

# Boasting in the Cross

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now as the Lord enables us, let us again turn to Galatians and chapter 6 and focus for a few moments together on verses, about verse 13 onwards.

Reading from verse 13.

There are a number of references in the book of Acts to the Apostle Paul's journeyings and he mentions on more than one occasion that he went throughout the region of Galatia.

In Acts 16 verse 6 he says that he had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia. And in Acts 18 verse 23 that he went through Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples.

And Galatia as mentioned in the Bible is in central Turkey, present day Turkey.

[ 1 : 42 ] And it says in chapter 3 of this very epistle that Christ, in the middle of verse 1, it was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.

In other words, in Paul's preaching about Christ, he described Christ's crucifixion.

The reason for Christ's suffering upon the cross and dying upon the cross. That is the core of the gospel. That is central to the gospel.

That is crucial to an understanding and a living of the gospel. The word crucial is from the same word as cross. It's central. It's absolutely necessary for us to be centred upon the cross.

And what happened at the cross of Christ in order to have salvation. And Christ, Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified among these people in central present day Turkey.

[ 3 : 00 ] And many of them were converted. But as always, Satan seeks to undo the work of the gospel. He seeks to bring the people of God aside into the byways of sins of various kinds.

Sins of thought. Sins of word and of action. Associating with people who are not at all profitable to have their company.

The devil will try and draw us aside one way or another. I often think of the way the translation is in the book of Job.

When Satan asks, sorry, when God asks Satan, when he presents himself with the sons of God before God, Where have you been?

And Satan says, I have going through and fro upon the earth and up and down upon it. It's as if he goes from north, south, east and west.

[ 4 : 07 ] From all sides. And he comes from all sides to bear upon the Christian. To seek to undo our peace. To break our association with the church.

To turn our lives as Christians upside down. And if he cannot do that, he'd cause as much confusion. And heartache as possible.

And that's the kind of thing that happened in Galatia. Besides the Apostle Paul preaching among these people, There were those whom they call Judaizers.

People who still kept a firm hold on the Jewish religion. And insisted on the Jewish rights, such as circumcision, to be performed.

And this got a hold among the Christians in Galatia. So that some of them, from that point onwards, When they had taken this on board, as it were, They wanted to do a work that would earn their own salvation.

[ 5 : 19 ] As well as believing in Jesus. For example, go through the Jewish rituals, as well as have faith in Christ. It was a religion of Christ, plus their own works.

That's what they were embracing. And we see at the beginning of chapter 3, going back here once more, The Apostle says, O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?

It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ publicly portrayed as crucified. And then he says, Let me ask you only this. Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? And he calls them people who were foolish.

And they had been bewitched. They had been sidetracked. They had been turned off, focusing on Christ alone for salvation. It was Christ plus something else.

[ 6 : 26 ] And there are people in the world now who are just like that. They say that they believe in Christ, but then they have these works that they believe are meritorious, so that they can gain salvation through Christ plus their own works.

It cannot be done. It is not possible. God begins the good work, and he brings the work on.

Certainly we are asked to walk in the fear of the Lord, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, but not working it out to earn the merit of God, or to earn the favor of God.

No. We do our works in thankfulness and in commitment to the Lord who has saved us. And that's an expression of our love to him, that we work for him and serve him, and give ourselves as willing sacrifices day by day, looking to him who loved us and gave himself for us.

And then coming to the chapter we've got here, chapter 6, on the verses I've mentioned.

See at verse 13, In other words, they want the numbers who follow their particular kind of theology to be swell, to swell up, that they count a number of heads.

[ 8 : 05 ] And the more heads they have, the prouder they have of this line that they've taken, Christ plus their own works. But Paul says in verse 14, Far be it from me to boast, except, he said, in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which, or an alternative rendering is, through whom, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Well, we see the boasting of the Judaizers and their followers, their boasting in the flesh, and the number of people that are following them. That's their boast. But the boasting of the apostle is focused and centered upon Christ alone.

God forbid, he says, as it's rendered in the authorized version, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world was crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

There are many people who boast of various things. Some people boast of their family.

Some people boast of the amount of money they've got. Some people boast of their village, their country, their football team, whatever it is.

