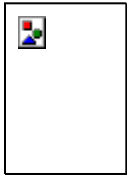


HOW we Glory/Boast in Yeshua's Cross

Part 2



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

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Summary: The cross or stake of Christ is the anchor of God's grace and salvation. We know about the sacrifice of the crucifixion of the Son of God for us. We all talk about the One who was the Lamb of God and everything his shed blood did for us. But do we as freely discuss, mention, and talk about his cross itself? Paul certainly did. In this teaching, we discuss **WHY** and **HOW** it's so crucial to also talk about the cross, even to boast and glory in it, especially now with Passover coming soon.

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Scott: Last time, Philip started his 2-part sermon **on Galatians 6:14** about boasting or glorying in the cross of Jesus. Last time he covered some of the ways the Old Testament pointed to the crucifixion and also how the Romans historically used various designs for crucifixions.

Today, we proceed with Part 2. This time we focus on WHY and HOW we boast and glory in the cross or our Savior. After all, that's what Paul said is all he wanted to do. Here's Philip Shields – Part 2.

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Please be sure to watch the video with notes. **THIS** sermon in particular will have a LOT of comments and information beyond these notes.

Hello, children of the Highest, brothers and sisters in the House of God. Thank you for coming.

As Scott said, today is Part 2 – HOW we do glory and boast in the Cross, as Paul put it **in Galatians 6:14?** DO we frequently **BOAST** in the Cross? We just don't talk about the cross itself that much. Many believe the symbol of the cross is of pagan origin and so they shy away from it. See Part 1 for more about that and showing how the Old Testament prophecies, if anything, points to a cross-shaped "cross"! And historical descriptions of crucifixions bear this out: the crossbeam cross was more common than we first thought.

We know now that the "cross" of Jesus could have been any number of things: just **an upright stake** in the ground, or a **T-shape** or the more traditional **crossbeam cross**,

or even an **X shape** or to a Tree. Romans used them all. Certainly, the crossbeam cross was widely used.

When Apostle Paul looked at the Cross of our Savior – he stood in AWE of what happened on the cross, as well as of the cross of our Savior itself. He spoke often both of the One crucified, as the Lamb of God who shed his blood for us – as well as the instrument of death. This is key to understand.

Please bow your heads as we commit this service to Father's blessing and as we bless, thank, and praise our Abba and Yeshua for the life and death and resurrection of our Savior.

Opening prayer ... (here are notes from it)

Holy Father, Abba in heaven, and holy Yeshua – meaning “salvation” – Thank you. We bow our heads before you as we come to the cross of Yeshua, where you – Yeshua-- **knocked Satan out, in the head, at Golgotha.** We're * in * AWE * of you. We are amazed by you.

Forgive us, Yeshua, for not esteeming your love enough for all you've done. King, Master and Savior -- your blood ran down red, and you washed our sins white in your blood. You took our sins, took our shame, took God's wrath on us we had earned – and brought us forgiveness, love, acceptance, reconciliation, and justification IN YOU. Thank you so much.

Father, again thank you for sending The WORD to do all this and more. Help us **be ready for Passover** and to be esteeming the Lord's body – both HIS own body and the body of Christ, which is the ekklesia, the church. Let us **never doubt your love and thank you** for always being there. Help us love you more each day.

Please send down your holy anointing spirit on all listening as well on what you want me to say to your children. Guide the speaking and the listening, as we commit this service into your hands.

In Yeshua's loving and powerful name, Amen.

Hello again, everyone.

I covered the INSTRUMENT of Christ's death in part 1 because there are too many who get hung up on the word “cross” – without realizing that the latest research on it shows many crucifixions were indeed often on crosses – *with crossbeams*, not just one upright.

Even I, for decades, did not give sermons about boasting in the cross. I believed in the one upright stake and no crossbeam because of the fact that some pagan religions before Christ also used the cross symbol. But Romans crucified on trees, on uprights, on T shaped and on X shaped and crossbeam crosses! I'm very sure that Yeshua did not carry the entire cross shape, but just the crossbeam. So I'm NOT reluctant to say “the Cross” as some are. If you prefer “stake,” so be it; you say “stake” then.

