

GOD HONORS THOSE WHO HONOR THE CROSS

GALATIANS 6:14 • TV092B

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Galatians 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.”

“GOD HONORS THOSE WHO HONOR THE CROSS.” That’s my subject today and my text will be found in the book of **Galatians chapter 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.”*

Again Paul said; *“I am determined, to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him on crucified (on a cross).”* Again he said; *“We preach Christ and him crucified.”* Again he said; *“The preaching of the cross is to them who are perishing foolishness (nonsense) but unto us who are being saved, the preaching of the cross is the power and the wisdom of God.”*

Now my friend, that which should be preached the most often is, I’m afraid, the least often preached and that is the cross of Christ. Bishop J.C. Ryle, one of the great, old preachers of many years ago and one of the great writers said this; “The cross of Christ is the strength of the

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preacher. I for one would not be without the cross of Christ. I'd feel like a soldier without his weapons. I'd feel like an artist without a pencil. I'd feel like a pilot without a compass. I'd feel like a carpenter without his tools."

Let others, if they will, preach law and ceremony. Let others, if they will, hold forth the terrors of hell, and yea, the bliss of heaven. Let others if they will glory in the church, in the ordinances, and the sacraments; give me the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the only message that will ever turn this world upside down. This is the only message that will ever cause men to forsake their sins. This is the only message that will bring a man to God. This is the only message that will give a man hope of eternal life. This is the only message that will save a man's soul, nothing else will. If the cross of Christ will not save, nothing will.

A man may preach with a perfect knowledge of Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, but he will do little or no good for his hearers if he doesn't know something about the cross.

A man may preach with knowledge of church history, theology and prophecy, but only the cross will give a sinner hope of forgiveness and comfort, a pardon and assurance of life eternal. God will honor those who honor the cross.

And the first reason for this is that the cross of Jesus Christ is the foundation of the whole Bible. If you don't know anything about Christ crucified; you don't know anything about the Bible because Christ crucified is the foundation of the whole Bible.

Without Christ crucified our preaching is like someone said; "Heaven without a sun. Well, it's like a body without a soul; it's dead. It's like a clock without the hands. It's like a lamp without oil. It's like a compass without a needle."

The message of this Book is the Lamb slain. That's what it's all about, "*the lamb who was slain and redeemed us to God by his blood out of every tribe, kindred, nation and tongue, under heaven.*" That's what it's all about from **Genesis to Revelations**. It's the story of the Lamb slain.

You go back to the **Book of Genesis** and you will find the lamb typified. The very first sacrifice for sin that's recorded in the Word of God; do you know what it was, the first sacrifice recorded in the Word of God?

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I'm not saying that it was the first sacrifice. I say it's the first sacrifice written about and recorded. Two brothers; one was name Cain and one was named Abel. Cain was a tiller of the soil and Abel was a keeper of the sheep.

And Cain came to God with a sin-offering. He knew that he was a sinner. He knew God was holy. He knew that God required an offering. His daddy had told him that, his daddy Adam, I'm sure. God had instructed Adam and Adam had instructed his son.

But Cain rejected God's way and God's instructions and instead of bringing a lamb he brought the results of his own labors, the fruits of his own work. He offered vegetables and fruit and all of these things that he had raised in his garden.

The Bible says: "*God did not have respect to Cain and his offering.*" Rejecting his offering he rejected Cain. You see, rejecting his offering made him rejected.

And then, his brother Abel brought a lamb, a firstling of the flock as God had instructed. He slew the lamb and put its blood on the altar. And God received Abel because of his offering.

Now, what was that all about? Well, Abel's offering was a lamb, a lamb slain, and a lamb whose blood was shed to put away sin; "*The wages of sin is death. Without the shedding of blood there's no forgiveness; there's no remission.*" Sin brings death.

Cain brought a bloodless sacrifice. There was no death, there was no picture of Christ dying and giving His life. Abel brought the blood. He brought the slain lamb and "*God had respect to Abel and his offering.*"

And then, you go over into Egypt, there are so many other pictures, but over in Egypt you have the Passover Lamb. When God was passing through Egypt at midnight judgment was upon the land and God was to slay the first born in every home where there was no blood on the door.

Well these Israelites were to take a lamb, the firstling of the flock, without blemish and spot. They were to put it up for so many days and then slay it. You see; "*Christ is the first born of every creature.*" He's without sin and without blemish.

And He lived on this earth 33 ½ years under the temptation of Satan, the law, sin and men and He proved to be faithful. "*He was tried in every point, tempted and tested in all points,*" and then Christ was slain.

