

Glorying in the cross of Christ alone (Quality: Average)

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[0 : 00] Would you kindly turn, dear friends, to Paul's epistle to the Galatians, the Galatians, the last chapter, chapter 6.

And as the Lord may, in his mercy, grant needed help, may we consider the 14th verse there. Verse 14, in the sixth, the last chapter, Paul's epistle to the Galatians.

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

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What a tremendous statement for any poor sinner to be able to utter before God and before others.

[1 : 26] And, dear friends, if the Lord should grant to you and me the grace he granted to the apostle Paul, then, what a mercy, if you and I are enabled to take up such words as these, humbly and not with any presumption, but in godly faith and fear, and say with Paul, but God forbid that I should glory.

And the apostle Paul did glory. In his earlier years, he had much to glory in, and much to look upon, which seemed to be to him, as standing by him.

But he had to see that all of it was only temporary, passing, and of this world. And when the Lord appeared to him on the way to Damascus, what an amazing change was brought in the apostle.

Then all his ideas, his thoughts, his ways, his desires were turned round. And he was granted that precious gift of God-given faith to look to Jesus Christ himself, to hear his voice, and to say, Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?

But God forbid that I should glory. In the prophecy of Jeremiah, I believe somewhere there Jeremiah uses this expression, Let not the rich man glory in his riches, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the strong man glory in his strength, but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me.

[3 : 32] Well, that's where, surely, the apostle Paul had been brought. You would probably notice, or have noticed, in the chapter we read together just now, the Epistle to the Philippians, chapter 3, the apostle worded that third chapter somewhat similar way.

Finally, he says, My brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed, is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision, for we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

And then you think of what he said further, Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, in a natural way and manner, Paul naturally hath much to glory in the flesh.

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any man thinketh that he hath, whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more.

[4 : 58] And then he lists those things, which naturally speaking, he would and did rest on, very much so, in his unregenerate days, circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrew, as touching the law, a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, touching the righteousness, which is in the law, blameless.

Well, there was a lot, he had naturally then, to have confidence in, and to trust in. But he goes on to say here, that what things were gained to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, 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, and be found in him.

Well, you notice then, that mess the apostle sets here before us, circumcised the eighth day. Circumcision was that vital act, and right in the Jewish religion, and among the Hebrews.

All the other nations and peoples, were among the uncircumcised heathens. The Philistines were spoken of, referred to, as the uncircumcised Philistines, as though they had no right, nor luck, in the great things of God.

[6 : 58] Well, Paul rested, for a long, long time, on the fact that he, had been circumcised, as a Jew, an Orthodox Jew.

And then he said, further, of the stock, of Israel. Oh, what a great matter that was, to him, to the Jews, even to the Jews today, to be of the stock, of Israel, to be, known as an Israelite.

And, just thinking there, for a moment, dear friends, we, as Britishers, we, naturally, rejoice, feel, we were born, in this free land.

and, that we are known, as British people, British citizens. And, we're reminded, in the Acts of the Apostles, I believe, that when, Paul the Apostle, was standing, before his accusers, on one occasion, and answering, for himself, he spoke, to, the one who faced him, as a Roman citizen.

And, one of the rulers, who was speaking, addressing him, said, well, with a great son, obtained I, this freedom, all says the Apostle, for, that I, was free born.

[8 : 27] Born a Roman. Born, within the Roman Empire. Therefore, a Roman citizen. He had, so much then, to rest upon, to trust in, even to glory in.

And, when you think of it, we, as British people, British citizens, we, have something, to be thankful for.

There have been occasions, in most of our lives, no doubt, when, you and I, have felt proud, to be British. That, experience, came upon one, more than once.

In the first world war, and in the second, and since. Well, Paul, therefore, had something, to be proud of, that he was a Roman citizen.

And then, further, he goes on here, of the tribe of Benjamin. And, that was something, to be proud of, to the Apostle, to be of the tribe of Benjamin.

