The World Is Crucified To Me, And I To The World

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[0:00] verse 14 of that passage in the King James it would read God forbid that I should glory in the ESV far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world I am not a mountaineer I can't even boast of being a hill walker but mountains fascinate me they have a kind of mystique and these great mountains have an authority and rather fancifully in my imagination

I think of the cross as the greatest of mountains towering over history and over my life and as I walk round it in the scriptures I see it facing out in different directions and as it does so I come to learn that the cross of Jesus which is for our sins to deal with our sins it's God's way of removing and cancelling our sins but I see the cross of Jesus facing out in different directions and dealing with all the effects and the causes of sin and it has multiple ways of dealing and eliminating our sins and
I like to look at the different achievements of the cross as we see them in scripture and today I want to focus on how the cross confronts our relationship with the world the cross and the world and I've got four things that I want to draw out from the passage first of all can we see that the cross is our death to the world it's by the cross that the world has been crucified to me and I to the world now scripture uses this world in a number of different ways
Jesus we're told the word was in the world and the world was made through him and in that verse in John 1 he's speaking about the world as our planet or as the universe the cosmos and that's one way in which the Bible uses this word another way is that it describes human beings in their totality and you get this in the great gospel verse God so loved the world that he gave his son and in that case he's talking about human beings but often in the New Testament there's a specific use of the world which is actually much darker than either of these because it's the world in all its resistance to God it's the world as it opposes
Christ it's the world as it refuses to honour him it's the world with all its idols and its heroes and its aims and ambitions that says no to the Lord and in this use of the world the world and the kingdom of God are diametrically opposite now from birth you and I were born into that world of hostility to God none of us could was righteous not even one but when we turn to faith in the crucified Christ not only were our sins forgiven but our attachment to the world was terminated that's what it says here and that's why
[5:45] Jesus could speak about his disciples in prayer to his father and say they're not of the world even as I'm not of the world now we remain physically in the created world and we continue to live amongst the whole population people but in in this specific sense we believers in Christ have been taken out of the world we have been crucified to it and it has been crucified to us and the Lord Jesus came here to deliver us from this present evil age and before he went to the cross Jesus said to his disciples now is the judgment on the world and this is something that we need to take so seriously because it has dealt the cross has dealt this double blow the double death blow we've the cross has caused the world to be crucified to us that is the world no longer has the fascination and the glitter that it once had but the other side is that we have been crucified to it and we have gone to that place of where Jesus went to be executed we spiritually speaking we died to the influences of the world and how we need to think much about this we now live to different goals different code of practices people in the world are pressurized by its standards and by its ways but we've been pulled out of that and

Paul could speak about us being delivered from the kingdom of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of light and you need to see now that what you once were and what you've become are a world apart and it's one of our failings as believers that we don't think sufficiently about how big a change has happened when we became believers we think of it as a pleasant decision we made we think of it as maybe joining a movement we may think of it as ensuring us against the judgment to

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come we may think of it as important at the time back in whenever it was but it's now no longer that momentous to us and
Paul is showing us in this verse that we keep needing to remind ourselves that something huge took place when we came into faith in Jesus Christ and that was what was happening to the Israelites when they were constantly reminded as Stephen was reading praying they become a holy nation they become a treasured possession chosen by God out of all the nations of the earth and the separation was immense so that the first thing is the cross has for us dealt a death blow to our relationship with the world the second thing that the verse tells us is that the cross of Jesus is all our boasting it's our only boasting far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our
Lord Jesus Christ strange isn't it that we should boast about the cross and it it's grotesque it's bloody and it it was the most horrible form of execution and it made Jesus Christ look like a pathetic weakling and yet we glory in it we boast about it and Paul says here we boast in nothing except the cross of Christ now that's actually a very interesting thing for him to say because in other parts of the scripture he speaks about things that he boasts about and they're things other than the cross he glories or boasts in God himself in his own tribulations in his weakness and he even boasts in his converts in
Thessalonica who will become his crown of glory and boasting when Jesus is revealed and he can say that the same word is used he can say that these are his means of boasting but throughout it all he says I only glory in the cross of Jesus so that whatever other legitimate reason he had for boasting and glorying in what God has done for him and the things that he found pleasure in they all came under that supreme boasting of boasting in the cross of Jesus glowing in it and how important it is that we should see that the cross is our supreme cause of boasting and finding joy that we need to keep coming back here as we do
[12:42] Lord's day by Lord's day and seeing the cross as central and to keep looking there and to getting a better view of the crucified man the son of God because the people in heaven you know who've gone ahead they're still worshipping the lamb who was slain they are glorying in him okay the cross of Jesus is our death to the world the cross of Jesus is our only boasting the cross of Jesus is next our weapon against worldliness our weapon against worldliness let me read to you somebody's take on this verse when you put your trust in

