

THE CRUCIFIED LIFE

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(Edited transcript of sermon preached December 15, 2019)

Last week we spoke on meekness and temperance, two of the fruits of the Spirit. This evening we're going to finish Galatians chapter 5. This is kind of a summary of the Spirit's work in the Christian's life, and as we come to verse 26, we also have a warning. We're going to title this sermon "The Crucified Life." Reading from Galatians Chapter 5, verses 24 through 26:

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

Heavenly Father, again, tonight we ask for Your blessings and Your anointing upon the reading of Thy Holy Scripture. Lord, we ask again that you speak to our hearts as we work our way through this book and now that we're finishing this chapter. Lord, we pray that we'll make application to these passages, that we'll apply them to our Christian life. Lord, we ask all of these things in Jesus Christ's name we pray, Amen.

You may be seated. Again, these verses bring us to the end and close of this chapter. We have spent about eight weeks looking at the works of the flesh in verses 19 through 21 and the fruit of the Spirit in verses 22 and 23. I hope this has been a blessing and as rewarding to you as it has been to me. You listen to the sermon for about an hour; I spend seven or eight hours on it, so you really glean from it when you spend that much time searching the words and the Scripture and what God has to say in other places.

The first thing I want to point out is that verse 24 makes reference to those that are Christ's, and then, secondly, it says that those who are Christ's have done something: They have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. First of all, *"they that are Christ's"* are those belonging to Christ, in other words, those who are saved; and as we've read through this book, we found that verse 26 of chapter 3 says, *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."* Then verse 29 of that chapter says, *"And if ye be Christ's"* — in other words, belonging to Christ — *"then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."* Again, they that are Christ's are those who belong to Him, those who are born again.

The Bible speaks in many places of those who are in Christ. First Corinthians 15, verses 22 and 23, really sums up who those in Christ are. Being in Christ defines our position as believers as we stand before God, and as God saw us in Adam, He now sees those who are saved in Christ; and as we consider that God now sees us in Christ, that means we share all that Christ is and all that Christ has accomplished, just like when we were in Adam we shared with Adam all that he was and all that he accomplished.

First Corinthians 15, verses 22 and 23, clearly define two groups of people. Verse 22, “*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*” So we see here two groups of people. Spiritually speaking, we're all descendants of Adam, and we were in Adam before we were saved. Then the verse goes on to say that those who are in Christ shall be made alive. But notice verse 23. The apostle Paul is speaking now of resurrection. He says, “*But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's*” — those belonging to Christ — “*at his coming.*” So Christ was raised first. He is the first fruits of a great harvest that will come later. Then he says, “*they that are Christ's at his coming,*” those who belong to Christ. And Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10, verse 7, “*Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's*” — there's that expression again — “*let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.*” We see that expression “in Christ” many times, but I'm just using these few verses to show what it means to belong to Christ, to be in Christ. The apostles were of Christ. The Corinthians that were saved were of Christ, that is, belonging to Him.

Now, go back with me to Galatians and notice now the remainder of the verse — a tremendous verse. Verse 24 says, “*And they that are Christ's*” — notice something has happened in their life — “*have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*” So they have dealt with the works of the flesh. They have dealt with the product of the old nature. Now, when it says they have crucified the flesh, here's my definition of this passage. I believe this means that at conversion, every believer crucified the flesh in that they repented and renounced the life of sin. That doesn't mean they haven't sinned or failed since then, but let me say this again — and this is so important because what we're reading here, “*have crucified the flesh,*” is the opposite of the works of the flesh and is a choice that someone makes; it is the mark of true Christianity, because those who are lost are marked as those who walk according to the flesh, but those who are saved have been identified or have the mark of those who have crucified the flesh — just the opposite. Does that mean that we do everything perfectly? No, but that means we stepped on that straight and narrow path the moment we were converted. Let me say this again. I actually wrote this down so I would not forget it — and I'm not saying that this is original to me. I don't know where I got this, but I wrote this down in my Bible with this verse so I would never forget it. Here's that definition again: “*At conversion, every believer crucified the flesh in that they repented and renounced a life of sin.*” Is that not true? When we were born again, when we came into the faith, there was a repentance involved.