[9 : 34] Perhaps, dear friends, you and I, when we think, of the families, we have grown up, within, and among. We have, at times, had a feeling, of, pride, maybe, humble pride.

The fact, that we, belong to such, and such a family. Well, it's not wrong, to go that far, but, the Apostle, he did, and he says, of the tribe of Benjamin, and then, a Hebrew, of the Hebrews.

That's an amazing statement, isn't it? When you think of it, a Hebrew, of the Hebrews. Paul, referred, to his younger days, I believe, on one occasion, and spoke, of the fact, that he had sat, at the feet of Gamaliel, as a scholar.

Gamaliel, was a noted, and renowned rabbi, in the days, of the Apostle Paul, when he was, Saul of Tarsus. And, as Saul of Tarsus, as a young man, he, listened, to the teaching, of, that great rabbi, Gamaliel.

Well, in that, you see, he, no doubt, has something, to be proud of, for the fact of it, Hebrew, of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a Pharisee.

[11 : 06] Well, to think of, Paul, a Pharisee. You know, dear friends, when we speak, of the Pharisee, and think, of the Pharisee, you cannot help, thinking, of a proud, self-righteous, self-satisfied, religious person, as, the Pharisees, were.

And, Jesus said, they love to stand, at the street corners, to pray aloud, to be heard of men, for how, how, the Lord, condemned the Pharisee, as hypocrites.

Ye hypocrites, said he, of the Pharisees. Well, Paul was a Pharisee. He said it here, touching the law, a Pharisee.

He had to learn, very different things later. And then he says, concerning, zeal, persecuting, the church.

Persecuting, the church. Touching, the righteousness, which is in the law, blameless. All his zeal then, went, to the persecution, of the Christian people, men, women, and children.

[12 : 29] And when Stephen, was stoned, the apostle said, that he was standing by, holding the clothes, of those, who cast the stone, at godly Stephen.

Well now, all those things, must, have come before, Paul, many and many a time, since. And, how he must have, groaned and mourned, over it, as I believe, he expressed it, more than once, when he saw, what he had been.

And how, had he been left, to himself, he would have gone on, in the same way. But, what a mercy, all, but for the grace of God.

All says he, by the grace of God, I am, what I am. Makes you, think for a moment, of, John Newton here, and that, him of his, which expresses, and declares, his own experience, amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved, a wretch, like me, I once was lost, but now am sound, was blind, but now, I see.

Well, that's where, Paul was, you see. And so, he says, but, what things, were gained, to me, those, I counted loss, for Christ.

[14 : 09] And so, at the close of, the epistle to the Galatians, you see, he, expressed himself, in the similar way.

And here, in the verse 14, chapter 6, he says, but, God forbid, that I, should glory, saved, in the cross, of our, Lord, Jesus Christ, God forbid.

Well, dear friends, where do you stand, where do I stand, in regard, to such solemn things, as thee? Is there, and are there, various things, in your, particular path, and life, experience, in which, you have, found, something to glory in, something to pride yourself in, and, whatever it is, well, that's how the apostle, was at one time, but now he says, now, God forbid.

It isn't. As though, the apostle, overturned, all that he, learned in life, and had to pass through. I believe, the, his experience, at the feet of Gamaliel, must have been, useful, to him, as a young man.

And, he surely, wouldn't discount that. And, I believe, he may often, have thanked God, that he learned, the law of Moses, through Gamaliel.