- There's **much more in part 1**, so please watch that first video first.

- For many conservative sabbath-keeping churches, I would be amazed if you've ever had a whole sermon on boasting in the cross. Well, here's mine. Long overdue. I preach to myself, as I'm late in talking about it as well.
- **Paul's message was BROAD:** He spoke often of Christ and his sacrifice for us as the Lamb of God, but also about the CROSS itself.

So we also should openly talk about the cross. Saying "the cross" covers a lot of ground, as those 2 words summarize everything that happened on it.

I'm covering this before Passover, so we all get over any reluctance to speak of the cross," or if you prefer – "the Stake." And if others in your group aren't comfortable – you just don't speak of the stake either, to go along to get along. Let's not be like that. Let's follow the teachings and urgings in God's word. Let's talk about the cross much more often – whether you say "cross" or "stake."

Besides the newest historical information that I covered in part 1, even the Old Testament itself pointed us to the cross –

- Passover blood of the **lamb on the lintel above** – where the head would be and on the 2 side posts where his hands would have been
- The **shape of the camp of Israel** was definitely as a cross if you study **Numbers 2** and add up all the numbers of the tribes.
Look at this 2nd image too – and the larger numbers of Judah and its team.

Did you also note that the standard for the 4 teams of 3 tribes were a lion, man, eagle and ox? Just like the 4 living creatures around God's heavenly throne (**Revelation 4:6-8**). King David wrote in **Psalms 22:16-18** about the crucifixion when he said, "They pierced my hands and my feet" and mentioned how they cast lots for his garments and that he could SEE all his bones... Oh Savior...

Psalms 22:16-18

"For dogs have surrounded Me. The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
They pierced My hands and My feet;
17 **I can count all My bones.** They look and stare at Me.
18 **They divide My garments** among them,
And for My clothing they **cast lots**.

- **The Aleph-Tav** – the first and last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The TAV in the ancient original Paleo Hebrew –looked like a **cross!** It meant to mark, sign, covenant and is what the Hebrew says was the mark placed on God's people's foreheads in **Ezekiel 9:4** – "write a TAV, a mark, on their foreheads". Folks, that looked like a cross in ancient Paleo Hebrew.

So to me, all these things and more, make clear God himself is not ashamed of the cross shaped cross! There's much, much more detail in part 1. I will be saying "the cross' from now on – and that could mean a cross, an X, a T or an upright stake or even a tree. They used them all.

I ended the last sermon about Boasting/Glorying in the cross by saying, because of the death and shed blood of Yeshua for us, we could hear our heavenly Father – who is King of the Universe, God MOST High, say to us one day, who believe in Jesus Christ, (Yeshua our Messiah):

“Because of what My son did, your sin debt has been erased, paid in full and you are no longer sentenced to die, but sentenced to Eternal LIFE!”

And He will welcome us into his family. Also – nothing can separate us from the love of GOD, ever (**Rom 8:38-39**). So let's pick up again at Gal. 4:16.

Galatians 6:14

“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

Paul is not boasting about himself but is in awe of Christ and what happened on his cross. God wants us to glory in HIM and his goodness.

Jeremiah 9:24 –

“But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows ME, that I am Yehovah, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says Yehovah (the LORD).

Death by cross/stake was a shameful death reserved for the worst criminals.

So most people would never admit to having a loved one who had been crucified. So why is Paul saying he boasts in the cross? And he says it in so many ways, so many times. That's our example.

1 Corinthians 1:18-19

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

1 Corinthians 2:2

“For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”

So my first point in boasting about the cross is this: DO IT. Just start talking about it more. So many are good about talking about the Lamb of God, the blood of Christ and all it does, *but leave out the message of the cross itself. God's whole message to humanity is anchored in the cross and his resurrection.*

1. Just start including the Cross in your Bible discussions. Paul said he gloried in the CROSS – not just about Christ himself.

