

Dead to the World

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: 18 April 2010

[0 : 00] God bless you. Galatians 6.

I want to talk about the cross. We've sung about it today.! The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Galatians 6 verse 14.! Paul says, 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.

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

There's really two alternatives of how to live. Of ways to turn. Two alternatives. God's way, the way of the cross, or the world's way.

That denies the cross. We cannot have both. It's either the cross or the world. It's a stark choice, isn't it? The way of freedom, God's way, or the way of enslavement, the world's way.

[1 : 17] And Paul tells us here that the world is crucified unto me. The world is crucified unto me. And for all of us, we all can question, what should my relationship be with the world?

What should our relationship be with the world? And when we say the world, we don't mean planet Earth, but we mean the world's system, the world's way of thinking, the world's culture and mindset, the world's godlessness, really, isn't it?

Because it's a law unto itself. And the world can have a powerful sway. As we know, it's forcing, it's moulding, it's shaping, it's controlling, it's influencing everything that we do in our lives.

The world has got a force. And it's a force to be reckoned with. A force that is constantly against us. It's hostile to God. The world is against God and truth.

And by the Lord Jesus Christ, we're told, Paul writes here, he says, By the Lord Jesus Christ, by the cross, by his working, the world and all its attractions, all of its influence, is like a dead man towards me.

[2 : 28] It's like something that's dead towards me. It's crucified. It's crucified. It's nailed. It's dead. It's buried. I am dead, Paul writes, in terms of my relationship with the world.

The world is crucified unto me. And there's many scriptures that talk about the believer's relationship. The relationship of God's people to the world. What should it be?

John writes in 1 John 2, verse 15. That familiar one, and some of these are referred to in the morning. 1 John 2, verse 15, from verse 15 to 17, he writes, Love not the world.

Love it not. Neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

So, Paul says, as far as my relationship goes with the world, if he's following on, really, from what John is echoing here, we should love not the world.

[3 : 47] Another thing we should have in relationship to the world, is that we should not be conformed to the world. We should not be conformed to it. God's people are not meant to be conformed to the fashions and fads, and the views and influences of the world.

We're not to be conformed to that. And it's got the sense of being shaped. I suppose if you were to pick up a lump of Play-Doh or plasticine, and mould it, and shape it, and press it, and fashion it, that is the sense of it here.

That we're not to be shaped, and melded, and moulded, and squeezed into the world's kind of way of thinking, and the world's fashion. Romans 12, Paul writes that, He says, It's another familiar one. Not conformed to this world, but then you're transformed by the renewing of your mind. Not loving the world, not conformed to the world.

Another aspect is not fellowshipping with the world. Ephesians 5.11, Paul writes, I am dead in terms of fellowshipping with the world. He writes, Is that what it says in your Bible?

[5 : 25] Ephesians 5.11, And have a little bit of fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness? No, it says, And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

I heard another message lately, of how it's saying in the modern church, it's as if the Lord Jesus said to the woman caught in the act of adultery, Go and sin a little less.

He didn't say that. He said, Go and sin no more. I am dead in terms of my fellowshiping with the world. We're not meant to fellowship with it.

Now when we speak of fellowship, it means to form a close relationship. Fellowship is ideally that we would form a relationship with one another. As God's people, as God's family, as brothers and sisters who love Christ, who are part of God's family.

That there's a relationship in church. It's not just church, as in come and go, and not have much to do with one another. But fellowship is, we should be knitted together in love.

[6 : 26] We should have that relationship. And God says that we should have no fellowship with the world. We shouldn't be knitted together with it. We shouldn't be joining alliances with it. We shouldn't be joining forces with it.

We shouldn't be forming a relationship with it. Now we see today, sadly, at times there's this view that we've got to adopt and utilise all the means and fashions and methods of the world.

And for example, Christian rock or religious rock music. The trouble is, when you try to fashion something that's fashion after the world's fashion, it's not going to fit.