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And they put the blood on the door and on the side posts and on the lintel. And when God passed over and saw the blood the people were delivered who were in that home, delivered from judgment, delivered from wrath and delivered from death. So, throughout the Bible you have: “*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness;*” you have the Lamb, Christ crucified typified.

Then in **Isaiah 53** you have the Lamb personified; (it’s a He) “*he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him and by his stripes we are healed.*” There He is personified.

And then in **John 1:29** there was a man called John the Baptist who was born in an unusual fashion by the power of God. He was the forerunner of the Messiah, the Christ. He was the one God sent to announce the coming of the King, the coming of the Redeemer, and the coming of the Messiah.

One day he was standing by the Jordan River and this man Jesus of Nazareth was coming toward him. And we have the Lamb identified. He said, “*behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.*” There He is!

That’s the one of whom Moses wrote. That’s the one whose day Abraham saw. That’s the one Isaiah talked about. That’s the one that David said is my Shepherd, my Refuge, and my Rock; there He is.

And then in the book of **Revelation** you have the Lamb magnified and glorified. It says over there in Revelation: “*In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain and all sung a new song saying: thou art worthy because thou hast redeemed us to God. Thou art worthy of all glory and praise; thou has redeemed us to God.*”

That’s what the Bible is all about; it’s about redemption, the redemption of sinners by the will and purpose and plan of God, the redemption of sinners through the will and purpose and plan of God by Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

**“Alas and did my Saviour bleed
And did my sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head?
For such a worm as I?
At the cross, at the cross**

That’s where I saw the light, at the cross. That’s where I saw the power of God, the wisdom of God, the judgment of God, the justice of God, the redemption of God and the mercy of God:

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**“Where I first saw the light.
And the burden of my heart rolled away
It was there by faith
I received my sight
And because of that I’m happy all the day.”**

My message has five divisions.

First of all: I want us to consider the glory of the cross!

Secondly: The victory of the cross!

Thirdly: The offence of the cross!

Fourthly: The preaching of the cross!

Fifthly: The enemies of the cross!

First of all: The glory of the cross!

Paul said: *“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross.”* Now, Paul is not glorying in a piece of wood. To wear a cross around your neck; now, I wouldn’t offend you but I am telling you the truth.

To wear a cross around your neck; you might as well wear a hangman’s noose. You might as well wear a replica of an electric chair. A cross is a place of execution. There’s nothing beautiful about a crucifixion.

It was the old Roman way of executing people. And Christ Jesus died on that block of wood, on that cruel tree. He died an ignominious death, a horrible death, condemned as a criminal between two thieves. And there’s no power in that piece of wood to do anything for anybody.

Oh, I know that in all of these silly Dracula movies and all they hold a cross out in front of an evil spirit or something and they are supposed to go away. That’s hogwash and foolishness. There’s no power in holding out a piece of wood going one way and another one going the other way. That’s not the power; the power is in the person who died on that cross.

Paul’s not saying: “God forbid that I should glory in a block of wood or a piece of stone that’s made like that, or a symbol.” When Paul says, “I glory in the cross of Christ,” he is saying this; I glory in the doctrine of free justification and full atonement from sin that was accomplished by the death of Christ on that cross.

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Christ died on that cross as a criminal with our sins upon Him, with evil, filth, guilt and rottenness. Every murder, every rape, every theft, and the blaspheme of every believer was laid on Him that He died on that cross and paid our sin debt.

That was an execution. He didn't die as an example. He didn't die as a martyr. He didn't die as a reformer; He died as a Substitute, as a sin-offering. He's burying our sins in His body on that tree.

And when He did that He accomplished full redemption and full atonement and full satisfaction. The law was satisfied. When a man goes to be hanged he's got sin on him and judgment. The court has sentenced him to die and they hang him.

And after they hang him and they take him down its paid, the debt's paid. The law is satisfied and justice is satisfied. They can't touch him anymore. They can't touch him. And that's what Christ did for us. The law can't touch us because it was satisfied when Christ died.

You see, the cross of Christ, the glory of it, the glory of the cross, (this is what we are doing and it scares me to death) people are making images of heavenly things. They are making idols and they are worshipping idols. They are not worshipping Christ they are worshipping idols.

They are worshipping pictures of Christ. There's no picture of Christ that has ever been painted, ever been photographed, or ever been drawn. The Bible says for us to "*not make graven images of anything in heaven or earth.*"

God is Spirit. "*And they that worship him worship him in spirit and in truth.*" And that picture on your wall, you ask; "Who is that, well, that's Jesus." It's not any such thing. Christ never posed for a picture. That's not Christ; that's an image, that's an idol.

