# The Glory of the Cross

Galatians 6

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Pastor Craig Ledbetter

Bible Baptist Church, Ballincollig, Cork, Ireland

[www.biblebc.com](http://www.biblebc.com)

1. **Introduction (Philp 3:17-19) “***…* ***whose glory is in their shame****…”*
   1. What if there WAS something, something so thrilling, so real, so powerful, so awesome, that nothing else could compare – nothing else could dim its glory, no matter the pain, or the struggle you have to endure?
   2. Most people glory in shameful acts and shameful things – in such filthy and dirty things, like manure would be
      1. People glory in almost constant adultery on TV and in the movies
      2. Glory in rebellion and hatred of anything good and clean and godly
      3. Glory in homosexual acts, and sex outside of marriage
      4. They glory in their good looks, and in their wealth, and in their successes
      5. But it is like a child saying, Look Ma! Look at what “I” accomplished! (BIG PILE OF HORSE MANURE)
      6. No wonder each generation is falling apart faster than the previous one!
   3. We have something real, something awesome, to glory in
   4. That’s what I aim to tell you about this morning!
2. **Background (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*.

* 1. **The Meaning of “Glory”**
     1. Brightness, splendour, magnificence – like “Glorious”
     2. Fame, like a celebrity
     3. Perfection – something glorious is perfect! No imperfection, spots, or wrinkles
     4. Power
     5. It means, something Amazing, awesome!
     6. Something to boast about, to brag about
     7. Something that thrills you, and causes you to dance and rejoice and sing!
     8. You couldn’t get a better word than “GLORIOUS”
        1. **Jesus Christ Himself is glorious!**Php 3:21 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself*.
        2. **The GOSPEL is glorious!**2Co 4:4 *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*.
        3. **The Bible Believing, Bible Obeying Church is glorious!**  
           Eph 5:27 *That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish*.
        4. **The power of Jesus Christ in our lives is glorious!**Col 1:11 *Strengthened with all might,* ***according to his glorious power****, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness*;
        5. **The soon coming return of Christ in the rapture will be GLORIOUS!**Tit 2:13 *Looking for that blessed hope, and* ***the glorious appearing*** *of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*;
     9. None of that may be special to you, but they sure are glorious to ME!
  2. **Paul COULD have gloried in a load of things (Philp 3:4-6)**
     1. His National heritage
        1. Some people are proud of being Irish, and American, and French
        2. Paul could have been proud and boasted of being a member of the Jewish race, the very elect, people of God
     2. His high-level of education – at the feet of the greatest teacher of his day, Gamaliel
     3. His precise religion, and his obedience to it! He is not like most religious people today – only in name only!
     4. His amazing conversion – one of the greatest most unexpected conversions of all time, and he should have been quite proud of it!
     5. His ministry accomplishments
        1. Started at least two dozen thriving churches across Asia minor and southern Europe
        2. Personally trained hundreds of men to preach and pastor those churches he started
     6. His zeal and energy as a Christian leader – nothing seemed to stop or slow him down
     7. His survival in spite of all the adversities, and troubles and persecutions he had to endure
     8. But, ALL of that and more, he treated like it was just one big pile of MANURE (Philp 3:7,8)
  3. **But ONE thing, one event, one moment in time thrilled Paul more than anything else…**
     1. **THE CROSS** (Gal 6:14)
        1. Two words, that say it all!
        2. Those TWO WORDS define Christian JOY; they prove God’s MERCY; they offer a SURE HOPE for the hopeless!
     2. You need to get this truth folks!
        1. It will make Salvation sweet again!
        2. It will make Jesus REAL and PERSONAL again!
        3. It will make suffering and sorrow and troubles SMALL again!
        4. That’s what the cross, the glory of the cross can do!
     3. “To GLORY in the cross”, is the most amazing if not the most contradicting of feelings ever experienced by a human heart!
        1. Think about it… to rejoice in the torture, in such sorrow and abandonment that Jesus experienced, and ultimately in the death He experienced there…
        2. Well, as strange as it sounds, we rejoice in it! Those of us foolish enough to believe it
        3. And so did Jesus (Heb 12:2)!
     4. The Cross! A Poem by Craig Ledbetter
        1. Think about the cross…
           1. The place where Jesus died
           2. The place where sin was crucified
           3. Where the wrath of God was satisfied
           4. O think about the cross!
        2. Get to know about the cross…
           1. Find out Who died upon its frame
           2. The torture that could cause such shame
           3. How such a thing could take away ALL our blame
           4. If only you really knew about the cross!
        3. Be very upset by the cross…
           1. It will upset and offend you for sure
           2. Showing all your successes only as manure
           3. And even your righteousnesses as totally impure
           4. Oh yes, expect to be very upset by the cross!
        4. Look to the cross…
           1. There is an invitation waiting there
           2. An open door to heaven, if you dare
           3. Paid for by the blood of Jesus, though so unfair
           4. Will you look to the cross?
        5. Trust the cross…
           1. Don’t believe anything else around
           2. Only from the cross can forgiveness be found
           3. And from thence by faith all grace can abound
           4. If only you will trust the cross!
        6. Glory in the cross…
           1. Rejoice and shout and leap for joy
           2. The Son of God has sin destroyed
           3. And gave eternal life to us, forever to enjoy!
           4. So ever glory in the cross!

