

Crucified Unto Me

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

– Galatians 6:14 –

None of us is immune to the effects of popularity. Man was created for fellowship, and fallen man enjoys both approbation and adulation. It is this desire that permits many of us to instantly recall if we were (or were not) “popular” during our high school experience. In those days of metamorphosis into adulthood, the pull to be accepted is strong, governing sensibilities and in some cases, creating a foolish disregard for inhibitions and safeguards in order to “fit in”. It is sad that for many this pull continues into adulthood, with people searching for admission into the “in crowd” in a wide variety of locales and venues and ranging wildly – from the fraternity house to the city hall to the shop floor to the board room to the bar stool.

This quest for social acceptance is something of which we must all beware. Peer pressure is not just something that affects children and adolescents but can influence even the most steadfast of believers. As we sojourn in this world, the days of our pilgrimage can easily become lonely and it is an ever-present danger to wax weary of being strangers in a strange land. Here in America particularly, we can find Babylon a comfortable enough home that there need be no hurry to return to the city of God.

Paul understood this threat. Under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he penned for us a word-picture that will decimate the power of this temptation for every believer if we permit ourselves to grasp its import. Crucifixion was a magnificently total form of execution. It did more than just merely claim its victim’s life. It consumed and tormented his mind and body to the point that he lost his identity as an individual, becoming just another member of its roster of death. It bore its victim before a gazing world, stripped him of his dignity, and humiliated him by shamefully exposing the reality of his weakness and fragility. If you witnessed a crucifixion, certain realities made themselves fully apparent. The victim’s life was over, and his legacy, no matter its luster, was forever destroyed. This was his true and final state – nakedly consumed and destroyed by a brutal world that cared nothing for his aspirations, his affections, or his accomplishments.

The only soul to ever mock and reverse the immediate power of crucifixion was our Lord. Jesus’ resurrection forever set Him apart as a willing participant to its methods and the only temporary member of its bloody roll call. But to the unbelieving heart that knows nothing of the power of that resurrection, Christ and His followers are still perceived as losing the battle with the cross. Indeed, the preaching of that cross is foolishness to them that perish.

But herein, brothers and sisters, lies the reciprocal and revolutionary truth. The world system that encompasses us and pulls so incessantly upon our affections is *crucified to us*. Like any other of the cross’s victims (excluding Christ), it has been exposed to us for what it is – a weak and pathetic fraud. Satan, the very god of this world, was made of shew of openly upon it, and his systemic power over us via the world has been brutally defeated with no possibility of resuscitation. There was no resurrection morning for these foes. We need not fear the world’s threats, nor compromise with its pleadings. It is forever ignominiously defeated with its hellish headmaster and has no rightful claim to the slightest influence upon those of us who belong to Christ.

Therefore, let us glory in the cross of Christ, dear friends. The world despised Him, and it will never accept us. Let us wisely return its scorn upon its head, for there can be no compromise in this war.