



DON'T FORGET THE CROSS!

■ A STUDY OF GALATIANS 6:14 by Dr. John D. DeBrine ■

At one of the Billy Graham Crusades that Songtime USA covered, Cliff Barrows introduced a young school girl who was just great in her recitation of "The Cross in My Pocket":

I carry a Cross in my pocket,
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.
This little Cross is not magic,
Nor is it a good luck charm.
It isn't meant to protect me
From every physical harm.
It's not for identification
For all the world to see.
It's simply an understanding
Between my Savior and me.
When I put my hand in my pocket
To bring out a coin or key,
The Cross is there to remind me
Of the price He paid for me.
It reminds me, too, to be thankful
For my blessings day by day
And strive to serve Him better
In all that I do and say.
It's also a daily reminder
Of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my Master
And give themselves to His care.
So, I carry a Cross in my pocket
Reminding no one but me,
That Jesus Christ
Is Lord of my life
If only I'll let Him be.

All of this takes us to Galatians 6:14a which emphasizes the necessity of the cross of Christ. There is a word in the Bible translated "precious". It is the Greek word "timia" and it refers to something of great value. You find this word in II Peter 1:4 (referring to the Word of God) and in I Peter 1:7 it means God's estimate of trials. God calls them "precious" because they make the believer explainable only by God, if the believer applies divine operating assets (Ephesians 5:18 being one of them). In view of the word "precious" we shouldn't be surprised to find it referring to the cross of Christ emphasizing that after Good Friday and Easter we must not forget the cross. "Inasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold,

from your futile conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

-I Peter 1:18-19

I found the series on "Lessons from the Cross" which I prepared for radio to be one of the studies that meant more to me than any I have done. I was again reminded that "Christ died for my sins." My entire future depends upon my admitting my hopelessness apart from the cross and laying my whole record of sins on Jesus. That, by the way, is what Galatians 2:20 is all about - "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." No wonder Paul said what he did in Galatians 6:14.

Read the text and join with me as we study it..."But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

I. PROOF OF THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR TEXT

Note the words "God forbid". That is a very strong negative that carries the idea of virtual impossibility. I enjoy using a Treasury of Scripture Knowledge technique (an excellent reference book available in the Songtime bookstore). This often-used reference book is in my library and tells us that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible. That tells me to go to other Biblical texts to see the real

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"Country Gospel Music Day" at Lake Compounce

Join Songtime USA and Life Changing Radio for a day filled with special music, Bible teaching, and lots of rides and amusements at America's oldest family theme park. Get a group from your church together and come for the entire day on **Saturday May 30 from Noon - 7pm at Lake Compounce in Bristol, CT. Tickets are available from Songtime for \$13.95 per person** (a \$6.00 savings over the price of admission at the gate). Call 1-888-SONG-USA to order your tickets. Gates open at 11am.

impact of “God forbid” here in Galatians 6:14. Let me give you a few texts: Romans 3:4,6; Romans 3:31 & Romans 6:2,15. If you had any questions about the words before reading, you won’t have after you read them. For example, Romans 3:4 “certainly not” states the text. When I take the “God forbid” of Galatians 6:14 and see how the same word is used elsewhere I have to conclude

that the message of the cross is top priority in the mind of God.

II. WHY PAUL GLORIED IN THE CROSS

I Corinthians 2:5 is a horrifying reminder that some make human viewpoint the object of their faith. Such people have no positive future with God,

but hear it — properly relating to the message of the cross of Christ prevents I Corinthians 2:5. With that in mind, note I Corinthians 2:2 - “*For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*”

APPLICATION:

I must come to a frightening conclusion. In view of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself states in Matthew 7:14 that “narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it”, great numbers of people who receive this newsletter may be religious without the Holy Spirit being resident in your lives. I John 5:10 is simply not happening. Make sure you have laid your sins on Jesus because your sins are either on you or on Jesus. Pray this prayer:

Oh God - I am a sinner. I have nothing that Your holiness will accept but I recognize that Christ died for my sins. I recognize according to I Corinthians 1:30 that the righteousness I desperately need can be found only in Jesus Christ. I lay my sins on Jesus and I will daily use John 1:12 as my receipt because “As many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe on His Name. God - You said it — that settles it and I believe it. In Christ’s name I pray. -Amen

Now if you said that prayer, write to me so I can send you a special cassette. If you are sure of your salvation, I’m counting on you to include a special gift so we can get the same message to others including our service personnel at Otis Air Force Base right here on Cape Cod. An Evangelical Chaplain there is helping us with this project which can be used to reach them and their families back home. Perhaps you would like to give a special gift in honor of or in memory of your mother as we approach Mothers Day.