See, this is what I'm getting at here. When Scripture says they have crucified the flesh, that means there was a conscious decision that they would renounce sin and a life of sin and there was repentance. The nature of saving faith includes repentance. You've heard me deal with this many times, but let me take you to just one book, and I want you to notice how many times the issue of repentance is there. Why is this important? Because so many today deny the doctrine of repentance.

I'm just going to take you on a tour through the book of Acts. That's all we'll do is look at the book of Acts as far as repentance. I'm going to start in chapter 20 and then back up to chapter 2. A lot of people deny repentance or they redefine repentance. We know that repentance is a godly sorrow over sin; it is a change of mind that results in a change of life and direction. It is a turning to God from sin and the works of the flesh. And many hate this doctrine. They'll either say it doesn't exist today as far as getting saved, or they'll say that they're going to change the definition of it, they're going to redefine this word.

Again, repentance is a godly sorrow over sin, a change of mind resulting in a change of life and direction. I've heard preachers say you don't have to repent of your sins, but sin is the whole issue. Sin is what placed our Savior on the cross; it's what places individuals into Hell. Sin is the issue, for "by one man sin entered into the world" (Romans 5:12). We all became sinners because of one man that we're descendants of, and that's Adam. That's why Scripture says that in Adam all die and in Christ shall all be made alive. So, again, the nature of saving faith includes repentance. Acts chapter 20, verse 21, says, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." In this same chapter and in the latter part of verse 24 the apostle Paul mentions how he received of the Lord to testify the Gospel of the grace of God, and then in verse 25 he mentions the Kingdom of God which we enter into, and it's through repentance and faith.

Let's go through a few verses in Acts chapter 2. I'm just doing this as a reminder, because this is what it means that "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh." They have repented of sin; they have put their faith in Jesus Christ; they have renounced their former life and have begun on the straight and narrow path.

In Acts chapter 2 we find the first sermon at Pentecost after Christ ascended into Heaven. After the preaching of Christ, the apostle Peter was asked in verse 37, "What should we do?" and Peter replied in verse 38, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The instruction to be baptized doesn't scare me there. I don't have to finagle around with it. Those who accept Christ as their Savior follow the Lord in believers' baptism. And we know that baptism doesn't go before the new birth. In Acts chapter 10, Peter, the same preacher, preaches to Cornelius and his household, and those who believed received the Spirit, and then Peter takes them and baptizes them.

In Acts chapter 3, reading from verse 19, Peter said, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted" — Notice that. And Peter goes on to say, "that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." As we come to Acts chapter 5, we find in verses 30 and 31, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. ³¹Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give

repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Notice that Jesus Christ was given as a Prince and a Savior and to give repentance to Israel. They were preaching to Israel at that time beginning in Jerusalem and Judaea.

Acts chapter 11 is a recap of Acts chapter 10 where Cornelius and his household are saved. After being with Cornelius, Peter was confronted by the Jews and asked why he was among the Gentiles, and Peter gives them the story of how Cornelius and his household were saved by the grace of God and received repentance unto life, that is, they received eternal life. And then verse 18 says, "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

In Acts chapter 17, verses 30 and 31, we find that Paul is on Mars Hill, this time preaching to Gentiles and idol worshippers, and he says, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: ³¹Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead." So as the apostles stood before the Jews, they preached repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. As they stood before the Gentiles, the idolaters at Mars Hill, they're preaching the same thing — repentance unto life, that is, repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. So we flee to the Savior with a sincere sorrow of heart over our sins. That's how we get saved — with a sincere sorrow of heart over our sins. That's true repentance. Again, that's downplayed, forgotten, or pushed aside many times in our society and even in the churches across our land.