Christ over when you put your trust in Christ the overpowering attraction of the world is broken you are a corpse to the world it is a corpse to you your faith in him treasures Christ above everything in the world the power of the world to who your love has died now some of us might immediately say if that's really what Paul meant then we want to say to him you can't be serious
God will help because I know and you know that the world continues to press in on us Jesus calls it in the revelation he calls it Babylon the mother of harlots and of all the earth's abominations and it makes the nation drink from the anger of its passion and we experience that we continue to feel the world squeezing us so that we worship its idols we continue to feel the world taking the beautiful things that God has given us and horribly distorting them we continue to feel the world showing us possessions and the deceitfulness of riches and saying now worship them and that's our not just our everyday experience but our multiple experience every day so in what way have we died to the world and the world died to us well this is the thing when we've come to put our faith in Jesus Christ the world and its pool has decisively been cut and even though we continue for the rest of our life on this earth to cut away the tendrils of the world's influence nevertheless we are a people who've been dramatically definitively forever separated from that world and the more we keep coming back and spending time at the cross of Jesus the more we draw strength to put to death in an ongoing way the world's influences and pressure this is the victory that overcomes the world says John your faith your faith in that crucified saviour and when we keep coming back and seeing how he's made this transfer for us out of the world and keep dwelling on the cross as we do and put it centre to our worship it's then that we see how inappropriate it is for us to want to be chasing after the world's desires it's then that we see that the greatest thing in all of our lives is living for Christ and living for the glory and the pleasure and the happiness of our God now
I want to pick up from this passage one particular worldliness that Paul identifies one particular worldliness that the cross confronts and it's found in the attitude of the false teachers in Galatia I'm going to read from verse 12 it's those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ for even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law but they desire to have

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you circumcised that you may not boast in your flesh the new international version actually has a helpful gloss on this this expression in the flesh it translates it outwardly now circumcision was an outward sign a badge that the male converts were being pressurised to put on their body and the thing that Paul puts his finger on is these people who require the men converts to be circumcised they're simply doing something external and that's one of the features of worldly religion that it's purely external it says to you do outward things not be circumcised but do outward things publicly declare your faith in Christ do things for God and they say this will beat the pressure of worldliness and
Paul says that is absolutely not possible he goes on verse 15 neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision but a new heart and if we're out to combat worldliness we must remember that it's in the heart it's in our thinking it's in our world of our emotions and imaginations it's the pure in heart who get to see God and are blessed let me just take this and apply it to one thing that I've also seen we lived in the northeast of
[22:07] Scotland for a while and 20 years or so before we got there a considerable group of churches under their leaders embarked on an experiment and the experiment was we're going to overcome worldliness by cutting ourselves off physically from the world and they went to extraordinary lengths they formed a kind of ghetto they wouldn't even eat with unbelievers now their experiment was a disaster but it was also exceedingly damaging for many followers of Christ and the thing that made it a disaster was not just that they ignored what Jesus had said to his father

I do not pray that you take them out of the world rather that you keep them from the evil one it wasn't just that they ignored that but it was that they failed to see that to try and separate physically from worldly people is a purely external measure it is to change your circumstances but it doesn't change the heart and it doesn't stop the world invading you well the cross of Jesus is death to the world it's our only boasting and it's our weapon against worldliness we keep coming back to it and spending time there and doing so arms us to turn our back on the world now my final thing is this the cross of Jesus brings you to a decision making the cross of Jesus causes you to have a crisis
I 10 or 12 years ago I was involved in a correspondence in my work with a church in the state of Missouri and I was immediately taken when we started corresponding with the name of this church it was called the crossing I've since discovered that there are actually several churches in Europe and North America that have taken this name but there's something clever about it because it has a double meaning it's saying to the neighborhood come among us and you'll hear about the cross and then it's saying come among us and you'll come to a crossing you'll come to a cross road and that's exactly what the cross of Jesus does it brings every one of us to that crisis in our lives and Jesus says to us which way will you go will you go the way of the cross or will you go the way of the world now some of you may be at that cross and some of you may have been there for weeks even months and I want to to tell to you
I don't pretend that you're not going to have to give things up I don't pretend that you won't actually in some ways be a loser you you will lose things that maybe you are exceedingly fond of which God hates and friendships that you now have and which go really deep may perhaps mean less to you because he says the crucified one if anyone would come after me he's got to take up a cross and follow me but I want to say this too because Jesus went on to say this what are you going to gain by going at that crossroads along the way of the world and he asks the question what does a person who gains the whole world actually gain if he loses his own self and
I plead with you have you been at that crossroads a while you've got to take that step of putting your faith in the crucified and risen Jesus Christ and he will take you he will take you places you could never imagine and you will have him let's pray dear God we pray for people across the country we pray for there must be hundreds of people who are at the crossroads and we pray that today even in our churches and in all the groups of churches where the word of
[29:15] God is honoured and Jesus is loved that people may put their faith in Christ go with him and may it happen here party Glasgow City for your name's sake Amen to for His Church in see you a joy in person to the inclu–

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