It's easy to boast about someone you love. (Story of woman cheering on her son in a race – “that's my son, that's my son, that's my boy!”)

Even Paul's explanation of the GOSPEL message he preached in Corinth – was about the death and resurrection of Yeshua. See verses 1, 3-4 especially. Is that your definition of your “GOSPEL”?

1 Corinthians 15:1-6

“Moreover, brethren, **I declare to you the GOSPEL which I preached to you,** which also you received and in which you stand, **2 by which also you are SAVED,** if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.”

The FULL gospel of course has to include the good news of the Kingdom of God. But the gospel of the kingdom has to include the way INTO that kingdom. Jesus is the DOOR (John 10:7, 9) and he's the WAY into it, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). The full, true gospel MUST include everything about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and how HE makes the way possible to BE in God's kingdom.

The message of the cross is HOW even the worst of sinners who repent can get into the kingdom of God. So of course we preach the death and resurrection of Jesus as our gospel message, as Paul says in **1 Cor. 15:1-7**.

The full gospel is the good news message of the Kingdom, of Christ, of God, of Salvation, of Peace and the gospel of grace. Do you and your church speak of this good news -- in Acts 20:24 below? I have a recent 2-part sermon on God's grace/favor for us. When did you last preach or hear a sermon on the gospel of the Grace of God?

Acts 20:24

“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received **from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.**”

Paul was so in love with His Savior and his actions, that nothing else seemed to matter. *When you're deeply in love, that's how it is... nothing else matters.* So he spoke of Christ and his grace often, very often. The cross is the anchor to that message.

To boast in the cross means we're so awed by the cross and by Yeshua that we can't stop talking about it all! Boasting surely means we're frequently bringing it up and wanting people to hear about it. **Do we?**

Yeshua called Paul while on the road to Damascus (**Acts 9:1-20**). Paul was going to arrest God's people and even to lead them to their death. Christ called him to testify of HIM, and to bring Gentiles and anyone to be under Christ's power and freed from Satan's power. Note: Yeshua spoke to Saul in HEBREW. Hebrew was well known as well as Aramaic, as you'll see.

Let's read Paul's accounting of his calling by Christ later to King Agrippa.

Acts 26:14-15 CJB (Paul before Agrippa).

“We all fell to the ground; and then I heard **a voice saying to me, in HEBREW,** ‘Sha'ul! Sha'ul! Why do you keep persecuting ME? It's hard on you to be kicking against the ox-goads!’

So everything Yeshua said to Saul (Paul) here on the road to Damascus was in Hebrew. Even the sign over Christ's head on the cross was written in Latin, Greek and Hebrew.

Notice what the Son of God says his name is. He said it in Hebrew.

15 I said, 'Who are you, sir?' and the **Lord answered, 'I am YESHUA, and you are persecuting me!'** (remember, speaking in HEBREW).

The name our Savior said was his name – speaking in Hebrew – was Yeshua, meaning “salvation”.

Acts 26:17-18 (Yeshua continuing his mission to Paul...)

“I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,

18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’

The cross is the symbol of everything Acts 26:18 says Paul was to teach and do.

We are made righteous and made holy by faith in Yeshua... not by all the things WE do. What WE must do is to seek, find, glory in Yeshua, and stay focused on him. That leads us to point #2.

2. **CONTEXT of Gal 6:14 tells us: FOCUS on what GOD has done and is doing, rather than the spiritual things YOU are doing.**

The Galatians were trying to be spiritual by insisting that all the men be circumcised, and they boasted about how successful they were in convincing the men to cut their flesh. Paul is teaching that their focus was all wrong. Don't boast in what YOU do, but in what God through Christ did for US!