1. **Message**
   1. **The Cross is MORE than just Two Pieces of Wood**

* + 1. People wear crucifixes around their neck, and get a cross tattooed on their arms, but I am afraid that they have missed the meaning, and the glory of the cross!
    2. It was the determinate counsel of God (Acts 2:22-24)
       1. What does that mean?
       2. It means it was planned out and carried out perfectly according to the will and plan of God
       3. It means it was no accident; not a tragedy, but rather…
       4. The most amazing, the most wisest, and the only way, to save sinners from their sin
       5. Wow!
       6. The cross was **the whole work of God** (from eternity past, throughout eternity future) wrapped up in one excruciating moment of time!
       7. Eph 2:16 *And that he (Jesus) might reconcile both (Jew and gentile sinners) unto God in one body* ***by the cross****, having slain the enmity (all the problems and conflicts) thereby:*
       8. So, NOTHING that God ever has done, or ever will do, can exceed what was done at the cross! Think about THAT for a bit! More important than Creation, was our salvation!
    3. It was the full payment for all sin for all time (Heb 10:10,12,14; 9:12, 26)!
    4. It was the END of the Law! (Romans 8:3) – and the guilt, and the bondage of our sins!
       1. No other way to fulfil all the rules and regulations of God’s holy Laws
          1. None of us could keep them perfectly – no one on earth could live it perfectly
          2. And even if someone COULD, they could not do it for everyone else
       2. So the cross was GOD, coming in the flesh, to not only kill off sin, but also all the requirements of the Law!
       3. If you want to just keep on trying to keep the Law of God, go ahead. You will fail!
       4. I’ll take the cross! I will trust the cross over anyone’s best efforts any day!
    5. It was the most gripping, and attention getting event of all time
       1. Nothing else could get MY attention like all the injustices of the cross
       2. Like the betrayal and abandonment of the cross
       3. Like the finality of the cross
       4. And like the victory of the cross!
       5. THAT got MY attention as a hell-bound sinner!
    6. So, Next time you see a cross, on a hillside, remember, it is THE most glorious thing you will ever see, next to the face of Jesus Christ!
  1. **The Cross at FIRST is Totally Offensive, Repulsive, Horrible – the worst way to die**
     1. People hate the cross. Probably some people even in this room today!
     2. People hate the preaching of the cross
        1. People want to hear thoughts about how good they are, and how unfairly they have been treated, and how God is only loving, and only gentle… Hmmmm…
        2. Well, the cross is NOT nice, and NOT sweet, or soft, or cuddly
        3. It is rough, and harsh, and stern, and deadly
        4. It is completely offensive, repulsive to think about Someone having to die so horribly simply because those that He is dying for are so wicked!
        5. Whenever there is preaching about the cross, there will always be preaching about the reason for the cross – the wicked, selfish, sinfulness of all mankind
     3. It was so horrible
        1. Philippians 2:8 *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*.
        2. That word ‘*even*’ shows just how awful such a death it was
        3. Isa 53:4,5 uses these words, “*stricken, smitten of God, afflicted, wounded, bruised, chastised*” – whipped and beaten, then nailed to a cross, unable to breathe, torn to bits!
        4. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ was horrible – that’s the reality of it!
     4. It just doesn’t make sense to people
        1. And it certainly won’t ever make sense to the intellectuals and the politicians
        2. You put hardened criminals on a cross, not good people, right?
        3. No one would want such a thing to actually ever happen
        4. And yet, here was an innocent Man, taking the place for those who did NOT want Him
     5. So they try and smooth it over and make it not so harsh, not so upsetting, not so offensive
     6. But what Jesus did sure makes sense to desperate sinners, who have no other hope!
  2. **But, Everything about the Cross is Glorious!**
     1. The Justice of God
     2. The Wrath of God
     3. The Mercy of God
     4. The Sacrifice of God
     5. The very Son of God!
     6. And then the Resurrection that came BECAUSE of the cross!
     7. Try and show me anything more glorious than all of that! I would like to see you try!
     8. **Stephen Frye** hasn’t a CLUE about any of this? **Stephen Hawkings** is blind as a bat about it!
     9. The Cross is THE ONLY WAY to take care of mankind’s sin problem “***It is finished!***”
     10. The Cross is THE ONLY WAY to allow sinners to BECOME righteous, and still keep God righteous and holy!
         1. Rom 3:25,26 *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness:* ***that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus***.
     11. The Cross was VICTORY – not defeat at all (Col 2:13-15)
         1. *… having forgiven you all trespasses;*
         2. *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances (all the Laws) that was against us, … took it out of the way,* ***nailing it to his cross****;*
         3. *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*
     12. The Cross is still THE ONLY WAY to attract real conversion (John 12:32)
         1. Music can’t do it
         2. Fancy speeches can’t do it
         3. Money can’t do it
         4. Do you want to be saved from the wrath to come on sin and sinner? Believe on the Saviour who died on such a cross!
         5. Don’t believe on Mary, or a Pope, of Mother Theresa, or your grandmother
         6. Jesus said in John 12:32 *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me*.
         7. Only believing the foolishness of the cross can save anybody!
         8. And I am proudly *a fool* to believe it, and preach it, and rejoice in it!
     13. I’ll ask again! Do you want to try and show me anything more glorious than all of that??? I would like to see you try!
     14. Gal 6:14 *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ…*
  3. **Shame on ANYONE that promotes ANYTHING equal to the cross!**
     1. There are so many people who value, cherish, and promote things more than the cross
     2. Take a look at **all the ceremonies** and celebrations promoted today!
        1. 1Co 1:17,18 *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God*
        2. That includes Jewish Circumcision
        3. Baptism
        4. Ordination
        5. The elaborance of the Mass
        6. A fancy wedding – yours, or even princess Diana’s
        7. A crazy birthday party
        8. A huge funeral – and we all have seen some doosey’s
        9. The Jew’s bar-mitzvah
        10. Ramadan fasting
        11. No matter how much money you spent on it all! All are DUNG folks! Pure, stinking, putrefied manure, when compared to what happened on the cross!
        12. That’s why we Bible believers have very few ceremonies
     3. No personal prestige can equal the glory of the cross
        1. No Taoiseach - No President - No big company CEO
        2. No King, or Queen
        3. No sportsman or rock musician or artist
        4. No one on earth who has ever lived or ever will live can match the glory of the cross
        5. So don’t think for one minute that your feeble attempts to be great, actually matter anything in eternity!
        6. They are all as NOTHING! Listen to Isaiah 40:17  *All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity*.
        7. Not when the cross took first place in the mind of God!
     4. Forget all the celebrations of people’s accomplishments
        1. Like the Oscars, the Tony Awards, Eurovison
        2. The World Cup, the Stanley Cup, the Rugby World Trophy Cup
        3. None of it matters when compared to one man’s soul
        4. And yet most religions, and even churches now care only about big name celebrities, and honour great accomplishments, ignoring the shame of the cross, and the power there!

