

# Galatians (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Knight, Ebenezer (1908 - 1990)

- [ 0 : 00 ] I direct your attention to the Epistle to the Galatians, the 6th chapter, the 14th verse.
- The Epistle to the Galatians, chapter 6, verse 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.
- Amen. We would notice here just briefly how that the Apostle Paul addresses this Epistle to the churches of Galatia.
- And we gather from the first chapter that there were those false teachers troubling the churches in Galatia.
- They were perverting the gospel of Christ. And the Apostle Paul was warning them about these false teachers.
- [ 1 : 22 ] Indeed, in the 6th verse of the first chapter, he expresses his own surprise that they were so soon removed from him that called them into the grace of Christ.
- As he says unto another gospel, which he goes on to say is not another, but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ.
- Then, coming on down to the 8th verse, he speaks of his own persuasion and refers to his own confidence where he stood relative to his own ministry.
- He said to the Galatians, though we are an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you.
- Let him be accursed. For as we notice further down in the 11th verse, he says, I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.
- [ 2 : 33 ] For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- Now there, in that chapter, we see the Apostle's boldness in setting forth that which he was persuaded had been given him by the Holy Spirit of God.
- And you might read at your leisure, how that when he was not only called by grace, but when the gospel of God's grace was committed to his trust, he did not confer with flesh or blood.
- He had received it of the Lord directly from him. And therefore, in this chapter, he speaks, or rather coming to the words of our text, or the two previous verses, he warns the Galatians here about those who would glory in the flesh.
- And in the word of our text, he tells them what he glories in. He says, 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.
- [ 3 : 56 ] You will notice from the preceding verses that there were those here who purported to be leaders and teachers of the churches in Galatia who were glorying in their circumcision.
- Just a word or two on that point. As you know that in the Old Testament, circumcision was a sign and seal of a covenant.

But, in gospel days, if we ask the question, who are the circumcision, that is tantamount to asking, who are God's people?

For today, in gospel days, when we refer to those who are of the circumcision, we generally mean those who are numbered amongst God's people.

Well, there always have been two classes of people. The carnal and the spiritual. Those who contend for, out and rely on external things.

[ 5 : 08 ] And those who rely on internal teaching. The Jews here, they relied on outward observance. And yet, how solemn, what solemn characters they were found before God.

Friends, there always was, and there always will be, an Israel according to the flesh, and an Israel according to the spirit.

You may have noticed, in that chapter which I read in your hearing, the Apostle Paul there, states very clearly, He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh.

But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Now, in writing to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul, or rather the Holy Ghost through the Apostle Paul, still on this same point, he writes, We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

[ 6 : 42 ] Now, broadly here, there is an inference whereby the Apostle Paul roundly accuses these false teachers, chiefly among the Jews, are still being under the law.

For, we read here in the preceding two verses, how the Apostle warns them there, As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law, but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

Now, in the fifth chapter, in the sixth verse, the Apostle says, In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.

And in the fifteenth verse of this chapter, he repeats the same truth. He says, In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

[ 8 : 08 ] And the fruits of that new creation could not be found in these false teachers among the churches in Galatia.

And therefore, it is here as if the Apostle would say, Well, it matters not how much you may glory in your, in being a Jew, how much you may glory in circumcision, in Christ Jesus.

Circumcision, nor uncircumcision, availeth anything, but a new creature. As we read in his writings to the Corinthians, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And whilst on this point, dear friends, you know, it matters not what we purport to glory in, in our religion, if we do not walk it out in our daily lives.

I was reading only this week. I don't think it would be out of place to mention it here, how, I think it was John Warburton of old, a friend, said to him, Do you know Mr. So-and-so?

[ 9 : 30 ] Yes, John said, I know him very well. He's a talkative person. And the other man said, No, that can't be him. This man doesn't say much.

In fact, he says, but very, very little. But John said, I know him. He's a very talkative person. He talks with his feet.

Ah, friends, that's it. And there is a talking with our feet. These Jews, or these false teachers, the apostle Paul could see where they were.