It's really, as it's been said, that these things can at times be, for example, Christian rock can at times be, or become, a bridge over which Christian young people will travel to the worldly rock.

And that's the danger. As much as well-meaning people might try such methodologies, the danger is what it leads to. It's the thin end of the wedge, isn't it?

[7 : 27] It's the door ajar. And that is what it can sadly lead to. And it's a stronghold that has to be torn down. We're not to fellowship with the world. There's no place for that.

With the works of darkness. We don't want to have a bar of the works of darkness, but instead stay close to Christ and His Word. And so, the world is crucified to me.

And I am crucified unto the world. We know that's a familiar scripture in Galatians 2, verse 20. I'm sure some of you could quote that from memory.

Galatians 2, 20. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet, not I, but Christ, liveth in me.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Now, I don't know if you've ever seen a body. And I've seen a body. I've held the hand of a dead man.

[8 : 33] And I could have said anything to him and he wouldn't have got offended with me. You know? And I could have praised him and it wouldn't have gone to his head. You know? I mean, you can think of this.

I was reading something. There's lots of advantages about being dead. About being a dead man.

For example, there is nothing that the devil can do to a dead man.

Nothing that the devil can do to a dead person. If you are dead, you are free. There's some great things about being a dead man or a dead woman. A dead man has no appetite for the things of the world.

They've got no attraction. You know, lust, sin, whatever you can name of sin or imagine. A dead man has got no attraction to them.

You can't entice that man to sin. A dead man has got no will of his own. He cannot get angry or offended or jealous or prideful or vain.

[9 : 39] He cannot get offended or offend. What an advantage. You know, I'd love to be such a person. So have no complaint.

A dead person has nothing to control. A dead person cannot hate. A dead person has no concern for the opinions of men, whether they're praising him or criticising him.

A dead person cannot sin. A dead person cares not for the flatteries or the criticism, whatever it be that comes across his way. And if you're a dead person, you cannot do anything that is out of God's will.

What an advantage. And it's been said too, when a dead person is lying there in the casket, they have open hands. They're not clutching onto anything. They're surrendering all. They're surrendering all.

Shouldn't we be dead? Shouldn't we be dead in that sense? It's dead unto the world. To forget our ego, it's dead. So that when you go through life and someone stabs you in the back or kicks you up the bottom or hits you in the ribs or attacks you in criticising your credentials or your goodwill or finding fault with something you said or done or not done and just having a go at you, you're dead.

[11:00] You're dead. And it could be when, you know, I know street preachers have to be like that. They're not there to get people clapping or giving them, passing the offering plate to them when they're there stood on a soapbox in a public square with people hurling abuse at them.

You know, I've seen some preachers in the open air when they were throwing carrots at the preacher. You know, maybe they thought he was hungry or something. But, you know, you think that a person who's dead, it's not going to hurt them.

It's not going to offend them. It's just going to bounce off them. Of course, we're still human, aren't we, all of us? And the flesh still can feel the pain. But, brothers and sisters, we should be crucified to the world.

Crucified to the world. The Lord Jesus says to us, if any man will come after me, Matthew 16, 24, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

And when you're on your way to, when you're carrying a cross, it means that you're on the way to your crucifixion. It means maybe you're not there yet. Maybe you're not crucified yet.

[12:11] But you're carrying that cross. You're heading up that hill. They're going to nail you there on that piece of wood. They're going to jab those spikes into your hands and into your feet. You're going to die there.

That's what it means to take up your cross and follow me. It means you stop going your own way and you're following in his steps. In really those blood, bloodstone footprints.

You're following the Christ to your death. To the death of self. You're on your way to your crucifixion. And when you're crucified to the world, it means that you'll exercise discernment about what is the world and what is not the world.

What is God's will and what is not God's will that we should avoid? For example, in 1 Thessalonians 5.22 it says, Prove all things, hold fast, that which is good. It means we take that measuring stick of the word of God, we take that magnifying glass of the penetrating gaze of the Holy Spirit on what we do and choose to do or think to do and ask the Lord, is it good?