* + 1. All the self-sacrifices of good people throughout history… DUNG!
    2. And most of all, ANY and all prosperity stinks to God!
       1. Nothing wrong with working hard for money and having money
       2. But, Preaching that Christians should not be poor, and should not get sick, and should fly first class, and should live in multi-million euro homes!
       3. SHAME on ALL the wicked false prophets who preach a prosperity kind of gospel
       4. SHAME on all of that false gospel preaching, damning millions of people who love their wealth more than the old rugged cross of Christ!
       5. All of the wealth of this world is NOTHING like the glory of the cross! Only DUNG!

1. **Application and Invitation**
   1. If the cross means little to nothing to you, then you my friend have not known what it was all about – you have been lied to and misled
      1. If church to you has to be basilicas and cathedrals, ornate altars and fancy robed priests, Children’s programmes and padded pews… well…
      2. You have missed everything about the cross!
      3. If Sunday is hit and miss for you and your kids… then you have not encountered the cross
      4. If this old Bible is not being read and obeyed, every day, then it was not the preaching of the cross that brought you to church
   2. Don’t think that your feeble prayers and miniscule religious efforts mean anything to God
   3. THE CROSS – it is the ONLY thing that matters in all of eternity!
      1. To the lost, it means nothing – as a matter of fact, it is offensive, repulsive, upsetting, awful
      2. But to the broken sinner, who has looked on the cross, and believed the One who died there on it, 2,000 years ago, it is GLORIOUS! It is the power of God! And it saves!
   4. There is still room at the cross for anyone, even just one!
      1. Will you believe that what happened there was enough?
      2. Will you, like the thief next to Jesus on the cross, cry out to Him, and ask Him to remember YOU and get you into His glorious kingdom, all because of His substitutionary death on that cross?
      3. The Lord Jesus promises that if you would just trust Him, and ASK Him to save you, you would be so saved, that even if you died right now, you would be with Jesus in PARADISE!
   5. And to the Christian, it’s time we shook off all the glitter of this world, and cling to the old rugged cross, glorying in it, and thanking God that it happened, all for sinners like you and me!