In Acts chapter 26 the apostle Paul is giving his testimony. In verses 15 and 16 he speaks of his ministry and how the Lord appeared to him in verse 17 and said, "Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee." And here's what Paul was sent to preach and to do, verse 18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn" — That's the concept of repentance — "to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. ¹⁹Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Now, here's the verse I really want, verse 20, "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." So it's very clear that repentance is a biblical doctrine.

Coming back to Galatians 5, verse 24, Paul says, "And they that are Christ's" — they who are saved, belonging to the Lord — "have crucified" — past tense; in other words, the moment we were saved, we made a conscious decision that we will renounce a life of sin, we "have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Now, there are many other passages we see where this is true. In Galatians chapter 6, verse 14, we find the apostle Paul writing again, and he said, "But God forbid that I should glory, save [except] in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" — Now, watch

this — “by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” There's that separation and break from the world by Paul as a believer. He says that the world is crucified unto him and he unto the world.

Notice another time in Galatians 2. We've got an entire message on this. Paul says in verse 20, “I am crucified with Christ...” That's an amazing statement. We spent a whole sermon on verses 20 and 21 when we were coming through this chapter. It's an amazing chapter. Judicially speaking, the apostle Paul says, “I am crucified with Christ.” Symbolically, Paul died when Christ died; he was crucified when Christ was crucified. In other words, this emphasizes the union with Christ in His death on the cross, which frees us, according to Romans 6, from the penalty of sin. You see, what Paul is saying, we can say. I am identified with Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and even His ascension. Romans 6 says we've been baptized, spiritually speaking, and this is why Ephesians 1:3 says that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and Paul mentions forgiveness, adoption, predestination, redemption and many other things. So when we become a Christian, we become identified with Christ's death. That death is put to our account. We're not only identified with His death, but His burial and His resurrection and His ascension.

Let me give you these verses to write down before I read the rest of this verse: Galatians 2:20, we are crucified with Christ; in Colossians 2:12, buried with Him; in Colossians 3:1, risen with Him; in Ephesians 2:5, we've been quickened, made alive with Him; and then in Ephesians 2:6, we're seated with Him at the right hand of the Father. We're not physically seated with Him, not physically crucified, not physically buried, but symbolically this is put to our account. We have been identified with Christ. It's sort of like 2 Corinthians 5:21, “For he hath made him *to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*” Let me put it like this: Our sins were imputed to Him, put to His account, and His righteousness has been put to our account.

So Christ's death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and we're even seated with Him — all of that has been put to our account. That's why we can go to bed at night and know that if we passed in our sleep, we're secure. We don't have to stay awake and worry about whether or not we're going to Hell, because we've been born again, we've been saved by the grace of God — and that's a great peace. None of us want to die, especially in our sleep not knowing that we've passed until it happens, but we can lay down and rest peacefully because we know that these things are true. I am identified with Christ's death, burial, resurrection and ascension and even His seating. And then in Colossians 3, when He shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory. So we have that closeness. That's why Paul says in Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ” — in other words, Paul is saying, “I'm dead” — “nevertheless I live” — he said, “but I'm alive.” Figure that out. You can't figure it out unless you look at it from a spiritual point of view. Paul said, “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, let me take you to Romans 6 and just bring this home. Here is our identification with Jesus Christ, and since we're identified with Him, we are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive unto God. See, there are two groups of people: In Adam all die; in Christ shall all be made alive. There are two expressions that we find here in Romans, I think in Galatians, in Peter and other places. There are the expressions “dead in sins” and “dead to sins” — as different as day and night. To be “in Adam” is to be dead in sins; to be “in Christ” is to be dead to sins. Again, these expressions identify two groups of people.