Prove all things, hold fast, that which is good. We use discerning. We use rejecting of worldly philosophies so that by God's help we'll discern and then we'll reject that which is of the world.

[13:30] So we'll be as Paul instructs us to be aware of the philosophy of the world. For example, Colossians 2.8 in Colossians 2.8 he says, Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ.

So there's a sense where we can be spoiled. It's got the sense of really of having things taken from us, of being robbed. The worldly philosophies, the worldly way of conceiving things and believing and adopting views about things can spoil, it can take away, it can steal from you, it can rob from you.

The world can be enticing but we need to reject worldly philosophies. And we're constantly barraged with it, aren't we? I mean on the airways, through visual media or audio, there's a constant barraging and besieging of our thoughts through the ear gate and the eye gate the world's philosophies.

And it's no wonder we're influenced by that. Everybody is. As much as we don't want to be, it does influence us but we need to be discerning of it and reject it. And also, in terms of our love or our relationship with the world and being crucified onto the world, there's a resolution that we make to not have our loyalty to the world.

Our loyalty does not lie with the world. It does not lie. I mean, as much as we love the nation of Australia, our allegiance is not to the flag of Australia so much as our allegiance is to the Lord, our King, our Saviour.

[15:04] And that's not to denigrate our love for our nation and our loyalty to that which is good about our nation of Australia. But our loyalty is not to Australia, it's not to our nation, it's not to a race or a conglomeration of certain societies, but our relationship is to the Lord, that is what is paramount and our loyalty is to Him because we belong to God.

You are not of the world, you are in it, but you are not of it. You do not belong to it. And so, crucified unto the world, are you dead yet?

Are you dead yet? Do you resolve to be dead towards the world? To be, to that sense of belonging to the world, belonging to it. You don't have to belong. We don't have to be relevant to the world. We don't have to belong to it. We don't have to hanker after worldly acceptance. That's not what drives us. It's whether God accepts what we're doing. It's whether God is glorified through what we are and how we live.

And so, we should be aware that the world is watching us. The world is watching us. As professing Christians, do we just follow in that mindset of the world?

[16:27] And that can happen when we dress like the world, we play like the world, we manage money like the world, we raise our families like the world, we have the same goals as the world, we take in the entertainment of the world, we have throwaway marriages like the world, we're materialistic and greedy like the world, we're self-centered and individualistic like the world.

It's very easy to be like the world, isn't it? Let's face it, some of those things may be to a degree, we all have some of that to a degree. But God wants you and I to be truly dead unto the world.

How do we get there? That's the question, isn't it? There's many scriptures Paul talks about I die daily. He talks about being dead unto the world. You might like to turn in preparation to Romans 6. Are we truly dead? Answer the world. And if only people would search the scriptures and see the rich benefits that can flow from being separated unto God, from being dead, as we talked about, the advantages of being a dead man.

It's great. I'm not there yet. I'd like to be there. Now one day I will be there in the physical. But brothers and sisters, if we could be dead in the spiritual in terms of that our spirit is dead to the world but alive to God.

[17:44] It's a wonderful fact. To be crucified with Christ, are we truly dead unto the world? If a person comes to your house and is dressed like the world, acts like the world, talks like the world, listens to the world's music and goes to the world's attractions, you can surmise that that person is of the world.

Now the question for us as God's people, there's elements of that that we all have to a degree too. You go down the shop, you've got to buy something that the world wears, don't you? But you know, sometimes Christian parents, for their young women to dress modestly, they've got to make their own clothes.

It's getting to that point where a Christian woman can't get modest clothes in the shopping centre because it's all, and I'm generalising here, but at times it can be true that a lot of what is commonly sold and that which is on the clothing racks in the stores is immodest.

And as a Christian parent, I wouldn't want my daughter to be wearing something that is immodest. And constantly, it's impacting your whole life, isn't it?

When you really think about it. And as I was touching on this morning, in fact, where they're bringing laws into America that you could have a cross-dressing man teaching your children.