Christ is God. Christ is in heaven and Christ is on the throne. And we are not to bow down to these things or touch these things or hallow these things. It's just like the children of Israel. When that brazen serpent that God used to heal them when they brought it down off that pole; they made an idol out of it. They worshipped that thing.

King Hezekiah took it and ground it to powder and made them drink the water. He said: "*It's nothing but a piece of worthless brass.*" And that's all these idols are. I'm telling you my friend; I warn you and I warn myself too; we are supposed to worship God in spirit and in truth.

We are not to have replicas and symbols, pictures, idols, graven images and statues. It's nothing but idol worship. You may as well make your golden calf or golden lamb or anything else and

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fall down in front of it. The glory of the cross; it's a display of God's divine character, the glory of the cross.

God is merciful but God is righteous. God is love but God is just. God almighty saves but God punishes sin. And at the cross He did both; He punished sin and saved sinners. That's what He did at the cross.

The cross reveals the righteousness of God and it reveals the justice of God and it reveals the love of God. It's a full manifestation of Christ's love for His people. *"Herein is love, not that we love God; he loved us and gave himself for us."*

**"Couldn't we with ink the ocean fill?
And were the skies of parchment made?
And every stalk on earth a quill
And every man ascribed by trade,**

**To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry
Nor could the scroll contain the whole?
Though stretched from sky to sky?**

**Oh love of God
How rich how pure
How measureless, how strong
It shall forever more endure
The saint's and angel's song."**

The glory of the cross and the cross puts away sin. It puts sin away completely and fully by one atonement. The Scripture says: *"By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."*

If you will take the book of **Hebrews** sometime and read **chapter 9**, you have there three appearances of Christ for us, for His elect, for every believer. It says in **verse 26 of Hebrews 9**: *"Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."*

Christ died on that cross to put away sin. He paid the debt but that was by the sacrifice of Himself. It's not by water of baptism. It's not by sacraments and ordinances. It's not by the laying on of some man's hand; sins are put away by the death of the Son of God dying in the sinner's stead and place: *"By his stripes we are healed."*

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Then **verse 24 of Hebrews 9** says: *“Now he doth appear in the presence of God for us.”* There He intercedes for us and He prays for us. He offers His blood and His wounds as the basis of His plea for our redemption.

Then **verse 28** says: *“And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* He’s coming back without sin unto salvation. Christ’s not on a cross; He’s on a throne. He was on a cross.

He was in a tomb. He was raised and He is risen. *“Don’t seek the living among the dead.”* He’s on the throne. *“He’s exalted at the right hand of God.”* That’s the glory of the cross.

So, when Paul said: *“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ;”* he wouldn’t take you back to Jerusalem; he’d take you to glory. And he would say; *“What Christ accomplished has been fulfilled; it’s finished.”* And its free justification and full atonement and that is the victory and glory of the cross.

Now, I want you to listen carefully to me. I want you to listen very carefully. I know there are some who preach the cross and the death of Christ as if it were only an effort on the part of God to redeem sinners; God tried; God put forth a powerful effort at Calvary to save sinners.

Some people indicate that when Christ died on that cross He made some sort of payment. He made some sort of payment that requires my work and your work and the work of sinners to complete it.

In other words I heard a preacher say: *“Christ did all he could do and now it’s up to you.”* Well now, that makes the death of Christ not an atonement at all but an attempt to save, not an atonement, but an attempt.

And then that makes Christ’s death on the cross not a ransom but an effort to save. It makes Christ death on the cross not a redemption but an offer, not a redemption at all, just an offer.

But the Word of God presents the death and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ as an effectual work. What does the word effectual mean? It means He got the job done; that’s what it means, effectual and a sufficient work. That’s all that’s required.

“He reconciled us to God;” He did. He did it, not Jesus and me, Christ did it. They want to change that old song:

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**“Jesus paid it all
All the debt I owe
Sin has left a crimson stain
He washed it white as snow.”**

They want to sing it this way:

**“Jesus did a part
And I a part you know
Sin left a crimson stain
But we washed it white as snow.”**

It's not that way at all. *“The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin.”* And then the Scripture says, *“By his stripes we are healed.”* Then the Scripture says, *“Whom he called he justified.”*

And then the Scripture says: *“Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sin.”* And then the Scripture says, *“Unto him who loved us and washed us, (not made an effort, not made an attempt, not made an offer), but he washed us from our sins in his own blood.”*

Salvation is a gift; it's not a cooperative work. I don't preach halfway redemption; I preach a full redemption. If Christ died for me I'm as certain for heaven as if I was already there. So are you.