Now, watch this as we begin reading in Romans chapter 6. Paul says in verse 1, “*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*” Now, this chapter is going to encourage us to live for God because of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Here's Paul's answer: ²“*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin*” — You ought to underline those words and highlight them in your Bible so they'll jump out at you every time you see them. See, those who are saved are no longer dead in sins. Paul said, “*How shall we, that are dead to sin live any longer therein?*” Verse 3, “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ*” — this is a spiritual baptism — “*were baptized into his death?*” So Paul says in verse 4, “*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*” In view of all that He's done, here's what we should do. Verse 5 says, “*For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*” ⁶ Knowing this, that our old man is” — what's the next word? — “*crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*”

That's the point of this whole chapter. Paul says in verse 7, “*For he that is dead is freed from sin.*” ⁸ Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” Then he says in verses 11 and 12, “*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Verses 17 and 18, “*But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*” ¹⁸ Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” We were made free from the penalty and the power of sin. Verse 20, “*For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness*”; verse 22, “*But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*” Amazing statements!

Go back with me to Galatians chapter 5. I catch myself slowing down more and more in these passages as we study them in a verse-by-verse setting, because there's so much here and we don't want to miss this. Now, coming back to the subject of repentance, in our article that we

wrote many years ago, another author said, *“We cannot find a better definition of repentance than the one many of us learned at our mother’s knee: Repentance is to leave the sin we loved before and to show that we are in earnest grief by doing so no more.”* And John Bunyan said, *“Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or wilt thou have thy sins and go to Hell?”* John Milton says, *“Repentance is the golden key that opens the palace of eternity. The gate of God’s kingdom is closed to those who refuse to repent.”* Then another author, Charles Spurgeon, said, *“Repentance is a change of mind but what a change it is.”*

Many would look at this and say, "Oh, they're preaching works for salvation." No, they're not. They're showing the true nature of repentance and faith. And even Noah Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language, 1828, says repentance is *“Real penitence; sorrow, or deep contrition for sin, as an offense and dishonor to God, a violation of His holy law, and the basest ingratitude towards a Being of infinite benevolence. This is...accompanied and followed by amendment of life.”* In other words, any time there's true repentance, there will be a change of life, and that's one way you can tell whether a person has truly been born again.

Again, notice here in Galatians chapter 5, verses 24 and 25, *“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”* Now, we’ve already looked at one passage here nine or ten weeks ago where it talks about walking in the Spirit, but verse 25 says, *“If we live in the Spirit.”* That's like saying if you're saved. That's like saying if you have the Spirit of God dwelling in you, if you've been born of the Spirit. Galatians 3 speaks of receiving the Spirit at conversion. And I want to give you just a few other verses about our identification with Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17, Christians are new creatures in Christ Jesus; Ephesians 4:24 speaks of the new man; Colossians 3, verses 9 and 10, the new man created after the image of God. This has to do with the new birth.

And let me just say this. This will sound hard to someone who is lost, but to someone who is saved, it will not sound that hard because those who are saved have already crucified the flesh and its affections and lusts in that, as I've already said, at conversion they renounced and repented of a life of sin. Listen to these verses: Matthew 10:38, *“And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”* Somebody who is lost will look at that and would not truly understand it; Matthew 16:24, *“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”* That's what Christians do at conversion; they make a decision to believe on Christ; He's the Savior; they will follow Him; Luke 14:27, *“And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”* Well, the Christian has already made a decision, and he has crucified the flesh. Again, he's repented of sin, accepted the Savior, and renounced a life of sin. He decided he would travel on that straight and narrow path and not the broad path that leads to destruction but the one that leads to eternal life.

We've already spent time on walking in the Spirit in this series, but what does it mean to live in the Spirit? Again, this speaks of salvation and the gift of the Spirit that we receive through regeneration. There's no salvation apart from the Spirit of God. This is what we need to settle in our hearts. First Corinthians 6:17 says, "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit," and 1 Corinthians 12, verse 13, says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*" Now, "to drink" here is to partake or receive, because the Spirit is referred to in John 7 and other places as living water, a fountain of living water. So we find that all who are saved and have been baptized into the body of Christ have been made to drink into one Spirit; they have partaken or received the Spirit of God at salvation. Now, why is this so important? In John 3, verses 3 through 8, Jesus speaks of being born of the Spirit, and Titus 3, verses 5 through 7, speak of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, the renewing of the Spirit. So we see clearly in the Scriptures that no one is saved without the Spirit of God. The Spirit gives us the gift of salvation and eternal life.