They were glorying in their circumcision. They were glorying in, as they said, that they were the seed of Abraham. The apostle says, Now, God forbid that I should glory.

There's only one thing wherein I may glory, and that is, in my hope for eternity, in the cross of Christ, and in my ministry, he said, I determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

[ 10 : 38 ] Then you will notice also how in the ninth verse of the fourth chapter, the apostle Paul, he chides them there in that they were slaves to the ceremonial law.

And you may know that the reference there to the beggarly elements, whereunto they were in bondage, seemed to direct our mind to those things, those outward things, in which the Jews, they boasted in them, and yet they were slaves to them.

Those outward things concerned meats and drinks. In the tenth verse, he observed days and months and times and years, they gloried in their meat and drink, in their apparel, they gloried in the temple, in the various feasts, in the washings, and in the sacrifices.

The Lord Jesus, you may remember, reproved the Jews of this. In the seventh chapter of Mark, we read that the Pharisees and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem, when they saw some of the disciples eat bread, were defiled, and that is to say, on washing hands, they found fault.

For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they washed their hands off, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they washed, they eat not.

[ 12 : 15 ] And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels and of tables. And the Pharisees and the scribes, they said unto the Lord Jesus, Why do not thy disciples walk according to the tradition of the elders?

they eat bread with unwashed hands. How solemnly did the Lord Jesus answer them. He said, Well has, well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things ye do.

And Jesus said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Now that is where the people were here.

and then we might notice as concerning circumcision, it was a command of God, it was ordained by God to be observed until the fullness of time should come in.

[ 13 : 44 ] And you will notice in the first few verses of the fourth chapter of this epistle where the apostle makes a reference to it.

but when the fullness of time comes in, then as we read in his epistle to the Romans, Christ becomes the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

And yet the apostle here, there is a clear inference in what he says that these who professed to keep the law and these who gloried in their circumcision, they did not do it in an acceptable way before God.

Rather, in their worship which consisted of all externals, they were destitute of the work of the Holy Spirit of God in their heart.

Well now, the apostle Paul in writing to the Philippians, he emphasizes there those who are numbered amongst the circumcision before God.

[ 14 : 59 ] The first point he mentions is this, they worship God in the Spirit. Oh my dear friends, as far as our worship here is concerned, there is a worshiping God in the Spirit.

I seek for it, I contend for it, there are countless multitudes of people today who may speak very glibly about worshipping God and yet they know nothing of what it is to worship God in the Spirit.

Secondly, these who are numbered amongst the true circumcised in heart, they are said to rejoice in Jesus Christ.

what a wonderful truth this is. And dear friends, because of our unbelief, because of the darkness of our mind, because of the bondage of the law and those who contend for it, and because of the power of Satan, let us ever bear in mind this, there is a rejoicing in Jesus Christ.

there is a knowledge of one's salvation, there is a doctrine, and it is an article of faith among the majority of denominations, and yet very little thought about there is an assurance of faith.

[ 16 : 28 ] On that point, my mind goes to the particular article of the Westminster Divines. It's very, very beautiful. I'm going to read it to you in speaking of the certainty of the knowledge of our interest in Christ.

The article states this, this certainty is not a bare, conjectural, and probable persuasion grounded upon a fallible hope, but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promise of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, yea, the testimony of the spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God, which spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.

Now one may be ready to say, well, it leaves me all behind, but friends, it's something to lean and reach out after. Or do you find that desire in your heart whereby you cannot rest, especially maybe as you are journeying on to the end of your sojourning here upon earth, you feel there's one thing above all you seek for, and that is that full assurance that you, together with these characters, who are numbered amongst those who fear God, they rejoice in Jesus Christ.

But, there is also this one point, again, another point, another few words I read, only today, of good Luther, and he was a man of faith, and as you may well know, in his writings he spoke very strongly and ably concerning the justification of God's people, not by works of righteousness, but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And yet, even in his writings we find him, at times, stooping down to the level of a lamb in the fold, and he mentions this, I'll quote him here, he says, if any man feel in himself a love toward the word of God, and willingly heareth, talketh, writeth, and thinketh of Christ, let that man know that this is not the work of man's will or reason, but the gift of the Holy Ghost.

