

**Galatians 6: 14; “Crucified to the World”, Message # 62 in the series –
“Christ has Set us Free”, a Bible Study conducted on January 11th,
2017, by Pastor Paul Rendall at his home.**

The three great enemies of a Christian are the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Christ overcame all of these enemies at the cross, but in the process of your sanctification, dear Christian, you are becoming more like Him. And so, God expects that you will work at overcoming these enemies practically, in your own experience, as well. You can see from verse 14 that Paul is writing in the first person. “But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” He wanted to make these truths personal to himself in his experience and he would have you make them personal to yourself in your experience as well. Tonight we want to look at 3 realities in the life of the Christian; spiritual realities which Christ has purchased by His death on the cross, so that you can overcome the world in your walk with Him. 1st – Through Christ’s finished work on the cross, I want to come to understand what I should boast in. 2nd – Through Christ’s finished work on the cross, I want to come to understand how the world has been crucified to me. And 3rd – Through Christ’s finished work on the cross, I want to come to understand how I have been crucified to the world. It is what Christ has done for us, and what Christ by His Spirit has done to us, that is the basis for our overcoming the world in our experience.

1st – Through Christ’s finished work on the cross, I want to come to understand what I should boast in.

Our text says: “But God forbid that I should glory (boast) except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ....” May God hold me back from boasting, except in this regard. The last time we were together we spoke about the boast of the flesh. I said to you that false teachers like to make a good showing in the flesh. They are working according to the principle of the flesh. The flesh is the principle of reigning corruption in our being before we become a Christian. It is that principle which reigns unchecked in unbeliever. Turn with me over to Romans chapter 8, verses 5-8. It says here: “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.” And verse 8 says: “So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. To make a good showing in the flesh is to exalt yourself. It is to promote yourself and all that you can supposedly do for God and other people by your own strength and your own wisdom. You want to be seen as great in the eyes of men. You attempt to make yourself look as though know what is best for yourself and other people, without receiving to yourself what God has said in the Scriptures.

If you are a fleshly moral person you want to be seen as the best and the greatest before men, in all the situations of your life. But we should understand that sometimes a person can be a very great hypocrite in their heart, when their outward actions might make them appear that they are very righteous. I want you to remember that the Lord Jesus said that the Pharisees and the scribes did all of their works to be seen by men. (Matthew 23: 5) They were making true religion to supposedly consist in externals; the things that men see, rather than in their really thinking about God, and how he saw them, as the way that they lived their life. True progress in learning what to boast in begins with your understanding that God perfectly sees your heart. God is the One who looks at your heart to see what your motives really are. Is your highest motive to glorify yourself, or is it to glorify God? The great object in living the Christian life is not to live to promote yourself, but to promote Christ and the grace of God coming to you through Him.

This will require that you will come to have a right view of boasting in regard to yourself in relation to Christ. Turn with me over to 2nd Corinthians chapter 12, verses 1-11. “It is doubtless

not profitable for me to boast.” “I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago – whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a one was caught up to the third heaven.” “And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” “Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities.” “For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth.” “But I forbear, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.” “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.” “Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.” “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’” “Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake.” “For when I am weak, then I am strong.” “I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me.” “For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.”

You can see here, I think, what the problem was. The problem was that there were some in the Corinthian church who were impressed with the boasting of the false apostles and not with Paul. They saw Paul as weak. “His personal presence is weak, and his speech is contemptible,” they said. (2nd Corinthians 10: 10) They were looking at things outwardly. In the context of these verses, Paul was indeed boasting, but it was not in regard to himself directly, but rather, he was boasting in regard to the grace and power of Christ shown to him, and working in him. Indeed, all of this boasting that he was engaging in was ultimately in the cross of Jesus Christ. Even when he relates the most exalted spiritual experience that he ever had, being caught up the 3rd heaven, to hear inexpressible words which it was not lawful for a man to utter, he relates that story in the 3rd person, as though “he knew a man” who had had that experience. Why does he do these things? Because it was only by the grace and power of Christ purchased on the cross for him, that enabled him to be able to understand that it was when he, Paul, was weak in himself, that he was then made strong by the consideration of the cross of Christ, to set aside his exalted view of himself, and to see Christ as the truly great One, the glorious One, the One who was teaching him to boast in Him alone, and not in himself.

He knows that he ought to have been commended by the people in the Corinthian churches as being a great apostle. He knew that they had been swayed by false teachers to question his authority as an apostle. But he had come to understand what true spirituality really was; that it was not a man’s boasting in himself, or in the supposed strengths, physical or spiritual, in other men. It was his boasting in his own weaknesses and his infirmities; those things which he suffered for the sake of Christ, so that the power of Christ would rest upon him. That is what he should boast about, because his being able to endure these things and actually grow up into Christ, and be useful in service to Him, depending on his being able to see what he ought to boast in.