[ 9 : 41 ] But you see, the Lord says, through Jeremiah, tell the man who is boasting, or glorying, in his strength, not to do so.

The man who is glorying in his riches, not to do so. Glorying in anything, or anyone, apart from the Lord, is completely wrong.

And you see, in these verses, the Apostle Paul focuses us on the one in whom we should rejoice, and of whom we should boast, if we have come to trust in him for salvation.

Well, let's have a look at what this verse says. Far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He's boasting in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. And you say, well, it's a strange thing to boast of, isn't it?

[ 10 : 56 ] When you read in the scriptures, and when you read the history of the time, you realize that crucifixion was an awful and terrible experience.

It was first of all reserved for slaves. Combined every element of shame and torture. That was crucifixion.

And the punishment of crucifixion began with scourging. There was a scourge made with strong cords and very often the soldiers who were charged with scourging the criminal, they would stick nails and pieces of bone into these cords so that every time they hit the prisoner, not only was he hurt with the cords, but the nails or the pieces of sharp bone would dig right into his flesh.

And the scourging usually took place with a prisoner standing before a stone column. Whip, scourge, beating.

And the apostle says, I want to glory in a cross. What kind of cross was it? Well, if you follow the history, you'll find that the cross probably used from which the Lord Jesus was crucified was called a Latin cross, which is a member like this and a straight post into the ground.

[ 12 : 43 ] And the criminal who was to be crucified carried his own cross to the place of execution. and our Lord was nailed to the cross. Nailed to the cross having been scourged and spit upon and with a crown of thorns upon his head and there they crucified him between the two thieves.

And the apostle Paul says, I don't want to glory in anything else except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I think this is the very, very important thing we have to notice in relation to these verses. It is a particular cross of a particular person.

It's the cross of the Savior on which the Prince of Glory died. It is the cross that he was crucified upon and where he offered up his soul unto death and where he gave that marvelous word. It is finished for the whole world to hear. And the apostle here says, that is what I want to glory in and that is the one in whom I want to glory, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

[14:18] Now, when the apostle is thinking about the cross, what do you think really appeals to him about Jesus Christ and him crucified?

I'm going to suggest a number of things. I'm going to use some technical terms because it's important that we get to know these terms.

First of all, when the apostle Paul looked at the cross of Jesus Christ, he could say, that is my substitute crucified there.

It's the cross of substitution. Now, you all know what substitution means. Somebody who takes the place of someone else.

A substitute comes onto the playing field at football and one of the other players goes off. The substitute plays in this place. Somebody in the place of somebody else.

[15:27] And that's what Jesus Christ is. He is the substitute of his own people. He went up to Calvary carrying the cross in the room and in the stead of his own elect people.

And the apostle Paul is able to get a hold of that with faith. and he says, he died there in my room and in my place.

I should have been the one who should have died because my sins deserved it. Every sin of mine deserves the wrath and curse of God. And that's exactly what Jesus suffered, the wrath and the curse of God undiluted as he there was crucified upon the cross of shame.

So the apostle says, I glory in the cross because he died for me. And the next thing that we can mention is that he paid the price for my freedom and liberty.

You see, he became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

[17:04] And what price did he pay for our liberty, for our freedom? And you say, well, what need did we have of being set free?

Where were we imprisoned? Who was the tyrant that kept us in chains? Well, the sin of our hearts and of our lives made us serve itself.

Sin was our master and sin was the tyrant that kept us in chains. But also, of course, there was the law of God.

The law was, as it were, the prison house in which we were until we would fully pay what the law required of us.

And what is the law required of us? Perfect obedience to every aspect of God's law. Have you ever thought that that's an impossibility for you?

[18:15] How? Well, first of all, what about all that is past of your life? The sins that you have committed in your life?

Up until now, even from now to the end of your life, if you lived a perfect life, still you would need Christ as Saviour because of the past sins of your life.

And over and above that, there is original sin which attached to you and was laid upon you at the point of your conception inside your mother's womb.

The guilt of Adam's first sin. And the law says, I want full satisfaction for every aspect of the sin of your life.

Original sin, actual sin, sins of omission and commission. Every aspect of sin needs to be paid for and the price is full obedience.

