

**Title:** Living the Cross-Centered Life

**Passage:** Galatians 6:11-18

### **Introduction:**

"But may it never be that I would boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (v.14)

- Charles Spurgeon's favorite verse in the letter

What matters most? A cross-centered life

#### 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For I delivered to you as *of first importance* what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

#### Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

#### Galatians 6:14

But may it never be that I would boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

*Book recommendations:* C.J. Mahaney (The Cross Centered Life; Living the Cross Centered Life)

*"See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand."*

- meaning: Paul writing passionately of what is of great importance

### **Overview: The marks/principles of a cross-centered life**

I. Humbled, not prideful

II. Boasts in the cross, not self

III. Treasures Christ, not the world

IV. Values spiritual transformation, not external ritual

V. Walks in truth, not in error

VI. Seeks to please Christ, not people

VII. Lived by grace alone, by faith alone, through Christ alone.

#### **I. Humbled, not prideful**

*"It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 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."* (v.13-14)

- different categories of self-interest:

1) pride ("those who want to make a good showing in the flesh"),

2) hypocrite ("do not themselves keep the law"),

3) boasters/prideful ("they may boast in your flesh")

- the more mature you become a Christian, the less worthy you feel you as a child of God. (J. Piper).

- meaning: the closer you are to Christ, the more sensitive and stark you see your own sin/sinfulness compared to the wonderful mercy and grace of God. Joy and remorse.

#### 1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

- we recognize we cannot take credit for our salvation and relationship with God. It is purely out of God's mercy and grace.

#### **II. Boasts in the cross, not self**

*"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."* (v. 14)

- "*boast*" = "to glory in, to trust in, to make much of, to be consumed with"
- one doesn't merely affirm the cross but it is consumed and boast in nothing but the cross.

#### Romans 5:2-3

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

"except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"

- what does it mean "only" or "except"?
- the cross enables every other legitimate boast.
- every good thing you have was obtained for us by the cross of Christ.

#### James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

#### Hebrews 13:20-21

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

- Question: How often do you thank God for the cross?
- we cannot boast in the cross or ourselves at the same time.
- Indicator of cross vs. self: How do you respond to criticism?

### **III. Treasures Christ, not the world**

*"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."* (v. 14)

- nothing in the world has the same level of attraction compared to the cross.
- The power of the world has been broken. (Doesn't mean you'll never be tempted but the death blow has occurred)
- Testing Questions: How do you view the material things of the world? If given all those things, can you still say "I choose Christ."? What do you treasure - the cross above all else?

#### Psalms 16:2

I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

#### Matthew 6:21

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

"When Christ calls a man, He bids him to come and die." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

### **IV. Values spiritual transformation, not external ritual**

*"For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation."*

"Counts for nothing" = external works carry no weight

"A new creation" = only done by God.

#### John 3:5-6

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

#### 2 Corinthians 5:17-18

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. *All this is from God*, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

## **V. Walks in truth, not in error.**

*"And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God." (v. 16)*

"Walk by this rule" = canon = God's Word

- Gospel-centered theology is of great importance.

"Peace and mercy" = the result

Psalm 86:11

Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may *walk in your truth*; unite my heart to fear your name.

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, *rightly handling the word of truth*.

## **VI. Seeks to please Christ, not people.**

*"From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus." (v. 17)*

- "let no one cause me trouble" = people

"I bear on my body the marks of Jesus"

- his commitment to please Christ disregards personal comfort and the proof is reflected in his life.

- it will cost you

2 Timothy 3:12

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

## **VII. Lived by grace alone, by faith alone, through Christ alone.**

*"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen." (v. 18)*

- a reminder that all is by grace from God.

### **Prayer:**

Thank God for grace, Christ, and the cross. In that assurance, help me to live a cross-centered life for your glory.