Galatians 6:12-15

“As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13 For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised **that they may boast in your flesh.**”

14 **“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

15 **For in Christ Jesus** neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, **but a new creation.**”

Talk about what GOD is doing in your life, not what you're doing to be spiritual. Paul says what really counts is God creating you into something brand new – something or someone who's never been before: a NEW CREATION!

YOU and I do not create or cause our own new creation. There's ONE Creator-- GOD! He has created all things – and most especially people who are new creations in Christ! Paul is telling them (**Gal 6:15**) -- “THIS is what matters!” [Note: There's so much more explanation in the video!]

2 Corinthians 5:16-18

16 "Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

In verse 16, Paul is telling them to quit thinking of people the way they were before they came to Christ. Certainly quit gossiping about anyone's sins in the past. Your gossiping becomes a current sin vs someone else's sins of decades ago that you want everyone to know about. And any of you who do that, don't understand or practice God's grace! That puts you in trouble – because if we don't offer grace and forgiveness, WE will not be receiving grace either.

17 Therefore, **if anyone is IN CHRIST, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, ALL things have become new.**

18 **Now ALL things are of God**, who has reconciled us to Himself *through Jesus Christ*, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,"

"ALL THINGS are of God". He's our focus. Yeshua is where our eyes are fixed.

God is the creator of ALL THINGS – including his NEW CREATION in us. We are not creating our own new self. It's GOD'S work. That work could only be possible first by the cross and then the resurrection of the Son of God, and then HIS resurrected life coming to live again in each of us. **BOAST** in that! That we have a **WONDERFUL, AMAZING GOD AND SAVIOR**, not in what great spiritual things YOU are doing.

SO when we talk about the Cross, **we have to also talk about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The glorying is in BOTH** – the death and resurrection of our Hero. That he **LIVES** now again... and lives obediently in us, just as he did when he walked the earth.

The Cross means: You can't come up with a more selfless act of love ever done by a man – than what Yeshua did for us all, on a cross. In his cross, we see not just the son of God crucified, but **the bright HOPE of the world**. We believers see release from sin's bondage. We experience the love of God. I imagine if we could ever see an actual crucifixion, we'd appreciate much more what Yeshua did for us.

I doubt any of us fully appreciate or comprehend what happened on that stake or cross 2000 years ago but know that if you trust in him and believe in him, all the guilt you've ever felt for your awful sins are washed away, and you find peace with God. Yes, I will boast in that cross.

Many of you are coming to this site from Brazil, Kenya, China, Indonesia, Philippines, North and South Korea, Israel, and Europe and the Americas. This cross is for you too.

Do you remember how the Bible says **SIMON OF CYRENE** helped carry Jesus' cross? Jesus had lost so much blood in that awful scourging and had not slept a wink all night before – so it got to be too much. Romans called on Simon of Cyrene (**Mark 15:21**) to carry the crossbeam. He had 2 sons who were believers.

Simon of Cyrene was very likely a black man from north Africa. There were also many Jews in Cyrene, so he could have been a local black man or a Jew. God is using and calling

and inviting people from all over the world. The cross is for everyone – YOU too. He died for you too, no matter who you are, where you're from, or who you've been, even if you've been a persecutor of Christians like Paul was! (DO stop the persecuting now though, OK?)

Final Hours for our Savior

Isaiah 53:7 says Yeshua was led like a lamb for the slaughter. Pigs squeal terribly when being killed. Lambs do not scream or make a lot of noise when they are being killed, as I understand it. Somehow, I believe the same for our Messiah. He did shout out – “FINISHED!” while on the cross.

Once we accept Yeshua as YOUR life now, and realize you belong to Him now, and ask him to let you be IN HIM, in his body, we're part of HIM – ALL KINDS of wondrous things happen that we are included in! This should be so exciting.

From before the foundation of the world, God and the Word had a long discussion about their plan of salvation. The Word, who became Christ, offered to be the sacrificial Lamb of God.