- [15 : 48] And then, of course, the other points, in his life, the fact that he was a Hebrew. Well, he wouldn't discount it, naturally speaking. I hope we don't, dear friend, as Britishers.
- It's something to thank God for, isn't it? I will remember, comes to mind here, on the very, day, that our release, from captivity, came upon us.
- And, about 500 of us, mostly young men, somewhat tattered, and torn, marched, toward the great port, on the Baltic Sea, to enter, a ship, to take us home, to freedom.
- And, we arrived, at the gates, of the port, on the Baltic, in utter darkness. And then, the gates were flung open, and, we marched through, and then, all of a sudden, it was all lit up, with brilliant light.
- And, we began to realize, those lights, were searchlights. And, they were coming, from a ship. And, that ship, was a British ship, a light cruiser, of the British Navy.
- [17 : 12] And, there were half a dozen, searchlights, shining up, and met together, at one point. And, where they met, we saw, flying, the Union Jack, the British flag.
- And, the British flag. And, we were so overcome, with emotion, that we all broke down, into tears. And then, we gave, a united cheer.
- and, I believe, at that moment, all of us, felt thankful, we were British, and, belonged to a free land. Well, the apostle, I believe, was there.
- He was thankful, that he, was a Hebrew, and, that he belonged, to the tribe of Benjamin, the stock of Israel. But, then, dear friends, you see, when, God appeared, it changed, all of it.
- He didn't, discount these things, but he saw, something infinitely, greater, and, mightier, and, worthier, that God, forbid, that I, should glory, saved, in the cross, of, our, Lord, Jesus Christ.
- [18 : 31] You notice, the expression here, our, Lord, Jesus Christ. This, then, has to do, surely, with all the family of God.
- Every member, living member, of the mystical body of Christ, and they are joined together here, in this expression, our, Lord, Jesus Christ.
- Well, dear friends, what does the Lord, mean to you, and what does he mean to me? Further, what does the cross of Christ, mean to you, and to me?
- Is it nothing to you, said one, all ye that pass by, when the dear Redeemer, in his holy, sinless nature, offered up himself, there, and then, without spot to God, for the sins of many?
- Was it the sins, that you have done? And was it the sins, that I have done? He hung, upon that tree, amazing pity, grace unknown, and love, beyond degree.
- [19 : 48] Or, what does the cross, of our Lord, Jesus Christ, mean to you, and to me? There were many, that passed by, on that solemn occasion, they wagged their, fingers to him, and their heads, and some of them said, if thou be the Christ, come down, from the cross, and we, will believe thee, come down, from the cross.
- Or, how could, Jesus, come down, from the cross? No, having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them, unto the end, and that is, the bitter end.
- He must fulfill, the purposes, of Jehovah. He must complete, the work, until, he should cry, it is finished.
- And gave up, the ghost. Oh, God forbid, that I should glory. Perhaps some of us, have much in life, that we could be proud of, and that in a natural way, we still are proud of, that, if God has come to you and me, near friends, in a way of grace, and mercy, all these things, will become, very secondary.

we shall see them all, as temporary, only for time, and then they, they'll fade away. I was only, looking at the 103rd Psalm, I think it is, lately, where, the psalmist says, it's a good psalm, you remember, opens with thanksgiving, bless the Lord, he cried, O my soul, forget not, all his benefits, who forgiveth all thy diseases, forgiveth all thine iniquities, healeth all thy diseases, crowneth thee, with loving kindness, tender mercy, love, I believe, I believe in that psalm, a little further on, the psalmist, refers to the end of life, and, he refers to it, as a wind, that passeth over, he says, the wind, passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof, shall know it, no more, no more, solemn thought, isn't it, to be gone, you and I, may feel, we hope we do, some useful place in life, we wouldn't wish to be useless, we hope we're of some little use, here and there, but dear friends, whatever position we may, have or have had, time will come, when the wind shall pass over us, and we shall be gone, and the place thereof, shall know it, no more, it's very humbling, isn't it, to proud nature, but oh God forbid, that I, should glory, in anything, else, but, the cross, of Christ, and, so he says, by whom the world, is crucified, unto me, and I, unto the world, now, just briefly, if the dear Lord, might, enlighten one, a little further, what is, the cross, of Christ, what, dear friends, is the vital point, and meaning, of the cross, of Christ, all, does it not, in itself, stand, alone, entirely, alone, nothing else, that ever, transpired, in this world, can ever compare, with the cross, of Christ,