A MOTHER'S DAY “HYMNSTORY”

■ *Bill Dagle* ■

The second Sunday in May each year is celebrated as “Mother’s Day” in America. This has been the case since 1914 due to a proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson. Many think that it was Julie Ward Howe who, in 1872, first suggested that a day be set aside to honor mothers. Mrs. Howe would also give us the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”, but it would be the determination of Ann Jarvis and her letter-writing campaign to officials across the nation asking that the second Sunday in May be dedicated to mothers which finally brought about “Mother’s Day”. Of course one day a year is not enough, as each and every day we should remember the importance of motherhood.

When Joseph Scriven penned a poem to comfort his ill mother, he was simply saying, “I love you, Mom.” Little did he know that his poem, “What a friend we have in Jesus” would bring comfort to more than just his mom down through the years.

Such was the situation for another mother’s son who would give the words of encouragement from which a song would be born. Everybody knew that William McKinley was a devout Christian, Bible class teacher and Superintendent of a Methodist Sunday School. What they didn’t know about McKinley was that every day of his mother’s life, he would either write or telegraph her. He did this every day he was not with her throughout his years as lawyer, congressman, Governor of Ohio and as the President of the United States. In fact, he was so close to his mother that when she became severely ill in the winter of 1897, he had her home in Canton connected to the White House by a special wire and also kept a dedicated train standing by with a full head of steam at all times. Finally the fateful night came when “Mother McKinley” called for William. Attendants wired, “*Mr. President, we think you had better come.*” The answer flashed back, “*Tell mother I’ll be there.*” On Sunday afternoon, December 12, 1897, Nancy McKinley breathed her last breath in the arms of her 54 year old son. For a full hour after she died, he did not move from her bedside.

Hymn writer, Charles Fillmore, read a newspaper account of McKinley’s telegram to his dying mother and the ensuing events which inspired him to write a hymn using the dramatic message as a title. The refrain of “Tell Mother I’ll be There” describes so well what has happened to many a wayward child when finally they come back to God in answer to a faithful mother’s prayer:

*Tell mother I’ll be there, in answer to her prayer;
This message blessed Saviour, to her hear.
Tell mother I’ll be there, Heaven’s joys with her to share
Yes, tell my darling mother I’ll be there.*

Maybe today God is calling you to respond to your mother’s prayer and get your heart right with God. If so, Songtime would like to help. Just ask for our cassette “Explaining Christianity” when you call or write.

New Additions:

Songtime USA welcomed three new broadcast partners in April. Listen to Songtime on these stations...

WFIL in Philadelphia - 560 AM
M-Sat at 5:00-5:30am each morning
WZZD in Philadelphia - 990 AM
M-F at 1:00-1:30am each night
WSAI in Cincinnati - 1530 AM
Sunday late night at 2:30-3:00am

ARE WE DEALING WITH THE MAIN HUMAN PROBLEM?

■ Steven W. Butts ■

Stories fill the news every day of people sinning, abusing, and killing other people. Why? Why can't people relate peaceably with one another? Why does so much anger, hatred, and violence exist? What makes people want to kill other people? Why kindergartners? Why can't Nations be peaceful with other Nations? We've found solutions for many problems but we continue to see an ugly side to humanity that won't go away.