Let's recall some points we can be boasting about. Yeshua said there's no greater love than to die for your friends – and yet Yeshua even died for his enemies! HE offered to die. It was his choice. Father didn't make him do it, in other words. They agreed, as ONE. Father sent him, but it was Yeshua's choice whether to be crucified or not (John 10:17-18).

John 10:17-18

"Therefore My Father loves Me, because **I lay down My life** that I may take it again.

18 NO ONE takes it from Me, but **I lay it down of Myself**. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. *This command I have received from My Father.*"

Here's how Paul summarized it, and these are all things we should boast about Christ! [There's more explanation on the video.]

Romans 5:6-10

“For when we were still without strength, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly**. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**.

[Even you and me with our worst sins, he paid the ultimate price to redeem you and me. He “died for ME, and loved ME”, Paul says – Gal. 2:20. Apply the same to yourself.]

9 Much more then, **having now been justified [made righteous] by His blood, we shall be saved from WRATH through HIM**.

10 For if when we were enemies we were RECONCILED to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we **shall be saved by His life**.”

The power of the cross is exalted in Christ's resurrection – his new resurrection life. We need to be like Messiah and seek to speak Father's words; do Father's works – and not our own. If Christ could be so strongly living in each of us that way, it would be like having thousands of Yeshuas walking the planet.

We're saved by Christ's resurrection life living again – obediently – inside us. We need to become like Christ who said every word he spoke, every work or act he did – were his Father's words and acts. **John 14:10-12**. We need to get to that same point.

Yeshua sought to do his father's will, not his own will (**John 6:38**).

Paul said in Philippians that he didn't care about his own righteousness by his own efforts. He only wanted to receive **GOD'S own perfect righteousness** by faith, as God's GIFT (**Romans 5:17**), through Christ.

Philippians 3:8b-11

“that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found **in Him, NOT** having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, **the righteousness which is from God by faith;**

¹⁰ that I may **know HIM and the power of HIS resurrection**, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead”.

Paul wanted to experience HIS – Christ's – resurrection... “that I may know the power of HIS resurrection.” He wanted Yeshua living again in him and he could boast about what Christ was doing. How powerful, how loving, how amazing our Master is!!

Our entire eternity starts with us understanding and loving the cross of our Savior – and then his resurrection by God the Father.

Let's recount Christ's love leading to his cross:

- **Yeshua was INTENT on getting this done, though it also caused a natural dread in him, for a while, as he prayed in Gethsemane.**

Satan had captured all humanity after Adam and Eve's sin in the garden and God expelled them. God KNEW that would happen and so in that way, we're told that Christ was slain **from “BEFORE the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:18-20)** God sees the end from the beginning and knew the Word of God – Jesus/Yeshua – was going to have to die for their creation. None of us would have done any better than Adam & Eve, by the way.

*When you love someone, or something, or a cause – I mean REALLY love them – **not much else matters. And you KNOW that where there's deep love, there will also be deep hurt come your way sooner or later.** You know that. But you're willing to be hurt, to even die, for the people and the cause you love so much.*

That's what God and His Son realized before mankind was even created. There would be sin, and there would be hurt. God and Christ experienced abandonment.

And so the plan was made – from before creation of man – to show their love by dying brutally for us all and giving us the way back into His presence.

And at the Passover meal in John 13, AFTER Satan possessed Judas, notice the eagerness and determination of Christ.

John 13:26-27

Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

27 Now after the piece of bread, **Satan entered him**. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

We now read some strength and anticipation in Jesus' words—knowing the stage has been set for the grand battle for the saving of humankind. Yeshua – the son of Man-- is ready to rumble with the most powerful evil spirit in creation – Satan. God is the ultimate power of course and against God, has no chance. Remember Jesus is a man at this point.

John 13:30-31

Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

31 So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "NOW the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him..."

- **After Adam and Eve's sin, humanity came under Satan's rulership.** He became the "god of this age/world" (**2 Corinthians 4:4**), though still under some **restraints and limits imposed by God, who is still Supreme**. Jesus said the people of his day were of their father – the Devil!