Look over at 2nd Corinthians 13: 4-6. “For though He (Christ) was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God.” “For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.” “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith.” “Prove yourselves.” “Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified.” “But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.” This was Paul’s boast, that since Christ was crucified in weakness and now lives forevermore by the power of God in His resurrection and ascension to glory, even so, all those who are boasting in what Christ’s cross has done for them, taking away their guilt and shame, and giving them power by

His giving to them His Holy Spirit, will also be able to walk with Him and fulfill their ministry to Him, because of His life working in their life. Now, I wonder if we understand how dependent we really are, in terms of our ministry for the Lord, in relation to people around us? It is because His life is working in their lives, and the in lives of those whom they are ministering to; this is what the Christian should boast of, and glory in. Christ is in them, the hope of glory, and the strength of their heart, and their ministry to others on His behalf, all rests upon His being with them and His blessing them. God forbid that I should boast save in the cross of Christ, by which means God redeemed my soul to Himself. He gives me spiritual life every day to help me to do God's will, until He welcomes me home to glory.

2nd - Through Christ's finished work on the cross, I want to come to understand how the world has been crucified to me.

“But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me...” What does this phrase mean – “by whom the world has been crucified to me”? How can the world be crucified to me? Well, as we think about it, I think that we can come to the conclusion that it means that the world of people who are living for this world are crucified to you. They want nothing to do with the Jesus that you love; the Jesus that you serve; and unless grace is working in their heart as well, they are crucified to you. Turn with me over to 1st Corinthians 1, verses 20-25 – “Where is the wise?” “Where is the scribe?” “Where is the disputer of this age?” “Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” “For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

This gives us a hint as to what Paul means when he says that the world is crucified to me. He is saying that when people hear the gospel and they reject it, they are thinking that their earthly wisdom is wise, when really it is foolishness. But people who are proud of the strength of their own wisdom, people who are wise in their own eyes, will reject God's wisdom unless they are given grace to see the truth. They are crucified to us. They are dead to our pleadings and reasonings; they are dead to our preaching to them unless the Holy Spirit comes with power. Usually the wisdom of God which is found in the gospel is rejected because the messenger does not appear to be anybody special; even as the apostle Paul did not at first sight appear to be anybody special. Look over at 1st Corinthians 2: 1-9. “And I brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. “For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” “I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.” “And my speech and preaching were not with persuasive word of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”

“However we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.” “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” There it is; those who rejected Christ, and crucified Him thought that they had greater earthly wisdom than God's wisdom, and they thought of Him as someone who deserved to be crucified because of His supposed weakness. They crucified the Lord of glory. Had they known what they were doing they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. What were they doing? They were working according to their own wisdom; the wisdom of the world. The wisdom of the world is the wisdom that leaves God out of everything, and leaves the need of Christ out of everything,

and trusts in false gods, and the strengths of men, and their intellects. But they did not realize that this was really God's strength, and the way that God would have Him to overcome the world's way of thinking, reasoning, and doing things. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Let us see and understand that when we bring up the Lord Jesus conquering the world's wisdom and laying down His precious life for sinful men, that unbelieving people are crucified to that way of thinking unless the power of God is working in their hearts. The world is crucified to us.

And 3rd – Through Christ's finished work on the cross, I want to come to understand how I have been crucified to the world.

"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." What does it mean that "I have been crucified to the world"? Well turn over with me to Galatians 2: 19-21. "For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God." "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain." So righteousness coming through the law; men attempting to keep God's commandments by their own efforts, that is what the Christian dies to. Because he knows that Christ died in order that the law would be fulfilled, and that righteousness could be imputed; that is, charge to his legal account, through what Christ has done. Righteousness would be imputed to his legal account, and grace would come to him to change his heart.

Now, the first thing that happens when you become a Christian is what Professor John Murray calls – Definitive Sanctification. That is, you were set apart in your heart and your mind to God. You died to sin. You experienced an actual death to sin, and to the law, and you live to God as a result of that, in terms of the Holy Spirit's being given to you, and His work beginning in your heart and life, when you believe in Jesus. Righteousness coming through the law, men attempting to keep God's commandments, without faith, without being crucified with Christ, is the world's way of thinking. You have been crucified to that way of thinking; of thinking that somehow you can obtain righteousness by your own efforts to keep the law. You have been crucified with Christ to that idea. Through the law you died to the law that you might live to God. The person who sets aside the truth of the necessity of receiving grace, by faith in Jesus Christ, and then tries to please God without seeing their need of being born again, will never be able to serve God or please God. You must be born again to enter the kingdom of heaven.

You must be born again to see and enter the kingdom of God. And part of that call of God; that effectual call of God through the gospel, is your being crucified to the world. And the world has been crucified to you as well in that same qualified way. So you get it both directions; the unbeliever is crucified to you, and you are crucified to them in terms of their wisdom; their supposed wisdom in thinking that they can merit favor with God or please God in their own flesh, or according to their own idea of serving Him. No, your boast cannot be in yourself, or the doctrines of men, who say circumcision or baptism are necessary for salvation. Because the only thing that is necessary for salvation is that you be born again and that you believe in the gospel that He died for sinners like you, and like me. It is only the truth of Christ crucified, and your being crucified with Him that will save your soul, and transform you into a person who is pleasing to God.