

9-11-22

Galatians 6:11-15.

I. The Cross Removes the Penalty of Sins.

- **Read verse 14.**
- Paul wrote that he would boast only in the cross. That was an amazing statement because the cross was a horrible instrument of torture and execution. It was a thing of shame.
- Wiersbe says that the word “excruciating” comes from the cross. When someone speaks about excruciating pain, that word literally means “from the cross.” But Paul wasn’t boasting about just any Roman cross, he was boasting in only one cross—the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Transforming Truth: The death of Jesus is my only reason to boast.**
- Paul was writing to combat the influence of legalistic Jewish teachers who had misled the believers into thinking they had to become good Jews before they could become Christians. They demanded all the Gentile men undergo circumcision. They were PROUD of their Jewish observances; they boasted about how religious they were.
- There are a lot of things people boast about today. We brag about our investments, our houses, our cars, and our football teams. People still boast about how religious they are. But there is only ONE thing we should truly boast about, and that is the cross of Jesus.
- The Bible states the penalty of sin in no uncertain terms. It says, **“The soul who sins is the one who will die.” (Ezekiel 18:20)** So since we are all sinners, we deserve death and hell.
- But on the cross, Jesus, the sinless one, became sin for us, and He paid the price for the penalty for our sins. He became our substitute. The Bible says, **“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)**

II. The Cross Repels the POWER of Sin.

- When Paul wrote that the world had been crucified to him, he wasn’t talking about the world of people, or the planet earth. In the New Testament “the world” describes the general attitude, actions, and culture of people who reject God.
- We battle sin on three fronts: the world, the flesh, and the devil. The devil is the tempter, the world is the temptation, and my sinful nature, the flesh, is the tempted. To put it another way, the world is the carrot the devil dangles before my sinful nature. The devil uses the sins of the world to attract my sinful nature.
- **Transforming Truth: The attractions of this sinful world have lost their allure.**

“Don’t love the world’s ways. Don’t love the world’s goods. Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity.” 1 John 2:15-17 The Message

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2 ESV

- The world wants to make all of us conform to its fads and fashions. Fashion labels are a perfect example. We all feel the pressure to wear the labels that are currently in fashion.
- The world is still playing its siren music trying to attract us toward what it claims is the pleasures of sin. But it is a dangerous song because sin always leads to death. And most of us can think of Christians who have ended up with their faith shipwreck on the jagged rocks of sin.
- As followers of Jesus, we're listening to a new song, and it's so beautiful and captivating that the song of the world no longer appeals to us.

William McDonald wrote, "When a man is saved, the world says goodbye to him, and he says goodbye to the world. He is spoiled as far as the world is concerned because he is no longer interested in its fleeting pleasures; the world has lost its attraction for him, because he has found One who completely satisfies." (Believers' Bible Commentary)

III. The Cross Rejects the Practice of sin.

- Not only was the world dead to Paul, but he had also died to the world as well. There was nothing in the world that appealed to him because he was crucified with Christ. As Christians, we aren't perfectly sinless, but the cross makes us hate sins the way God hates sin.
- ***Transforming Truth: My sinful nature no longer controls me!***
- Paul knew what it meant to be crucified with Christ. He wrote, **"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)**
- There really was someone who was literally crucified with Christ, and we'll get to meet him in heaven. It was the thief on the cross. As he hung there, he knew his life was about to end. He looked over at Jesus who was bleeding and dying as well. The last thing Jesus looked like was a king, but he said, **"Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom."** And that simple profession of faith was enough. Jesus said, **"Today, you will be with me in paradise."**
- When we're crucified with Christ, we'll be like that thief. He no longer cared about what people thought about him. They could have yelled that he was ugly and stupid, but it didn't bother him, because he was crucified with Christ. He didn't fear arousing the wrath of the Romans for talking to Jesus, because he was crucified with Christ.
- Just imagine while he was being crucified with Christ, a well-known hot lady walked by. Do you think he was interested in looking at her? No, he was crucified with Christ.
- Just imagine a Roman Centurion drove up in the latest model of a sporty chariot. It had eight horsepower and dual slaves. Do you think he thought, "Man, I'd sure like to have one of those?" Nope. He was crucified with Christ.
- Imagine a wealthy Sadducee was there wearing a mink robe and a velvet prayer shawl. Do you think that thief yelled, "Hey, Simon, where can I get me an outfit like that?" Nope again. He was crucified with Christ, so none of those things mattered to Him. The only thing that mattered was Jesus. Put yourself on that cross with Jesus and look into His eyes, and you lose the desire to look at anything else.
- It's like that great song says, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus; Look full in His wonderful face; And the things of earth (the world); Grow strangely dim in His glory and grace."

Conclusion

Some people don't want to be reminded, but we should never forget September 11th. Today it was 21 years ago, all our lives were changed in those horrifying few hours.

You've probably seen the untouched photo of the smoke billowing from the World Trade Center where it appears as if you can see the face of Satan in the smoke. It could have been just a bizarre natural phenomenon, or it could have been God's reminder to us that Jesus said these words concerning Satan, **"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy." (John 10:10)**

On 9/11 the smoky face of the devil dissolved after a few seconds. But when the workers at Ground Zero started clearing away the site, they came upon an amazing sight—a perfectly formed cross standing among the wreckage of the fallen towers. Now, maybe that was also a freak accident of the physics of falling steel beams. But maybe it is more.

Both the face and the cross might be complete accidents, or they could be a message from God. The devil appears for a second and then disappears in a swirl of smoke leaving behind only the carnage of death and destruction.

But the cross still stands strong outside the 9/11 memorial as a symbol of hope for the thousands who visit it every day. The cross is God's reminder that evil cannot win. The Romans put Jesus on the most despised symbol of the ancient world, unspeakable brutality, and death. But God has transformed the cross into a powerful symbol of love and forgiveness.

How do we respond to the cross? We all know Paul's response.

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which[b] the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Galatians 6:14)

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

1. Surrender to it. (Removes the penalty of sin)
2. Yield to it in our lives. (Repels the power of sin)
3. Obey the truth found in it (Rejects the practice of sin)

Many of us can check off response one. If we were honest this morning many if not all of us find ourselves stumbling with response two and three, yielding fully to the truth of the cross and obeying the truth found in it.

Unfortunately, many of us will spend the entirety of our earthly life in torment fighting to yield and obey. The real scary part of it is many of us have or will grow numb to the Holy Spirit chastening. IF we are not careful, we can grow content to be in spiritual mediocrity. Not Paul's content, but content in our spiritual conduct. Content in not being pliable to the leading/direction of the Spirit.

My prayer is that we don't just respond in surrender, but that we seek out areas in our lives that are not yielded or are obeying to the truth found in the crucifixion. We have been redeemed, purchased at a high cost, we are no longer slaves to sin, we are overcomers, conquerors, because Jesus did it for us.