It's not what I do, it's what he did. It's not what I give, it's what He gave. It's not what I pay, it's what He paid. He paid it all. Christ redeemed His people. That is what I am saying. I'm saying He did what he came to do.

I'm saying He has finished what He set out to accomplish. He said, *“It's finished”* and He sat down. *“By one offering he perfected forever them that are sanctified.”* He didn't attempt to, make an effort to, and He didn't offer to, He did it.

Now that's the victory of the cross. There was a victory accomplished on Calvary. God did what He set out to do.

And then, what about the offense of the cross? Paul spoke of the offense of the cross; it's offensive. The message is offensive. Statues and symbols aren't offensive. A message is offensive.

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I've preached to people who have sat right in front of me wearing a cross and I've preached to them what happened at the cross and have them get angry with me. They'll wear a symbol but they won't bow to a message, to a person, to a victorious Lord.

What is the offense of the cross? The offense of the cross is never ceased. It will never cease as long as pride reigns in the hearts of men. The world is the same and the Gospel is the same.

And the Gospel is the most peaceful and mild and benevolent message and yet its history is a history of blood, bloodshed, martyrdom, wrath, and persecution. Why?

The Gospel hasn't changed. *"Christ was despised and rejected of men. A man of sorrows acquainted with grief."* He said, *"Marvel not my brethren if the world hate you, it hated me."*

And then again, the world and the Gospel are unchanged. Men have always accepted a religion of works and never a religion of grace or substitution.

Wherein is the Gospel of Christ offensive? Will you listen to me? I'll give you four reasons. This is what Paul is talking about in the offense of the cross:

The cross of Jesus Christ addresses all men everywhere and I mean all men; I mean the little man and the big man, so called. I mean the rich man and the poor man. I mean the white man and the black man.

I mean the learned man and the illiterate man. I mean all men. It addresses all men as sinners, helpless, hopeless, depraved, defiled sinners, and that offends man's dignity; he doesn't like being called a sinner.

Oh those men in prison; they are sinners. Those men who committed Watergate; they are sinners. And those girls that sell their bodies in the red-light district; they are sinners. And the drunks; they are sinners and somebody else; he's a sinner.

But my friend; you are a sinner. You are as rotten on the inside as anybody this side of hell by nature, by birth, by choice, and by practice. And the cross of Christ says you are a sinner and that offends man's dignity.

And then the cross, the message of the cross, comes as a revelation. Natural man doesn't understand it. It comes by the revelation of God's Spirit. It has to be revealed: *"The natural*

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man does not receive the things of God;” they have to be revealed. And that offends man’s wisdom. He thinks he’s smart. His wisdom is foolishness with God.

And then the doctrine of a full atonement, a complete atonement; Christ paid the full price and I receive it as a gift of God. I receive it by the grace of God and that offends man’s pride.

And then the Lordship of Jesus Christ; Christ will be Lord. He won’t be your Saviour unless He’s your Lord. He’ll reign or He will not save and that offends man’s love of self. Man loves himself; he doesn’t love God.

That’s the offense of the cross and that’s the reason Paul said men won’t preach the cross because they don’t like to offend. They like to have folks brag on them. They like to win friends and influence people and build great religious movements and organizations. They won’t preach the offense of the cross.

But he said, *“I do.”* And he suffered for it too. He died for it too, the preaching of the cross. There are just two attitudes to take toward the cross. *“The preaching of the cross is to them who are perishing foolishness, (sheer nonsense).”*

And you may be listening to my message today and you say: “That’s a pack of foolishness.” Well, that’s what God said you would say.

The other attitude is it’s the power of God. There are two attitudes, either to those who are perishing it is sheer nonsense, foolishness; *“to them who are being saved it’s the power of God.”*

In the last place who are the enemies of the cross? Satan is the devout enemy of the cross. He did everything to keep Christ from going to the cross. He said, “Jump off this mountain. Fall down and worship me. Make these stones into bread, anything, but don’t go to the cross.”

The liberal modernist is an enemy of Christ. He’s an enemy of the cross. He wants you to be saved by your works or baptism or something. But do you know who Paul calls the enemy of the cross in **Philippians 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.”*

Those people who profess to believe on Christ but by their unholy lives they are enemies of the cross by their unrighteous lives, by their dishonest lives and are enemies of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Oh the glory of the cross. Those who honor the cross God will honor!

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