[19:02] And this is something that is actually being put into legislation in America. God forbid that they should be in that place of teaching, of mentoring, and of role modelling what our next generation should accept and condone and applaud as normal.

And friends today, marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. People might watch this video or hear this kind of talk or in print or media, whatever media that this comes out in, and they'll be against this.

There's churches that would be against this kind of talk. There's preachers that would be against this kind of talk. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. Don't be surprised, he says, 1 John 3, 13.

It's actually normal for the world to hate you. If you're a really out-and-out Christian, if you're a full-on fair-dinkum, genuine, Aussie, true-blue, dinky-dye Christian, the world will hate you.

The world will hate you. God promises that 1 John 3, 13. And sometimes it can be where we dabble-dabble, we dilly-dally, we kind of sit on the fence where we still hang on to and associate with the world such that it can damage our Christian testimony.

[20:22] Now, again, I put a proviso here. I'm not saying don't have worldly friends. I'm not saying that. But I'm saying that there's times when the company we keep influences us.

It can influence us. We should be the ones influencing them. We should be the soul and we should be the light that influences them. And worldly friends can damage our spiritual life if they're influencing us in contrast to us influencing them.

For example, 1 Corinthians 15, 33. Paul writes, Be not deceived. Evil communications corrupt good manners. In other words, that kind of communication, that fellowship, can corrupt the conduct, the right manners, the good manners.

And as Solomon wrote in Proverbs 13, 20, He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. A companion of fools shall be destroyed.

So it's the company we keep can influence us. When I became a Christian, I immediately spoke to my schoolmates and they weren't my mates for very long.

[21 : 27] Now that's not to say we don't want to lose our friends as far as we want to still have the influence to be able to keep witnessing to them and we need to use wisdom and tact about how we do so. But the world will drop you if you're a Christian.

They won't want a bar of it. And the world will hate you. Christ says so. And God wants every believer to be dead to the world. Our loyalty and our love is for the Lord.

That's what motivates. That's what matters. And when that holiness is internalised, it'll happen, that'll be evident in our walk. and as we are determined to be crucified unto the world, God will help us to walk that walk and not just talk the talk.

Romans 6, 11, Paul writes here again. And there's so many scriptures. This is really a theme through the word of God. If you really were to explore this truth of being dead, being dead.

And the good thing is we can be alive. We don't be dead in our trespasses and sins as we were before we are saved. Dead, as God describes the man who's lost, dead in sin, but rather to be dead to sin.

[22 : 40] Dead to sin. Romans 6, 11, it says, Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead, indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.

Whoa! Alive unto God. Hallelujah. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. An earthquake. Amen? So, dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies that you would obey it in the lust thereof, neither yield ye your members or your body as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

For sin shall not have dominion over you for you are not under the law but under grace. Isn't that wonderful? That there's a sense of obeying, of yielding and it's true that really it's what we obey, what we yield to is our master, isn't it?

Do we yield to the flesh, to the world, to the natural, the carnal, or do we yield instead in obeying him and his spirit?

[23 : 49] The world is crucified unto me, I am crucified unto the world. And thirdly, Paul says, my glory is in the cross. My glory is in the cross. And as I was saying earlier, it's not that we would venerate some crucifix on the wall or have some kind of bowing down to a piece of wood and adoring that.

It's not that we adore a piece of wood. Really, God forbids us to do so. But my glory is in the cross of Jesus Christ, our Lord. That's what Paul writes here.

And he says that the glory is in the cross. It's in that cross. It's where our Saviour died. As John writes in 1 John 1, 5 to 7, he talks about God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

He says, walk in the light. We have fellowship with him. Verse 7, but if we walk in the light as he is in the light, verse 7 of 1 John 1, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin.

It's the blood that makes it all possible. The powerful sway of the world may be overcome by the much more powerful sway of the blood of Christ. The powerful action of the redeeming blood can save your soul, can sanctify your soul.