[19:18] And if you can't pay, you've got to suffer. And Jesus, as the one who took our place, he paid the price for our liberty.

The price was that he gave himself, his blood, he gave himself unto death, that we might be free. He paid the price. Save him from going down into the pit, we find in the Old Testament in Job. For God says, I have found a ransom.

I have found a ransom. And the apostle Paul here has discovered that ransom price has been paid for him in the person of Christ and him crucified.

God forbid, he said, that I should glory in anything or anyone else. What about this?

[ 20 : 29 ] The word propitiation. The word propitiation. that word has reference to the wrath of God and that Jesus Christ has by his own sufferings unto death, even the cursed death of the cross, has satisfied the wrath of God, has, as it were, covered it over, so that the wrath of God does not break forth against the believer anymore.

Christ covered so that we do not get exposed to the wrath of God forever.

What an amazing work the Saviour fulfilled in his life and in his death and the apostle here says, I am not going to boast in anything but the cross of my Saviour.

What about the word atonement? If you look at the word atonement in the English, you can divide it, as it were, to say, at-one-ment.

Atonement. And by nature, we are the enemies of God. We are not at one.

[ 22 : 10 ] Our minds and our hearts and our lives veer away from him. The language of our heart is, we will not have this man, Christ, to reign over us.

We are not at one with him. We don't want him. But then, when Christ came into the world, he made peace in this way between those who were rebels and the holy God.

And the price of peace was that he suffered eternal wrath in his own person to the satisfaction of the triune God.

God, you know that when Jesus rose on the third day, some theologians say it was as if God was giving his signature of approval to all that Christ had done by way of suffering and dying for his people.

God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, totally satisfied with all that Christ has done.

[ 23 : 30 ] And Christ rose from the dead as proof of God's full satisfaction with what was done. And he says, far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, the cross of ransom, the cross of atonement, the cross of propitiation, the cross of substitution.

That's where it all happened. That is the focus of the faith of God's people. people. When you read in John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, you see the pilgrim starting off from the city of destruction, weighed down with his burden of sin.

And the burden remains upon his back until he comes to the cross of Calvary. And there he looks up and he bursts into song after his burden has fallen off and rolled right into the grave and he never saw it again.

And the song was blessed cross, blessed sacrifice, blessed rather be the man that there was put to shame for me.

The same kind of thing as the Apostle Paul here has. Far be it from me, he says, to boast in circumcision or in good works or anything else, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified unto me.

[ 25 : 24 ] Well, that's a statement, isn't it? It's as if he sees the world and all that it is crucified unto him.

In other words, all that is in the world of worldliness, of man centeredness, of carnality, of things that please us, that belong to time and sense only, the things of the world that had such an attraction to us and for us, they have been crucified to me, he says.

When you think back to a time in your own life when you were desperate to be in favor with the world, with the people who were worldly, the activities that were worldly, things that pleased what was carnal within you and you were so desperate to be part of that, you didn't want to be seen left out of it, you didn't want to know anything else but full commitment to and satisfaction in the things of the world.

But now, what has happened? The world is crucified to you. It hasn't got the same attraction.

It's not the be all and end all of things. The apostle Paul says elsewhere, for to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

[ 27 : 19 ] To live is Christ. In other words, the focus of his life changed on that day on the road to Damascus when the Lord arrested him and the Lord spoke to him and the Lord flattened him to the earth.

And he said, Lord, what do you want me to do? The direction of his life changed. He was from then on a God-fearing man.

He had turned his back upon the world, turned his back upon persecuting the church, turned his back upon his own self-righteousness and he thought he was doing so well according to the

righteousness that is in the law.

I saw myself blameless, he says, as he writes to the Philippian church. He thought he was doing perfectly well, but now he's knocked down to the ground and he realises that there are greater than him.

He realises that he has been living the wrong way up until now. Maybe that's the way you are.

[ 28 : 35 ] Maybe that's the way you feel. Maybe you feel that the world has suddenly gone pale, turned sour on you. Not just because of some personal circumstances that you find life difficult, but because the grace of God has come and you see the world for what it is and you see sin for what it is.

Well, that's what happens in the experience of those who have been crucified with Christ, who find Christ precious, who have Christ as saviour.

The world is crucified to them, but then it says also, and I am crucified to the world.

