that you're just an evil wicked person it's part of the old way of life you're cursed you're condemned it's about justification by grace alone through faith alone in

Christ alone and this objective reality becomes our own reality as we experience the new birth new life that comes by the Holy Spirit and regeneration this is where chapter 5 verse 6 comes into play Paul said chapter 5 verse 6 for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything but faith working through love in God's new world order there's a new you it's by the mighty horrible precious bloody despicable shameful cross that this new creation happens this new creation comes the cross is our pride and joy it's the Christmas gift we show off we live our lives by this new creation this new standard look at what he says in verse 16 and those who will walk by this rule now let's stop there and unpack these words excuse me walk it's the same word that's used in chapter 5 verse 25 525 if we live by the spirit let us also walk by the spirit we talked about that a couple weeks ago which means keeping in step with the spirit so those who keep in step with this rule when he says rule it's like a ruler or a straight edge for a measuring stick it's like the standard so this new rule or standard is pervasive it's radical it's a standard by which we walk by which we keep in step the new creation is my focus

I'm keeping in step with that so a person must place their complete trust in Christ and him crucified and solely regulate their life by this principle that's what that means the new creation is my focus and if you live this way walk this way keep in step with the standard notice what he says peace and mercy upon them and upon the Israel of God the Christian life is totally based upon the person and work of Jesus through whom we have peace and mercy with God the Father you can have peace with God the Father through the cross you're shown mercy and grace by God the Father at the cross circumcision doesn't bring you peace circumcision doesn't bring you mercy with the

[27 : 43] Father only Jesus no one and nothing else but Jesus if there is any news that's vital and essential it's the news of free grace whereby we can be made right with God and not face his just judgment he shows us his great grace that's the gospel if you're here you don't know Christ or you're here listening to this message you can hear the message of grace where God will save you when you turn from your sin and trust in Jesus saying I should be condemned but Jesus you were condemned and face God's wrath in my place as my substitute I turn away from my sin and I trust that you died for me he'll save you that's the heart of the gospel that's the grace of God if there's any rule any standard that we're called to live by it's the rule of

Christ the new creation and it's a standard it's not just for Gentiles Gentiles but not Jews peace and mercy upon them and upon the Israel of God it's a standard not just for Gentiles but also for Jews that's why Paul says the Israel of God Jews are not to focus upon circumcision but upon the person work of Christ their Messiah if they follow this rule they will have peace and mercy if we follow this rule we'll have peace and mercy so we're boasting the cross it affects us how I'm dead to the world it's dead to me the new creation is my focus third I embrace suffering and you can even add I embrace suffering for the gospel for the gospel

I embrace suffering for the gospel verse 11 and verse 17 see with what large letters I'm writing to you with my own hand so it's like Paul said to his amanuensis who's the dictator give me that pen man he wrote the ending of the letter himself why does he do this he was trying to authenticate the letter he's stressing this letter was to them from him he wrote in large letters not simply because that was the way he wrote but possibly for emphasis they would recognize that this letter truly was from Paul himself so he's saying listen to me listen to me what I'm telling you verse 17 from now on let no one cause trouble for me for I bear on my body the brand marks of Jesus in other words don't mess with me don't mess with me

I'm for real these clowns Judaizers and maybe some Galatian members they may avoid persecution but Paul saying my body was branded with the marks of Christ there's no reason to doubt his motives because he was willing to be persecuted for the gospel no not like the Judaizers they hated to be persecuted for the gospel they tried to avoid that in any way they could but Paul says I have the marks of Jesus literally on my body I've suffered tremendously for this gospel I'm not about just getting things so I can get what I want interesting the word brand marks were placed upon slaves even Galatian slave owners practiced with their slaves so Paul had suffered wounds excruciating and injuries in preaching this news of free grace these marks gave palpable proof that Paul was suffering for the

Lord Jesus with the Lord Jesus he was suffering for the gospel he was a slave of Jesus I mean just Lystra alone he was almost stoned to death to suffer on behalf of the news of free grace is a sign of holding true to that gospel of free grace we truly get that boasting the cross has this inclusive aspect of suffering if you embrace it you're gonna suffer for it the inseparable benefits of Christ's death is we fellowship with his sufferings we are rejected we are scorned we are shamed and in some cases we are killed we'll suffer if you're gonna boast in the cross you embrace suffering for the gospel we're called to be conformed to his death in regards to the things of this world whether they be material immaterial we die even daily die to the world and the things of this world and when we become dead to the world then we become an object of contempt to that world to those who place their confidence in the world and the things of this world look if they hated Jesus they're gonna hate you if Jesus suffered so will you in 2

[33 : 43] Timothy chapter 3 Paul says that those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted I like what John Calvin John Piper said not John Calvin John Piper he says this quote you cannot cherish the Christ of Calvary without joining him on the Calvary road you cannot cherish the Christ of Calvary you can't cherish Jesus on Calvary if you're not gonna join him on the Calvary road and suffer the world's dead to me I'm dead to the world the new creation is my focus it's affecting me both in the cross third I embrace suffering for the gospel fourth and this is good not that the others aren't good but this is really good God's grace is always present God's grace is always present verse 18 the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ be with your spirit brethren amen a closing of grace depressed this news of free grace upon the spirit of his readers when we become cross boasters it affects us because God's grace will always be present with us he called them brethren interesting as a way to show he hadn't given up hope in them he called them back to grace grace and in this letter the Lord Jesus will give his grace by his mighty presence because his grace is found as we listen and heed his inerrant word or to put it another way as they heeded and listened to the words he wrote the grace of Jesus would be with them as we heed the word given to us in this letter the news of free grace we're justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone the grace of Jesus will be with us just as well so may the grace of Christ the freedom of the gospel and the power of the spirit be yours cottonwood bible and may it continue listen and may it continue when this church is replanted as valley life church of cottonwood may it continue may you be a part of building that foundation of a church that's built on the foundation of the gospel of free grace that we're justified by grace alone through faith alone and Christ alone live in this gospel freedom the news of the gospel the news of the gospel it's very relevant isn't it very relevant let's pray and we do need your grace father to help us to stay in grace we need your grace to help us stand fast in grace we pray for that for us help us to stay in grace to stand firm in grace to be faithful to this gospel this news of free grace it's a work that only you can do in us only you so take a few moments if you would there'll be a few moments of silence take this opportunity to fill your mind with the news of free grace of God's grace to you in Christ and the cross let the message of the gospel overwhelm you

God's gracious mercy to you God's merciful grace to you may it show itself in thanks and praise and humility take the time if you would and do that now please