Look at the normal run of life in America. Why do an alarmingly large percentage of marriages fail? Why do an ever increasing number of people turn to drugs and alcohol to escape the painful reality of their lives? Why do we face the increasing problem of street gangs dominating our cities? Why do husbands abuse their wives and abandon their children? Why do many of those same children become adults who repeat the sins of their fathers? Theft, rape, murder, youth killing youth, gov-

ernment leaders involved in questionable dealings—these are constant headlines in local and national news. Something is clearly wrong with the human race.

Are there any solutions to these serious problems? Can anything or anyone make wrong things right? Is more or better government the answer? Should we look to education or technology? While we must be thankful for the help provided by some of these sources, it is obvious that greater answers are needed. No century has witnessed as much evil and brutality as the 20th century—the most advanced of human history. Something is desperately wrong!

I am not a pessimist, nor do I enjoy analyzing things in this way. I try to look at life with as much optimism as possible. Yet the older I become the more convinced I am that what I see is (to borrow the title of a book I recently read) *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be*. The author, Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., tackles the complexity of the human dilemma with great skill and honesty.

According to Plantinga the main human problem is sin. He sees sin as a spoiler of creation. Plantinga observes that "sin is a departure from the norm; *deviant, perverse. An injustice, ingratitude, iniquity. It is disorder, disobedience, faithlessness, lawlessness, godlessness.* It oversteps and fails to reach God's holy standard. Sin spoils the goods, stains the garments. It is a hitch in one's gait, a wandering from the path, a fragmenting of the whole. It is an anomaly, an intruder, a notorious gate-crasher. Sin is a parasite."

Most are familiar with the account of David's sin of adultery with Bathsheba. When King David confessed his sin he acknowledged that his problem went deeper than his actions. He said, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Psalm 51:5). His act of adultery (and the murder of Bathsheba's husband) gave witness to his sinful nature—a nature common to every person. The scripture says, "For all have

sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

All of this demonstrates the human need of salvation by grace alone. God's salvation reconciles what sin separates. Why, for example, do relationships fail? Could the answer be that sin has been a separating force from its beginnings. The "fault line" runs so obviously through the Scripture. Adam and Eve. Cain and Abel. Sarah and Hagar. Isaac and Ishmael. Jacob and Esau. Joseph and his brothers. David and Saul. The pattern is clear. Who can deny the words of the prophet Isaiah, "All of us like sheep have gone astray; each of us has turned to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6).

We don't need religion—we need rescue, redemption, and reconciliation. Only grace could rescue us and grace is what God offers through Jesus Christ. Scripture specifically states, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast" (Eph.2:8-9). Those who find the vocabulary of salvation distasteful have a very unrealistic view of the human predicament.

Plantinga suggests that, "Self deception about our sin is a narcotic, a tranquilizing and disorienting suppression of our spiritual central nervous system. What's devastating about it is that when we lack an ear for wrong notes in our lives, we cannot play right ones or even recognize them in the performances of others. Eventually we make ourselves religiously so unmusical that we miss both the exposition and the recapitulation of the main themes God plays in human life. The music of creation and the still greater music of grace whistle right through our skulls, causing no catch of breath and leaving no residue. Moral beauty begins to bore us. The idea that the human race needs a Savior sounds quaint."

In our sophistication we may think we've grown beyond archaic ideas about sin but its destructive presence continues to disrupt peaceful existence.

FOURTH ANNUAL RETREAT IN BERMUDA

Join us September 17-25 at Willowbank, Bermuda. This is a wonderful place to unwind and relax, which refreshes both mind and body. Dr. John will bring the morning devotions before we start each day exploring the island, swimming, golfing, playing tennis or shopping. "Game Nights", concerts, movies and talent nights are available in the evenings. Meals are magnificent, tea-time is a great way to meet the other guests and the spiritual food offered each day by Dr. John helps us in our daily walk. Cost of the 9 days/8 nights, breakfast, afternoon tea & full-course dinner daily, hotel and departure tax, cab to Willowbank, 7-day bus & ferry pass is: \$1580-single, \$1280-double per person for garden view rooms; waterview rooms are \$1750-single or \$1450-double per person. Airfare and tours are extra. For a brochure and registration, please call Songtime at 1-888-SONG USA.