John 8:44a

"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do."

The wages of sin is death – real death! Like ashes under the feet of those who fear God's name (**Malachi 4:2-3**) – not eternal life being tortured forever in hell fire that doesn't quite kill you! **So Yeshua/Jesus came to pay your and my penalty -- our lives—for us and he did it on the cross.** Now I can accept His offer of paying the sin debt I incurred -- and become a new creation, a son of God, and have eternal life as God's GIFT – because of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Satan battled Christ as hard as he could, I'm sure, to make Jesus sin. Just once would be enough to deal the fatal blow – to make Christ sin.

Though Yeshua was also God (**John 1:1-3,14; 20:28**), realize this human named Jesus/Yeshua was now going head-to-head against the most powerful, most wicked, most brilliant evil strategist especially now in his last couple days before Yeshua died.

Remember **Genesis 3:1** says the Serpent (who was Satan – **Rev. 12:9**) was the most cunning, crafty, shrewdest of all creatures ever *created*. Satan took responsibility personally to try to defeat Yeshua!

This was no doubt a vicious battle of temptations going on constantly, trying to make him DOUBT he was the Messiah or son of God. He even infected onlookers with creating doubt: “IF you’re the son of God, come down off that cross.” (**Matthew 27:40**).

But Yeshua WON. I can boast about His victory! He crushed Satan’s HEAD at the Place of the SKULL, Golgotha – just as HE prophesied to Adam and Eve (**Genesis 3:15**), that one of their SEED (Christ) would crush the serpent’s head – and DID, at the place of the Skull.

- **Jesus was also aware of the battle forces gathered invisibly – both evil and righteous angelic spirits around him. And that he could call on more than 12 legions of the elite angelic fighting force, battle-ready angels – 72,000** – with spirit swords drawn and eager to **instantly do** battle, if Jesus just gave them the word! (more is explained in the video)

Can you imagine **the TENSION in the spirit arena around Yeshua**? We don’t fight flesh and blood but demonic powers, and I assure you this was going on heavily as Yeshua was being arrested. A Roman LEGION had up to 6,000 fighters. 12 legions x 6,000 = 72,000.

Matthew 26:53

“Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?”

This was all done for me, for you, for the whole world! Do you see WHY glory in the cross?

Because the cross of Jesus was about this fight against Satan and in this fight, he totally defeated Satan, he “crushed Satan’s SKULL” as it were, – at Golgotha, the PLACE OF THE SKULL. Our Savior is also a fighter and his perfect performance on the cross smashed Satan and opened the door for BILLIONS to be saved from Satan’s grasp over time.

Hebrews 2:14-15

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that **through death He might DESTROY him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,**

15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Jesus was ready for the battle! Ready to get this done. Ready to show his glorious love for humanity, yes – even for those who hated him. Even though the pain was excruciating and shameful.

It is IN The CROSS that we see the love of the Messiah in its greatest clarity. He showed love and concern throughout his ministry – but at the cross, his love ran red, as it splashed and dripped down that old ugly beam to the cursed ground below – now being cleansed by his blood.

Even while we were still sinners – he spread his arms and hands out wide – and invited us into HIM. We owe all to you, Jesus. We stand in awe of you, Jesus. We're in awe, Father.

In his open arms he saves us, protects us, forgives us, and He brings us back into his Father's presence... and said, "Abba is your father too, now, because of my cross and resurrection." (John 20:17)

Yeshua, Son of God, wants us all to come back to the presence of holy Father.

Oh I can boast on my Savior... at his cross. Praise you, Jesus, praise you.

HOW we Boast and glory in the Cross

Hebrews 13:12-15

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."

HOW can we benefit the most from the cross? From Jesus Christ's sacrifice?