It's as if he has taken Christ's side. Christ has won him over and he wants to identify with Christ Jesus.

He wants to identify with Christ against the world, against sin, against Satan, against what man ordinarily seeks to gratify himself.

[ 29 : 55 ] He doesn't want anything to do with it. He wants to be in the company of Christ, in the fellowship of Christ. He wants to be at the cross focusing upon Jesus, through whose life and death, salvation came to him.

Isn't this a prayer you have yourself, day by day? Lord, that I might see you more clearly in your perfect life, that I might see the glory of your life.

Don't you have that prayer? That I might see the glory of your incarnation coming into the world.

The angels of heaven who never sinned, broke into rapturous music, singing of that particular happening in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago.

Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. That we might see the glory of his incarnation, see the glory of his life as the one who was so compassionate, as I mentioned in the morning, who touched the suffering leper and who killed him from his leprosy, who touched the blind man, and who touched others in such a beneficial and blessed way, that he might touch me.

Lord, touch me and my sins will be forgiven. Touch me and my circumstances will improve according to what you plan them to be.

[ 31 : 56 ] And then, of course, when you think of Christ crucified, oh, there is such a depth there, there is such a mystery there, when you think of these marvelous words of substitution, propitiation, atonement, and ransom, that I may get deeper and deeper into each of these words' meanings, what my salvation has cost him, what my atonement has cost him, what my life required that propitiation or peace with God might be effected, that he took my place as substitute, that I might get deeper into these things and that the peace of these things would fill my heart and life more and more and more, that I might see his glory as the risen and ascended saviour, the risen and ascended

Messiah, who is now sat at the right hand of the majesty on high, to make intercession, continual and prevailing intercession in the presence of God for all of God's elect people.

Satan has desired to have you, he said to the disciples, that he might sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your faith fail not.

It's an example of Christ's caring intercessory prayer on behalf of his people and all of his people, whatever circumstances they have, they are represented and prayed for in the presence of God in heaven.

Remember the great high priest with the breastplate with the precious stones, twelve precious stones representing the tribes of Israel.

[ 33 : 58 ] And when the high priest went in before God, it's as if these tribes were upon his heart. And so it is actually and truly with Christ our Saviour, every soul and every circumstance of every soul of his people is before him and he makes intercession on behalf of them in the presence of God.

The world was crucified to me and I to the world. If you are crucified to the world and the world crucified to you, these are the prayers I think you'll be having.

That I might have more fellowship with such a Saviour. That I might see his face more clearly. That I might hear his voice more distinctly.

That I might know his grace and strength more really as I encounter the difficulties and trials through which I have to go in the wilderness.

The disappointments that break my heart. Remember, he knows them and he's able to bind up your broken heart and heal your wounds.

[ 35 : 27 ] The disappointments you have as you fight the world and the flesh and the devil and you feel defeated so often by that group of enemies that seek to undo you and undo your Christian life and witness.

But the Lord knows and he promises never to leave you nor forsake you. Neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, creation, but a new creation.

It is a new life that begins in the experience of those for whom Christ died in a day of grace when the benefits of his redemptive work are applied to us by the Holy Spirit.

It's a new beginning, a new creation, a new life. Have you felt it? Are you aware of it in your own experience?

Do you hate sin? Do you love holiness? Do you prefer Jesus' company than the company of the world? Well, if you do, these are marks on those who with the Apostle Paul have gone from darkness to light and from the kingdom of Satan and to God.

[ 37 : 14 ] I had thought of preaching on another version this chapter this evening. And the version is this, and I'll just leave it with you. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Reading from verse 6. One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.

And then in verse 7, do not be deceived. God is not mocked. But whatever one sows, that will he also reap. But the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption.

But the one who sows to the spirit will from the spirit reap eternal life. I had planned to preach on that, but I couldn't. And I think it fits in very well with the verses we had as our text this evening.

Those who sow unto the flesh, the world has not been crucified to them. They do their own thing.

[ 38 : 26 ] But those who sow to the spirit they are able to do that and live a spiritual God-fearing life because the Lord has died for them and risen again.

God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

Let us pray. this ringing camehalten time. Here are the events that hurt an family would makejungle ha to the that hurt.