

"GLORY IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST"

TEXT: *Gal 6:14* **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.**

INTRO.: A. The cross was the Roman method of capital punishment. It was done to **shame the person crucified** and as **an object lesson** for anyone else who may intend to commit a similar crime. That is why Paul declared in *Gal 3:13* **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.** *The cross of our Savior made Him a curse for us!* It was not just a horrible way to die but was a way to degrade someone who died in that manner. It labeled them as someone to be totally rejected by society. It placed them with those committing the most heinous of crimes, e.g. rapists, pedophiles, pornographers, murderers, necrophiliacs, etc. – the lowest of the low.

B. And yet with all of that Paul says that **he would glory in that cross** because it was **the means of our salvation!** That is why it has become **the emblem of our salvation** and of **Christianity.** We place that symbol on our churches, pulpits, Bibles, etc. to remind us that because of Christ's death on that cruel, cursed cross we now have access to heaven itself.

TRANS.: So exactly does the Bible say about the cross? **THE BIBLE SAYS THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION:**

1 Cor 1:18 For the preaching of **the cross** is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

It is foolishness to the ungodly: The unsaved don't want to hear about that cursed cross. They make jokes about the cross, the Gospel and our Savior. **Phil 3:18** (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

For the believer, on the other hand, the Bible says much about the cross, and it is a serious subject...

I. THE CROSS IS A PLACE OF SACRIFICE:

A. The O.T. Sacrificial Animals Pointed to the Cross:

1. Multiplied millions of animals shed their blood to point to the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world.
2. From **Eden** where God shed the blood of animals to cover man's nakedness after man sinned, to **Abel's acceptable offering**, to **God providing a ram** in place of Abraham's son Isaac, to **the Tabernacle** where countless animals were slaughtered, to **the Temple** where millions more shed their blood, to Christ's appearance and the Baptist's declaration "**Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world...**" all pictured **Jesus' death on the cross**.

NOTE: **Jesus could not have died in a bloodless manner!** He could not have been hung, or thrown over a cliff, strangled or suffocated. He had to die a bloody death and as the Psalmist predicted centuries before crucifixion was a method of capital punishment predicted it had to be the bloody death on Calvary! In **Ps. 22** Jesus' crucifixion is graphically described.

B. The Sacrifice of Animals Even in the False Religions Point to the Cross

ILLUS.: In Israel our Arab guide, whose wife was once crowned Miss Universe, told of how they slew a sacrificial animal when they bought a new car and dipped their hands in its blood and placed their bloody handprints all over the vehicle. Sacrificial bloodshed of innocent victims through the centuries have symbolized the blood of our Savior.

As someone has said: ***"Only Jesus could build a bridge to heaven with just two pieces of wood."***

II. THE CROSS IS A PLACE OF SURRENDER:

NOTE: Before going to the Cross Jesus was in agony anticipating the cross & wept and ***"sweat as it were great drops of blood."*** There in Gethsemane He prayed ***"not My will, but Thy will be done..."*** Though it is true that He had to endure the cross experience, **the victory was won in the Garden when He surrendered His will to His Father's will.**

A. Jesus Commands Us to Surrender Our Will to His:

Matt 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 .***

NOTE: This command is found in all 4 Gospels!!!!

1. Taking up our cross is nothing more than surrendering our will.
2. But that surrender must include our mind (will), – the origin of all our sin and our bodies.

B. Jesus Commands Us to Take Up Our Cross:

1. The words "**his cross**" makes it personal.
2. Every believer has at least one cross He is to "**take up**".
 - a. Before you can take up your cross, you must know what it is.
 - b. Your cross may be some physical affliction (Shirley), a mental anguish, a heavy burden (like a lost child, the death of someone close to you, something you can't even explain).
 - c. No one else can take up YOUR CROSS for you.
 - d. The context of Jesus' statement here is after He rebukes Peter and addresses him as Satan(!) due to his lack of discernment of what Jesus' mission was.
 - e. Jesus uses this same phrase in another context which really describes what He means, it is all about surrender!

Matt 10:37-39 *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth*

after me, is not worthy of me. 39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

III. THE CROSS IS A PLACE OF SPIRITUAL VICTORY: "it is finished!"

A. It is Where Our Salvation Was Sealed:

1. We know of course that without the resurrection the cross and its suffering would have been of no avail.
2. But if Christ had not surrendered to the cross He could not have completed God's will.
3. If He had not surrendered to the cross His life and even His death would have been useless.
4. It was where the "middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile was broken down.

Eph. 2:16 *And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby...*

B. It is Where Our Victory Must Be Won:

ILLUS.: I used to have a license plate on the front of my car that said: "**1 Cross + 3 Nails = 4 Given**". And while forgiveness comes by way of the cross, so does **surrender** and **spiritual victory**.

1. The preaching of the cross is to those who are saved "**the power of God**".

2. The victory of the cross for the believer is to die to self and deny self.

Gal 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; 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.*

- a. You and I are to act as dead to the world and its lusts.
- b. We are to live a crucified life.

- 1). Those who are crucified have no selfish desires.
- 2). Those who are crucified can do nothing on their own.
- 3). To be dead to self is to allow Christ to live in and through us.
- 4). The issue then is HOW do we do this? The answer is found in these verses:

Rom 6:12-15 *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

CONCL.: If this all seems foolish (1 Cor. 1:18) to you, then you are probably not saved! But if it rings scripturally true, we have a responsibility to **"take up our cross" – surrender to Him and gain the spiritual victory.** Will you do it Christian?