[23 : 48] Christ, it's the holy, name of God, giving himself, a sacrifice, for the sins, of many, and, pouring out, his precious, life's blood, that you, and I, if we, are among, that favored number, may, be eternally, saved, saved, in the Lord, with an everlasting, salvation, therefore, the cross, of Christ, marks, a vital point, in human history, doesn't it, and, it, it marks, an everlasting, point, in the history, of every, poor sinner, redeemed, by his precious, blood, and so, dear friends, it's a point, of all importance, isn't it, must be, should be, where would you, and I be, what hope, should we have, of heaven, hereafter, but, for the cross, of Christ,

I have, at home, I believe, referred to it, this morning, a large copy, as large as this Bible, of Pilgrim's Progress, all in the Dutch language, and among the illustration, is one, and it's a very telling one, of Jesus, on the cross, at Calvary, and the Christian, Bunyan's, hero, we might call him, standing there, looking up, eyes, flowing with tears, and the great burden, that hung on his back, falling away, into, the darks and tomb, it's there, dear friends, where, if we're alive, by grace, we shall want, to be often found, the cross, of Christ, and so, says the apostle, but God forbid, whatever, whatever,

I have prided myself in, hitherto, whatever, I may pride myself in, even now, oh Lord, let it go, by the board, I wouldn't despise it, but I pray for grace, to see it, in a very secondary, place, and that I might, look to thee, and, that I might have, nothing else, to glory in, but a precious, Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, and today, and forever, the cross, of Christ, then, was, provided for, before the world, began, in that covenant, ordered, in all things, and sure, it must have been, mustn't it, and the three, persons, in the Holy Trinity, combining together, and agreeing together, upon this, great thing, ah, nothing, but thy blood, oh Jesus, can, absolve us, from our sins, and, when you, are brought to feel that, and see it, then the cross of Jesus, stands, for us, and, you would not, depart from it, it's where you, want to be, one of our hymns, puts it in this way,

Lord, I creep beside thee, as a worm, and see thee, die, for me, as a worm, oh, we can't get low enough, when, we're given the sight, of the cross, of Christ, we can't, be, low enough, in ourselves, as we're brought, to view, what the cross, of Christ, means, what it meant, what it still means, 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, I believe, when you, and I, may be brought here, spiritually, we shall be ready, to say, with top lady, I believe, oh Lord, crucify this cell, that I, no more, but Christ in me, may live, and, so, the Lord, is pleased, to teach us, and who teacheth, like him, and dear friends, the best teaching, that you and I, ever receive, is by our own experience, isn't it, that old Latin proverb, which says, experience teaches, there's a lot in it, you know, it's true, isn't it,

I have learnt, says the apostle, but he doesn't say how, but you read into it, that he learnt, by experience, in whatever state, I am, therewith, to be content, I have learnt, have you and I, dear friends, learnt these things, and have we, through the teaching, of the good spirit, of God, learnt the blessedness, the unspeakable, wonder, of the cross, of Christ, and has, it been made, to you and me, such a wonder, that we, feel we don't want, to get far from it, we want to be close, to it, we beg the Lord, to keep us near, to him there, and watch him, by precious faith, as he gave up, his life, for poor sinners, upon a life, I did not live, said one, upon a death, I did not die, my whole eternity, hanged, and stand, upon that, his life, that he lived, his obedience, to the, his father's law, on behalf, of poor sinners, and then, the death, that he died, the agony, the shame, the cursing, and the unspeakable, misery, of that, unimaginable, death, on the cross, but God, forbid then, that I, should glory, all that it may be, granted to you, and me, dear friends, to know something, of what it is, of what it means, to glory, in nothing, but the cross, of Christ, and to see, what hangs upon it, what rests upon it, eternity, eternal life, at his request, to every saint, is given, eternal life, and so, dear friends, you see, if you and I, are possessors, of eternal life, the promise of it, then it hangs, upon the cross, of our Lord,

