

CB - 6/2/68 am

THE ONLY GROUND OF EXULTATION

Gal. 6:11-18

Intro: One of the most majestic sayings of Paul - Gal. 6:14.

Its importance is indicated by what one writer calls, "a sensational heading" (Findlay, p. 422). (Explain.)

- (1) Because Paul would write in spite of poor eyesight (cf. 4:15) - showing his great concern.
- (2) Because bold handwriting (such as our printing or underlining) arrests attention, indicates emphasis which is unmistakable.

PAUL DOES NOT WANT THE GALATIANS TO MISS HIS FINAL SUMMARIZATION!

~~Four~~ ^{Four} words stand out:

- (1) "Flesh" (vv. 12, 13).
- (2) "Circumcised" (vv. 12, 13, 15).
- (3) "Cross" (vv. 13, 14).
- (4) "World" (v. 14).

When all the teaching of the Judaizers was boiled down to its basic ingredients there was one thing which stood out above everything else: CIRCUMCISION - not righteousness, but ceremony!

They had taken an OT truth relating to Israel, AND THEY HAD PERVERTED IT INTO SOMETHING THAT MAN COULD TAKE CREDIT FOR.

This would give "the flesh" "a fair show," i.e., a good appearance (lit.). He is not talking about the physical body, but about men's

fleshly nature, his old corrupt nature which was so displeasing to God, ~~so~~ utterly mined that it was beyond repair.

THE LEGALIST SAID IT WAS NOT ALL BAD.

THIS WAS THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS. Christ died for us because we are completely beyond all hope spiritually.

BUT (and this is the point Paul is making) - THE WORLD HAS NEVER ACCEPTED THIS TRUTH!!!

note: "Only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ."

Man hates to believe that there is nothing that he can do to please God - that his greatest need is for CHRIST, that the death of CHRIST was an absolute necessity.

We might be morally sick, but the world says, ^{but} we are not spiritually dead, i.e., cut off from God without any hope.

SO - let me be circumcised, or let me be baptized, or let me give my money, or let me do some good works, or let me go to church - LET ME DO SOMETHING!

NO, God says, the answer is to be found at the cross.

Therefore, note v. 14.

I. THERE IS A TRUTH FOR ME TO RECOGNIZE. It is this: WHEN I

RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR IT FOREVER SET ME APART FROM THIS WORLD TO WHICH FORMERLY I BELONGED.

N.B.

This world with its wisdom, its way of life, its sin, its pleasures, its emphasis on things, its honors, its pride, its exaltation of man - all of this I have been delivered from!

There is a separation now. I do not belong to this world any more.

Cf. 2 Cor. 5:14-17, "For the love of Christ constraineth us..."

Cf. Jn. 17:14-19; 15:19.

How important it is for me to recognize this basic truth of the word of God!

But let me also say that arising out of this truth (as out of all other truth)

II. THERE ARE PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THIS MUST AFFECT MY LIFE.

The Galatians were being taught by their false teachers to water down the Gospel to make it more acceptable to the world.

They were being told that if they wanted to reach men they must tell them there is SOMETHING THAT THEY CAN DO, that they are in trouble, but not beyond hope!

THE SUBTLE THING ABOUT THIS IS THAT YOU CANNOT ALTER THE GOSPEL YOU PREACH WITHOUT ALSO AFFECTING THE TRUTH WHICH RELATES TO MY LIFE AS A CHRISTIAN!

THE LINES BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN AND THE NON-CHRISTIAN BECOME LESS DISTINCT - and the first thing you know, you have a situation existing like we do today when the world and the church have become so joined together that for all practical purposes THE WORLD IN ITS OPPOSITION TO GOD NO LONGER EXISTS.

The world becomes ~~Christian~~ outwardly, and THE CHURCH ACTUALLY USES THE WORLD'S METHODS TO MINISTER TO THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD.

We find the strange situation where people supposedly accept Christ, but they go on living like they did before!

The Church no longer insists (as the NT does) on CHANGE; we simply look for decisions and close our eyes to anything else.

We attract people to Christ by telling them how happy a Christian can be, how successful a Christian can be, how prominent a ~~Christian~~ can be - not how righteous God is and how hopelessly lost in sin men is.

WE ACTUALLY HAVE INSTANCES WHERE PEOPLE WHOSE REL. TO CHRIST IS DOUBTFUL WHO ARE ACTUALLY IN THE PLACE OF MINISTERING TO THE CHURCH!

Are these Scriptures no longer true - Rom. 12:2; 1 Jn. 2:15-17; Jas. 4:4?

How would you explain them?
Back in the early 1700's Isaac Watts wrote:

"Am I a soldier of the Cross - a
follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause
or blush to speak His name?
"Must I be curbed to the sties
on flow'ry beds of ease
While others fought to win the
prize or sailed through bloody seas?
"Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
to help me on to God?"

cf. v. 17

What are the answers to these questions? Has the world changed
OR HAS THE CHURCH CHANGED? Is
it because we are so much like
the world that the church has
lost its power in a day when the
world is in its hour of greatest
need?

How would you answer these
questions?

There is one other point in our
verse this morning. It is

III PAUL'S ATTITUDE - "But God forbid that I should glory..."

Was Paul unhappy about all of this? Did he long to be back in that old relationship with the world? Or, did ~~he~~ ^{he} wish he could have the world and Christ?

Absolutely not!

HIS JOY WAS FOUND IN THIS TRUTH THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH - AND IN PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD - LEAVING MAN WITHOUT ANY HOPE BEFORE OR AFTER SALVATION EXCEPT IN CHRIST.

Concl: We have finished our study for this time of the book of ~~Galatians~~. I am grateful for the blessings God has given us, BUT I WONDER HOW MUCH EACH ONE OF US WILL PROFIT IN THE DAYS TO COME FROM WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED.

WILL WE BE MORE AWARE OF THE NEED FOR A PURE, UNADULTERATED GOSPEL?

AND WILL WE BE JUST AS CONCERNED THAT WE ARE LIVING IN DEPENDENCE UPON THE SPIRIT OF GOD, LIVING LIVES PLEASING TO THE LORD - NOT TO MEN?

If so, our time has been well spent.

may God make us faithful to Him so that we may be effective in reaching others.