

Galatians 6:11–15

- ¹¹ See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!
- ¹² As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.
- ¹³ For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.
- ¹⁴ 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.
- ¹⁵ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

Boasting in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ ***Galatians 6:14***

INTRO:

The book of Galatians is the Apostle Paul's defense of the Gospel of grace. Judaizers came from Jerusalem and taught these new converts that it was not enough to just have Christ. According to these false teachers the Gentiles had to become keepers of circumcision if they were to be a part of the people of God.

Here in the conclusion of his letter the Apostle summarizes everything he taught with verses 14-15. ***“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. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.”***

I. Boasting in the Cross

II. Why Paul Boasted in the Cross

I. Boasting in the Cross

Galatians 6:14a ***“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”***

A. Before we can understand the impact of this statement we must understand the immediate context. Paul wrote about the Judaizers who told the Galatians that they needed to become Jews (proselytes) to become Christians. Paul began his conclusion to this letter by once again highlighting their motivation.

Galatians 6:12-13 ***“As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.”***

They do all of this to make everything appear good. They do it for the externals. Paul's desire is for the internal reality.

B. While these false teachers glory in what can be seen, Paul glories in that which they despise. He glories in Christ's cross. Our task is to understand what he meant.

1. While the false teachers exulted in their converts (i.e. their circumcisions) Paul only exulted in Christ and His Cross. The cross Paul exulted in was not the wooden instrument of our Lord's death, but what His death meant. Paul wrote a lot about the cross here in the epistle to the Galatians. First, he talked about the offense of the cross to Jews. He wrote in **Galatians 3:13**,

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).”

This is what Paul talked about in **1 Corinthians 1:23**, when he wrote, that the cross was ***“a stumbling block to the Jews.”*** According to the Law (**Deuteronomy 21**) anyone hung upon a tree was uniquely cursed by God. Jesus was cursed for us when He who was without sin was made sin for us and God condemned our sin in His flesh.

2. Second, Paul gloried in the cross because in the cross we were redeemed. **Galatians 4:4-6** ***“When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’”***

There are three things to glory in here. First, Paul gloried in the fact we were delivered out of our slavery to the Law through the cross of Christ. Second, he gloried in the sonship to God the Father that was made possible through the cross. Finally, he gloried in the Holy Spirit Who lives in us believers because of the cross of Christ.

3. Third, he gloried in the cross because through the death of Christ we live to God and Christ lives in us.

Galatians 2:19–20 ***“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.”***

Because of our union with Jesus Christ, in Him we died and in Him we are made alive to live in newness of life.

II. Why He Boasted

Galatians 6:14–15 ***“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. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

A. Paul boasted in the Cross of Christ because it meant so much to us as believers. He also boasted because it changed his life. It changed his life by changing his relationship with the ungodly world. When Paul describes this transformation we need to be careful how we define the word **cosmos**. This is not the world of people God loves and for whom He sent His Son to die. This is the world that John described in **1 John 2.15**.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Because of the cross of Christ his relationship to that world is entirely changed. Do you remember what he wrote in **Philippians 3: 4-7**?

“Though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.”

Everything changed when Paul met Christ and knew Him as the crucified Savior.

B. Second, his glorying in the Christ and His cross made a genuine internal change in his life.

Galatians 6:15 ***“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.”***

Circumcision and uncircumcision could not make an eternal difference in our lives.

Only a transformation - a new creation in Christ. We studied elsewhere in **2**

Corinthians 5, the apostle’s amazing statement about the miracle of salvation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”***

Paul knew the real change in his life and he longed for the Galatians to know it too.

Some questions for us.

1. Do we understand the wonder of the cross? Do we understand that Jesus had to die so our sins could be forgiven? The price was high because of our offense against a holy God. Do we know we are delivered from our slavery to sin? Do we enjoy this relationship as a Child of the King? Are we aware of the Holy Spirit who lives in us?

2. Is our relationship with the ungodly world around us different because we belong to the Lord Jesus?

3. Are we different now because something happened to us when we believed?

Hymn #185 *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*