[25 : 09] And if we love the Lord, the blood will be our glory. The cross, the wonder of Calvary, the adoration of his atonement, of his free gift granted to us.

The glory, the praise that comes out of our mouth is unto Jesus Christ, is unto his glory. And the wonder of the cross, really, is that God would deign to step down and to grant it to you, to me, that God in his great abundance, in his great love, with which his love does, would deign to grant it to unworthy wretches such as we, that God would grant that gift that is above all gifts, that unspeakable gift.

We can't write it, we can't describe it or put it into words. The wonder of Calvary. That is no wonder. Paul wanted to glory in that.

He wanted to praise. He wanted to rejoice in that, to joy in that. And the cross means that a man can repent of his sins and turn to Christ. The cross means that we can be justified, we can be redeemed, we can have holiness, and that Christ himself is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

1 Corinthians 1.30 And when we encounter worldly issues, we'll be crucified unto it. And it will be crucified unto us as we have that full surrender. The question for everyone really is putting it personally now, getting it right to the pointy end.

[26 : 50] Where do we stand personally? Can we claim what Paul did? I am crucified unto the world, the world is crucified unto me.

God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ. Is it a desire for fellowship with friendship, for his association with the world that is in here that's driving, that's behind our thinking?

What is it? I know on the weekend last week the speaker challenged, what is it that you think about the most? What is it that you spend your time thinking about or concerned about or dwelling upon or driving you?

What is it that your appetite is for, that you adore, that you long for, that you seek after? Is it that which is spiritual or that which is carnal? Is it that which is of the world or that which is of Christ, of God, of the cross?

And we need to be separated is really the bottom line. The church needs to be separated. That's why the church has lost its power in many quarters. The power has declined because the separation has declined.

[28 : 06] Friends, today, people tonight, God bless you tonight as you can get a vision of Christ today. Get a vision of the cross today. Get a vision of that power of the cross, that redeeming power, that sanctifying power of the blood of Christ shed for us, the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believe that the gospel and the influence of it, the integrity of it, the impact of it.

Let's not detract from that. Let's not take away from that. An old-time preacher, Campbell Morgan, put it like this. He said, if the church of God in the cities of today were aloof from, the maxims of the age, separated from the materialistic philosophies of the schools, bearing her witness alone to the all-sufficiency of Christ and the perfection of his salvation, even though persecuted and ostracised and bruised, it would be to her that men would look.

It would be to her that men would look. In the hour of their heartbreak and sorrow and national need, the reason why men do not look to the church today is that she has destroyed her own influence by compromise.

And we can all be neglectful to be unwise in decisions we make individuals as a corporate body. We can be neglectful and we need to get back to the cross people tonight, don't we? We need to get back to think as much as the word says we're not to picture Christ or such things.

[29 : 56] I know as was referred to this morning of various graphical representations of the crucifixion. But really man's artistic flair and Hollywood's creative energies can't really paint that picture for us and really not that we should want to place Christ as some entertaining thing to look at.

But the gripping reality of the cross, of that bloodshed, of that wounding, of that bruising for us, that is what we must glory in today.

That is what must drive us, that desire to imitate his holiness, to find that life that the cross brings for us. And our glory is in the cross. It's not our objective to draw a crowd or to entertain people, but our glory is in the cross.

It is there that our glory is. Our objective is to please that thrice holy God, the one of whom the angels find holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.

It is to him that we want to place our focus and strive to please and glorify him. And friends, just to wrap up, God wants you dead and alive, dead and alive, dead to loving the world, to loving it and its attractions, to being conformed to it, to fellowshiping with it.

[31 : 35] God doesn't want us to partake of that, but dead to the world, alive, alive, as if alive from the dead, which truly we are, alive unto God, alive unto God, to God, to him we belong.

God, he has your allegiance, he has your ownership over you, he has that rightful ownership, to him we belong, he has that loyalty that only he can be worthy of, that loyalty, and he has our love, alive unto God.