In 2 Corinthians 13:5, as the apostle Paul writes this letter, in closing he said, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Christ dwells in believers. Romans chapter 8, verse 8, says, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." In other words, it's just like saying that those that are lost cannot please God. And verse 9 says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." That's clear. We really don't need any other passage.

As we come back here to Galatians chapter 5, Paul says in verse 25, "If we live in the Spirit," if we have partaken of the Spirit, if we are saved, if we have been truly born again, then notice he says, "let us also walk in the Spirit." And, again, we've spent eight weeks dealing with the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. So let us walk in the Spirit. What does that mean? If you're taking notes, in Galatians 6:16 we're told to walk according to this rule, that is, the Gospel. It says, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Romans 6:4 that we were just reading a moment ago says that we are to walk in newness of life. That means we are to walk in the resurrection power that we have in Jesus Christ. First John 2:6 says, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked," that is, walking in the Spirit.

Now, here's the key to the whole thing. Ezekiel 36:27 is dealing with the New Covenant, and there are two words that jump out at me in this passage. It says, "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" — two words, "cause" and "walk." This is the only way that we can walk in the Spirit and bear the fruit of the Spirit. We must have the Spirit of God in us and we must yield to Him.

So notice as we come here to Galatians chapter 5, verse 16, "*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*" Now, you see here in verses 17 and 18 the two natures that dwell in the believer: "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" ¹⁸*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law,*" you're not under the law's condemnation, its penalty. Again, I mentioned last week as we closed out verse 23 that it says, "*against such there is no law.*" These things of the fruit of the Spirit are not condemned and are not contrary to the law.

So what does it mean to walk in the Spirit? We know what it means to live in the Spirit, that is, we're saved by the grace of God. To walk in the Spirit speaks of the Christian life and that we are to be governed and controlled by the Spirit of God. It's the opposite of verses 19, 20, and 21. It's the total opposite of walking in the works of the flesh.

Now, next Sunday night we'll be taking a brief break from Galatians. We'll be observing the Lord's Supper and concentrating on that, but we'll get into chapter 6 the week after. But notice as we come to the close of chapter 5. In verse 26 Paul says, "*Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*" So we close this chapter with a solemn warning, as we've already found in verse 15 and in verses 19, 20, and 21. Verse 13 speaks of this liberty that we have, but we're not to abuse this liberty but by love serve one another. Verse 14 says, "*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*" Verse 15 warns, "*But if ye bite and devour one another*" — and I doubt that he's talking about literally biting with your teeth; he's talking about words that we use with one another — "*But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*" Verse 26 is a similar warning to what we find in verse 15. After saying, "You that are saved have crucified the flesh, you that live in the Spirit now walk in the Spirit," verse 26 says, "*Let us not be desirous of vain glory*" — and this vain glory provokes one another in a bad way. Now, there's a good way to provoke one another. Hebrews 10:24 and 25 is a good way to provoke one another, but this vain glory in verse 26 is a bad way of provoking one another and envying one another.

So what is vain glory? Well, turn with me, please, to Philippians chapter 2. Now, we've read from Philippians 2 at least 10 or 15 times this year, and I hope next year we'll read from it 25 times, because we need this passage. But let me take one verse, and then I'll read some other verses around it. But let me take just one verse to begin with, verse 3: "*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory*" — now, there's the provoking and the envying — "*but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*" So this vice of vain glory is to be avoided at all costs. It is a danger that is common to all men and women, and it is a work of the flesh. Strife and vain glory are the opposite of walking in lowliness of mind and esteeming others better than ourselves. Now, why does this have to be repeated over and over and over again? Because of the prideful, sinful nature of humanity.