Hebrews 12:2 NIV

"Let us *FIX OUR EYES ON Jesus*, the author and perfecter (finisher) of our faith, who for the joy set before him *endured the CROSS, scorning its shame*, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

SO WE FIX our eyes on Jesus! That's the KEY to bearing fruit, as Yeshua says in John 15:4-5: IF we abide in him, we WILL bear much fruit. That's the key. Work hard on staying close, abiding, being attached to our Savior and Father – and we will bear fruit!

Paul says in **2 Cor. 3:17-18** that AS we fix our eyes on Him, focus on him, and of course on Father too, *we become transformed into Christ's very image!* We start to look, act and be more like Him, the more we fix our eyes on Yeshua.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror **the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.**"

We become what we focus on! As a man thinks in his heart, so IS he (**Proverbs 23:7**). **Don't be FOCUSED on your weaknesses and sins – but on HIM – Christ – who transforms you and me if we focus on HIM.**

As Yeshua said – Abide in me, and if you do, you will bear much fruit. (John 15:5)

So our WORK now is to focus and fix our minds on our leader – on Yeshua, Jesus the Messiah.

THAT's how we best overcome – by fixing our thoughts and gaze on Yeshua. Abiding in him. Yeshua – Jesus Christ – makes us more and more just like him, AS ***we focus on HIM***, his life, his words, and do everything to draw near to him and Abba, his/our Father. We become what we think about.

Proverbs 23:7a

“For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.”

But the more we focus on SIN, instead of on Christ, the more we think about and do the sin. (“Don't think about a pink elephant” – and that's all you can think about). Satan makes it so easy to focus on and see sin by TV, movies, Facebook, etc. PAUL said that about coveting – **Romans 7:7-10**. The more he pondered on “Do not covet,” the more he thought about coveting!

It's time to start wrapping this up. **In a future sermon I will update my 2008 three sermons about the Mystery of Being in Christ (April 2008) and then 2 more in July 2008. Search bar “Being in Christ.”**

I'll ask you all to read the first chapter of Ephesians two or three times please. Notice the words “in him” or “in Christ” as you read. *All these wonderful blessings of being in Christ are only possible because of the cross and resurrection of Jesus our Messiah.*

We answer God's call, repent, and turn around to His way, then we're baptized – immersed in water, picturing burying the old self and coming up as new. Then we have an ordained minister LAY HANDS on us, and we receive God's Holy Spirit. That's the usual sequence, though there are exceptions like Cornelius' family, in the Bible (**Acts 10**).

The Holy Spirit baptizes us into the Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

“For as the body [of Christ] is one and has many members, but all the members of that **one body**, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. **14** For in fact the body is not one member but many.”

The “body of Christ” is defined as His church (**Col. 1:24; Eph. 1:22-23**).

Let me say this now too, to be clear. I hope you're seeing how and why we must be willing to boast on Christ, spread the news about Jesus of Nazareth and what a GREAT HERO, SAVIOR, AND MASTER he is. Say this with AWE in your heart and it will show in your voice as you speak to others.

I'm telling you. I want to do “shout outs” for my Savior. I want to boast about him and that wretched cross – but, through that cross and accepting HIM as our HERO, our Savior, our KING – SO much happens.

That wretched cross, becomes our glorious cross because of all that happened. Talk about it. Boast about it.

But we have to accept him as our leader. YOU and I have to SURRENDER to him – our entire life!

I hope this has helped you love the cross of our Lord and the shed blood he spilled for each of us to forgive us our sins, remove the wrath from us, and reconcile us to God. And I hope you talk more about the cross of Jesus.

Chris Tomlin has a song that captures much of the story of the cross

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ONVG8DaREA>

“At the Cross, your Love ran red”

At the cross of Jesus – sin and shame are powerless. It's where we have peace with God. **As we stand in awe of Him, and give up our life for him, our sins are washed white in his streams of grace.**

Jesus – Yeshua our Messiah -- we worship you. We stand in awe of you and all you've done for us, for ME. You are so great, and you still love each of us so much. As we come to you, help us surrender our lives to you. Hallelu Yah! Thank you for your love. Help us love you more each day.

CLOSING PRAYER