

“Glorying in the Cross” **Galatians 6:12-18**

One either rejects the cross of Christ or glories in the cross of Christ!

1. Enemies of the Cross

vv. 12-13

Why was the cross a ‘stumbling block’ to the Judaizers? Why did they oppose it?

The cross:

- Offered salvation without works of the law of any kind!
- Dispensed with the observance of Mosaic rites and ordinances as a condition of acceptance with God.
- Welcomed the Gentiles into salvation without requiring that they become proselytes to Judaism first.
- Did away with the Jews’ national distinction and pre-eminence; Jew and Gentile on the same level!

What lay behind this opposition?

-1- Selfish interest

*“It is those who want to make a good showing
in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised”*

- They ultimately were concerned only the approval of men!
- “those who want to make a good showing in the flesh” Wanted to be popular with people!

-2- Cowardice

*“and only in order that they may not be persecuted
for the cross of Christ.”*

- They wished to avoid persecution.
- They were controlled by the fear of man!

-3- Hypocrisy

*“For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law,
but they desire to have you circumcised
that they may boast in your flesh.”*

- Insisting that their proselytes become “law-keepers,” while they were themselves were not keepers of the law!
- All that they might boast in the “Gentile proselytes” they had made!

2. Glorying in the Cross

vv. 14-18

(1) The one sufficient ground on which to build! *“But 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.”*

- Paul will ‘boast’ only in the cross!

A Paradox! The glorious cross!

- Paul’s whole life had been changed and was now governed by the cross.

- The world had been crucified to him.

“The world” - Epitomizes everything outside of Christ in which man seeks for glory and puts his trust.

The world had been judged in the cross, its vanity and sinfulness exposed.

- He had been crucified to the world

Because he had put all of his trust in Christ, the world now had nothing to attract him or to gain his allegiance.

(2) It alone brings about new life! 15 *“For neither circumcision counts for anything,
nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”*

- Mere externals count for nothing!

cf. 5:6

- The internal saving work of the Spirit counts for everything!

What matters is being a new creature! cf. 2 Cor. 5:17

‘New’ - Includes everything that has been given in and through Christ.

- The new reality of the kingdom of God already present, already in man.

(3) It provides the one true ‘rule’ by which to live. *“And as for all who walk by this rule,
peace and mercy be upon them,
and upon the Israel of God.”*

- It properly sets and determines the whole course of the life.

- It is the norm for what is valid and what is not; what is to accept and what is to reject.

- Paul pronounces a blessing upon all who know and live by this standard.

- “the Israel of God” = the new Israel, the true Israel cf. Rom. 9:7

(4) It alone is worth suffering for! *“From now on let no one cause me trouble,
for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.”*

- “the marks of Jesus”

- the marks of suffering Paul had received in the service of Christ
- Paul’s fellowship in suffering with Jesus was made clear by the very marks he bore.

- A warning to those who troubled him and opposed his ministry.