So we find here a vain glory. We see it all around us. We see it sometimes in the church. It is that boasting or vaunting ourselves to be superior to others. It is a self-exaltation, the desire to have honor. It is that pride of who we are or what we have. In 2 Corinthians 12:7 the apostle Paul says, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." Vain glory means to be exalted above measure. You see, the flesh, the old man, loves to show off, and it doesn't matter whether it's in the religious arena or in the world, saved or lost; the flesh just loves to show off. And listen to this passage, a passage that's dealing with alms-giving, prayer, and fasting. Now, we know all of those are biblical doctrines. There's nothing wrong with praying in private or public or giving in private or public, but listen to this. Matthew chapter 6, verse 2, says, "Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." Now we come to prayer in verse 5, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." And then in verse 16, fasting, "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

Vain glory is a vice; it's a sin; it is something that is common among all of us. It is a work of the flesh. It is the opposite of lowliness of mind and esteeming others better than ourselves. That's got to be worked on, and it can only be done in the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, being led of the Spirit.

Now, vain glory provokes one another in a bad way, and it also provokes the envying of one another. I wrote this little statement down: "*The ambition of vain glory is usually attended with envy and contentions, the very opposite of harmony.*" So if we go back to Galatians 5, verses 15, 19, 20, and 21, we see the total opposite of harmony. One writer says, "*He who aspires to the highest rank must, of necessity, envy all others.*" Think about that. Those who aspire to be great and of a high rank must, of necessity, envy others that may take their place. Another writer said, "*This is a very instructive verse because it shows our conduct to others is determined by our opinion of ourselves. When we're lifted up in our own mind and think highly of ourselves, it's very easy to be rude and hateful to other people and treat them wrong, but when we think lowly of ourselves and we exalt others, then we're walking as our Savior Jesus Christ did upon this earth.*"

So what is vain glory again? It is the boasting and vaunting of ourselves to be superior to others, self-exaltation, the desire of honor, prideful of who we are and what we have. This must be worked upon. Pride is one of the major things that all of us deal with, whether young or old. Some of us may never be tempted to the bottle, to the cigarette, or to drugs or anything like that. Some of us may not even be tempted in many other areas, but the pride that's inside of man to

exalt himself, to be superior, to always outdo somebody else, always competing with somebody else causes contention and envy. It's just a fact. Whether it's in a family or whether it's in a church or whether it's in a nation, it will bring disharmony in the home, the church, or the nation.

Now, let me read from verse 1 through verse 8 in Philippians chapter 2, and we'll close. And I challenge you, Church, to take your Bible, if you don't believe it's a sin to mark in it, and highlight certain words down through here, and every time you open this page, let those words jump out at you and grab ahold of you. Watch as we read this:

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, ²Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded" — be likeminded as Christ and as Paul — "having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. ⁴Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. ⁵Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷But made himself of no reputation" — Underline that, highlight that — "and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself" — Highlight it. We read this last week, by the way, and read it a couple of weeks before that — "and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

If we didn't have any more Scripture, we could spend the rest of our Christian life just working on these eight verses in order to walk as our Savior walked and not walk in vain glory, which is a work of the flesh.

Would you stand with me.

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee this evening for this day that You've given us in Thy house with Thy people. And, Lord, I pray that what's been spoken tonight is according to Your Word and the leading of the Spirit. And I pray, Lord, that You would burn these truths into our hearts, and, Lord, help us not to forget them when we're walking by the wayside, when we're working, when we're driving, that these things would come to our mind, that we would think about them, Lord, that this is what You would have us to be, that we would walk in the Spirit and bear the fruit of the Spirit and be led of the Spirit and not produce the works of the flesh, for it's in Jesus Christ's name we pray, Amen.