[ 19 : 32 ] For it is impossible that these things should be done without the Holy Ghost. My dear friends, that is true. We cannot see within our own hearts that which we would, and yet those very desires after Christ, those very desires after his word, those very desires in your heart which kindle maybe when you come into the house of God, they are not found there by the will of man.

For some of you know as well as I do that you can't kindle them when you want to. Maybe there are times when you come into the house of God feeling so dead and so cold.

it's a great mercy as I think I mentioned only last Lord's Day to be found with that desire after the things of God.

To feel, to be conscious in our own heart of that aching void which only Christ by his spirit can fill.

Well then thirdly, those who are of the circumcision, they worship God in the spirit, they rejoice in Christ Jesus and thirdly, they have no confidence in the flesh.

[ 20 : 57 ] Well now the apostle as it were seems to clear the ground. Now he comes to this point, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice the emphasis on his statement. He says, God forbid God forbid to God forbid to God forbid to destroy the law.

No, the apostle in another place he speaks of the law being holy, just, and good. But his intention here was that as far as the justification of these people were concerned, we can almost say that the apostle abased the law before them.

As if he would say, now then according to the law, there's no hope as regards your acceptance before God. For, as I mentioned again, following on from last Lord's Day, as if he would say, although you glory in these things, your sole acceptance, if indeed you are accepted before God, is not in any of these external, but by faith in Christ.

And that is where I stand. This is the very truth, he says, in which I glory. And looking upon them as they were found in their glory, he says, God forbid that I should.

[ 22 : 24 ] And I believe together with that remark, there is almost implied a prayer. For do we not say sometimes when we see men dead in sin or following in a way where we know that death is at the end of it, God forbid I should ever be left there.

Because after all, friends, if the Lord leaves us, you know, I don't know where we might get to. Because we encounter sometimes in our lives, like Christian and his companion did, as depicted by Mr.

Bunyan, you know, they went into Bypass Meadow. And in reading it, I often think of Christian looking over the hedge, and he says to faithful, well, he said this, this is a rough path where we are, this is a much easier path over this dial, and it runs exactly parallel with the one we are walking on, let us go over this dial, and walk along this path.

And friends, they went, and where did they end up? In the castle of joint despair. Oh, how we do need the Lord to keep us.

Apart from viewing things externally, when we come, to those matters of faith, whereby we stand before God, how narrow the way is, only the Lord can keep us in it.

[ 23 : 48 ] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid that I should ever be found where these characters were, glorying in externals.

Friends, there are multitudes there today. God forbid that ever we should. I believe in worship today, there are those who look for external things, and they get them too.

Things to please them, things outward to appeal to their fallen reason. God forbid that we should ever introduce it here, and God forbid that as far as my own soul's salvation is concerned, I should ever glory in it.

glory, so then, the apostle says, God forbid that I should glory, what is it to glory? Why, it is to rejoice in anything as a source of good, and not only to rejoice in it, but to trust in it.

Oh, my dear friends, what a poor trust, a trust in anything which belongs to us, no matter when it took place, no matter what it is.

[ 25 : 04 ] Without going into any points of theology, my mind often goes to the thief who was crucified with the Lord Jesus Christ.

It would seem as if he found mercy maybe only a few seconds before he entered into eternity. My dear friends, what could he bring?

What could he bring? Nothing. nothing. Nothing. He was crucified. His life was slowly ebbing from his body, and in his dying moment, although the one who was with him was passed by, yet faith was rooted in his heart, and he lived to prove the depth, the height, the glory, the blessedness of this scripture, father, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. This day thou shalt be with me in paradise. A few seconds and he's gone.

God forbid that I should glory other than in a gospel or in a Christ who can save me even as that thief was saved. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 26 : 34 ] What is this cross? It's not the cross of wood in which the Roman Catholic Church glories, and they have enough wood to make. I don't know how many crosses. And then again, all that we can speak about as far as the cross on which the Lord Jesus was crucified, we read, cursed is every man that hangeth on a tree.