Dr. Bob Burrelli Answers Songtime Listener Questions

Q: How can so many good and reputable Bible teachers disagree with each other on significant theological points?

A: Good Bible study, interpretation, and teaching do not come naturally and automatically for a believer, including the one with the gift of pastor/teacher; raw gifts still need to be honed, and Hermeneutics (the study of the methodological principles of interpretation), as with any other discipline in life, must be approached by a diligent, disciplined, and qualified individual.

By qualified I mean that the individual must be born again, if Scripture is even going to make any sense (1 Corinthians 2:14f.). They must also have a knowledge of hermeneutical principles. You might say, "Fair enough. But we do have great Bible teachers who fit this description disagreeing with each other on significant points of Scripture. How come?"

This description of the qualified Bible student is only half the story. There are other variables at work in the context of two equally qualified believers who hold two opposite views on a significant theological point. Though they are believers, they are also sinners and not beyond making illogical inferences and observations. Furthermore, they are not always able

to retrieve every single piece of datum concerning the particular topic of discussion. We all can't be experts on everything. Therefore, if they are limited in their data, they are limited in their accuracy of interpretation.

Finally, every Bible student faces the challenge of coming to the Scriptures without personal biases, selfish motives, wrong presuppositions, and with a desire to submit to the Word and to glorify God.

A Scripture passage that has helped me to see how disagreement between godly individuals is bound to happen is Isaiah 55:8-9: "for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways . . . As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." My prayer is that this sobering declaration of the facts would spur us on to learn how to agree to disagree in a mature and godly fashion, caution us against labelling others in the Body of Christ heretics, and prevent us from using Bible teachers as an adequate replacement for (rather than as a complement to) the personal Bible study that God commands each of us to do with all humility and sincerity (2 Timothy 2:15).

We Love to Get Letters!

"I heard your broadcast yesterday and you expressed the need for thousands of Christian music cd's to help fledgling Christian stations through Euro-Asia. I thought to myself, how could you possibly get thousands of cd's? I mentioned this to my wife when I got home and the thought came to me that there are thousands of people like us who need to extend out of our comfort zone and become involved in this project - even sending one CD. I trust God has provided for your need."

(New Jersey listener)

"Thanks for your support of me over the years. There have been deaths of parents, a child with cancer, loss of employment and other things going on in my life since I first contacted you many years ago. Your newsletter and program have supported me through a long period of trial. Even though I haven't been able to give, you have been incredible - continuing to send them out even when the years have gone by. Thanks again."

(Salem, NH listener)

"Here's a little gift to support your wonderful ministry. I spend 2 1/2 hours each day driving to and from work - so your audio magazine is a great blessing to me and then to others as I pass them along to friends. Bless you all."

(Mystic, CT listener)



Dr. John's Speaking Schedule...

- May 2 & 3:** **Valley Christian Church** in Conway New Hampshire.
Saturday service at 7 PM and Sunday services at 10 AM & 6 PM
- May 9 & 10:** **Bethlehem Baptist Church** in W. Boylston, MA
Saturday service at 7:30 PM and Sunday service at 10:30 AM
- May 17 & 18:** **New England Conference for CEO's**
at Hemlocks Conference Center in Hebron, CT
- May 24:** **East Baptist Church** in Lynn, MA for their 10:45 AM service.
- May 30:** **"Country Gospel Music Day"**
at Lake Compounce in Bristol, CT
- June 7:** **The Chapel** 895 N. Forest Rd., Buffalo, NY
Sunday morning at 9 & 11 AM and Sunday evening at 6 PM
- June 14:** **North Uxbridge Baptist Church** in N. Uxbridge, MA
Sunday services at 11 AM and 6 PM
- June 19-21:** **America's Keswick**
Friday evening, Saturday AM and Sunday morning.

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Email: info@songtime.com
Web Page: <http://www.songtime.com>

President: Dr. John DeBrine
Chairman: Rod August
Treasurers: Eric Rorstrom & Wally Lundstrom
Editor/Layout: David Donnelly
Contributors: Dr. John D. DeBrine, Bill Dagle, Steven W. Butts, Dr. Bob Burrelli, Marge Demers