[31 : 13] Jesus Christ, and so, he says, by whom, the world, is crucified, unto me, that's an amazing, statement, isn't it, the world, and all it means, we, some of us, no doubt, feel to know, a little, of what it does, mean, the world, and, the Bible, tells us, it's the world, that lies in wickedness, it's, the world, of sin, the world, of ungodliness, the world, of men, and women, who have, no hope, and no God, in the world, well, to, by whom, then the world, is crucified, unto me, the love of it, if any man, loves the world, says the Lord, in John, my soul, shall have, no pleasure in it, do you love the world, this present evil world, are there things in it, dear friends, which draw, your mind, your heart, attract you, we'd have to, hang our heads, in shame, wouldn't we, and say, yes, there's much of it, that attracts me, and, where should I be,

I should be, right in the midst of it, but, for divine grace, and, the mercy of God, in Christ, surely, that's where, we should be, I know I should, I wouldn't be here, had the Lord, not appeared, in mercy, for my guilty soul, and so, by whom the world, is crucified, unto me, I don't know, whether, one ever mentioned this, but, it just comes to mind, here, if it's a repetition, I hope, one might be forgiven, but, some years back, I was asked, to conduct, a funeral, at Bath, for the dear, godly lady, member, of Bethel Chapel, and, she was buried, in the old cemetery, at Bath, coming away, from the graveside, the undertaker, asked me to sit with him, and I did, and I'd never met before, we, didn't know one another, at all, but, as, we went along, the main street, of Bath, from the cemetery, he said, you know, that cemetery, has some sad, memories for me,

I said, well, how do you mean, it's always sad, isn't it, when life, comes to an end, I said, I, I mean in a different, way to that, he said, you know, within the last, few years, I have carried, to the grave, about ten, young people, most of them, had slung away, their lies, their precious lies, by drink, and drugs, he said, half of them, hadn't reached, the age of twenty, and there he said, he said, I sometimes think of it, and almost weep over it, think of it, those lies, which could, have been, useful, and profitable, just, slung away, by utter worldliness, and wickedness, well, I never forgot it, dear friend, and when, standing, facing the, Royal United Hospital, one day, after being there, to visit a friend,

I saw a nurse, come, with a young lady, holding her arm, and helping her, across the road, to the bus stop, and, I said, to a lady, nearby, that poor girl, looks ill, she ought to be, attended, ah, she said, don't you see, what the trouble is, I said, what, oh, she's full of drugs, she's a drug addict, like so many, today, all the sadness, of it, dear friend, well, may the dear Lord, grant to you, and me, grace to glory, in nothing, but the cross of Christ, and to know, that it is by him, through grace, the world, is crucified, unto you and me, and, says Paul, and I, unto the world, all that remarkable word, he uttered, in another epistle, for I, says he, am crucified, with Christ, nevertheless,

I live, and 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, or sometimes, we felt, if only, I could speak, like that, from the heart, or if only, I was enabled, to utter, my faith, like that, and yet, we've hung that, felt to be, utterly unworthy, of it, but dear friend, we would desire it, wouldn't we, you almost, envy the apostle, to be able, to speak like that, I do, then, let us thank God, even, to that feeling, and that desire, so, may God forbid, that I should glory, that you should glory, dear friend, that any of us, should glory, saved, in the cross, of our Lord,

[37 : 22] Jesus Christ, by whom the world, is crucified, unto me, or to be able, to say it, to say it, without presumption, to hope and trust, it's true, of you and me, by whom, the world, is crucified, unto me, and, I, unto the world, nevertheless, we know, only too solemnly, don't we, that still has, its solemn attractions, and, we need to be kept, oh, don't you feel, the need of it, dear friend, every day, every moment, all to be kept, by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed, in the last time, for nothing, less than that, dear friend, will save us, divine keeping, and so, it becomes, a matter of prayer, doesn't it,

Lord, keep me, Lord, hold me up, and, hold up my going, in thy path, in no other path, lest my, footsteps slip, I feel, I'll have to leave it here, and, would beg the dear Lord, to pardon, what may have been a miss, and, to make up to you, and me, all that's lacking, for his great, name's sake, amen.