There's the scriptural word. But suffice to say this, Christ was crucified, and when the apostle speaks here of the cross, it is not the cross on which he was crucified, but rather the doctrine of the cross.

It has been well declared by one to be the acropolis of the Christian faith, the heart and core of our religion. The apostle Paul in writing to the Corinthians in his ministry before them, he said, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Those of us who are found with a hope through the merits of Christ, do we not sometimes find ourselves in that place where we could sing from the heart with good Dr.

Watts in that hymn we sung, now for the love I bear his name, what was my gain I count my loss, my former pride I call my shame, and nail my glory to his cross.

[ 28 : 07 ] Yes, and I must and will esteem all things but loss for Jesus' sake, oh may my soul be found in him, and of his righteousness partake.

God forbid that I should glory saving the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and my dear friends we might well glory in it. What a mercy if the Lord enables us to look back and remember what he's done for us.

What a mercy if we're granted a faith view of the Lord Jesus suffering in our room instead. I believe it will bring forth the language of the hymn which we hope to sing in conclusion of this service.

And there is another verse not included in our hymn book. Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small, love so amazing, so divine, demand my life, my soul, my all.

God, forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. And yet I believe here that the cross, the apostle refers to here, means also those, the afflictions of the church, which it suffers for Christ's sake.

[ 29 : 34 ] And he and his fellow apostles knew, they knew something of those persecutions, those afflictions, those weaknesses, sorrows, trials in body, terrors in their mind, and all that they encountered.

And yet they gloried as it were in them, in that they saw the hand of God in his leadings and in his teaching, and in glorying in those things, they in effect said, I'd rather have this path, heavy, trying though it be, with Christ than an easy path without him.

Would you friends? God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ in the 44th Psalm.

You may remember we read there where the psalmist complained, for thy sake we are killed all the day long. Yea, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, but God forbid that I should glory save in this cross, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whatever it may cost me, and what did it cost the apostle?

Take Peter, we read of his death, take what the apostle Paul suffered, we mentioned it on a former occasion, all those persecutions he endured, but God forbid that I should glory in anything, he did not glory in any earthly honor, earthly honor is nothing to glory in, but again referring to our subject last Lord's Day, we might well glory in being found, adopted into the family of God.

[ 31 : 30 ] God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. In another place the apostle, speaking of his own genealogy and his upbringing, he left it, those things which were gained to me, those I counted lost for Christ, yea, doubtless, and I count all things but lost, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but done that I may win Christ.

Then he goes on, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. Well, if I may use the language of one of the old reformers in speaking, one of the Puritans in speaking, of the world, what it is to be crucified unto the world, he said, well, the world condemns me, I condemn the world.

The world judges me, I judge the world. I am crucified to the world, the world says that I am worthy of death, I in turn being crucified to the world, I say that the world also will surely bring death.

by whom the world is crucified unto me. Oh, my dear friends, what a mercy, if we can come to that place where the apostle was.

You know, we can't always say, let worldly minds the world pursue, it has no chance for me. Once I admired its trifles too, but grace has set me free.

[ 33 : 22 ] who are we going to say, what a target for us to press forward to here, that the world might be crucified, the world dead to us, and we dead to the world, for worldly people to find nothing attractive in us, and for us to find nothing attractive in worldly people.

Think it out, friends, there's a great death here, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world, not those two words, by whom, only through Jesus Christ.

Ah, we may be sure of this, and this might well be a word to our younger people, and to any of us who the word plagues, as only one way whereby we shall conquer it, and that is as we stand in Christ, by his gracious enablings, 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.

Now again, referring in conclusion, to the apostle's boldness, in setting forth these truths, he could say, as in another place, I know whom I have believed.

Friends, I believe I can say the same. And in the 16th verse, in conclusion of this chapter, he pronounces his benediction. He says, as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

[ 35 : 18 ] And finally, brethren, the grace of that same blessed person, in whose cross I glory, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with your spirit.

Amen. And I'll leave it, the Lord add his blessing, for these few remarks. Amen. I'll leave it. I'll leave it. The Lord add his blessing