



E. J. Waggoner – The Glad Tidings:

Why glory in the cross? Because by the cross the world is crucified to us and we to the world. The letter ends where it begins, with deliverance from "this present evil world." It is the cross alone that accomplishes the deliverance. The cross is the symbol of humiliation. Therefore we glory in it.

God Revealed in the Cross

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches." Jeremiah 9:23

Why should not the wise man glory in his wisdom? Because so far as it is his own wisdom it is foolishness. "The wisdom of this world is folly with God." 1 Corinthians 3:19. No man has any wisdom in which to glory, for his own wisdom is foolishness. Wisdom, which God gives, is something to cause humility instead of pride.

What about might? "All flesh is grass." Isaiah 40:6. "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Psalm 39:5, KJV. "Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." But "power belongs unto God." Psalm 62:9, 11, KJV

As to riches, they are "uncertain." 1 Timothy 6:17. Man "heaps up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them." Psalm 39:6, KJV. "Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." Proverbs 23:5, KJV. Only in Christ are found unsearchable and abiding riches.

Man therefore has absolutely nothing in which to boast. What is there left of a man when he has nothing that can be called wealth, no wisdom whatever, and absolutely no strength? Everything that man is or has comes from the Lord. Therefore he that glories is to glory in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:31

Now put this text with Galatians 6:14. The same Spirit inspired them both, so there is no contradiction. One text says that we are to glory only in the knowledge of the Lord. The other says that there is nothing in which to glory save the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The conclusion, therefore, is that in the cross we find the knowledge of God. To know God is eternal life, and there is no life for mankind except through the cross of Christ. So again we see most clearly that all that may be known of God is revealed in the cross. Aside from the cross, there is no knowledge of God.

This shows us again that the cross is seen in all creation. The everlasting power and divinity of God, all that may be known of Him, are seen in the things that He has made. Out of weakness God brings strength. He saves men by death, so that even the dead may rest in hope. No man can be so poor, so weak and sinful, so degraded and despised, that he may not glory in the cross. The cross takes him just where he is, for it is the symbol of shame and degradation. It reveals the power of God in him, and herein is ground for everlasting glory.

The Cross Crucifies

The cross cuts us off from the world. Glory! For then it unites us to God, because the friendship of the world is enmity with God. "Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4.

Through His cross Christ has destroyed the enmity. Ephesians 2:15, 16. "And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." 1 John 2:17. Then let the world pass away.

Jesus said, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." John 12:32. This He said signifying what death He should die, namely, the death of the cross. "He humbled Himself" to death, "even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name." Philippians 2:8, 9

It was through death that He ascended to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. It was the cross that lifted Him up from earth to heaven. Therefore it is the cross alone that brings us glory, and so it is the only thing in which to glory. The cross, which means derision and shame from the world, lifts us away from this world and sets us with Christ in the heavenly places. The power by which it does this is "the power that worketh in us," the power that works in and upholds all things in the universe.

Salvation does not come from man, whatever his state or condition, or whatever he may do. In an uncircumcised state he is lost. If he be circumcised, he is no nearer salvation. Only the cross has power to save. The only thing that is of any value is a new creature, or, as indicated in the Revised Standard Version, "a new creation," and it is only through death that we become joined to Him. See Romans 6:3.

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

The cross makes a new creation. Here again we see a reason for glorying in it. When the new creation came from the hand of God in the beginning, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:7

The Sign of the Cross

Put together all the texts that we have read: (1) The cross of Christ is the only thing in which to glory, (2) whoever glories must glory only in the knowledge of God, (3) God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, so that none might glory save in Him, and (4) God is revealed in the things that He has made. Creation, which manifests God's power, also presents the cross, because the cross of Christ is the power of God and God is made known by it. What have we? This: That the power it took to create the world and all things that are in it, the power that keeps all things in existence, is the power that saves those who trust in it. This is the power of the cross. So the power of the cross, by which alone salvation comes, is the power that creates and continues to work in all creation.

But when God creates a thing it is "very good." So in Christ, in His cross, there is "a new creation." We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10. It is in the cross that this new creation is wrought, for its power is the power by which "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is the power that keeps the earth from utter destruction under the curse; the power, which brings about the changing seasons, seedtime and harvest, and that, will at last renew the face of the earth. "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The cross conveys to us the knowledge of God because it shows us His power as Creator. Through the cross we are crucified to the world and the world to us. The cross sanctifies us. Sanctification is the work of God, not of man. Only His divine power can accomplish the great work. In the beginning God sanctified the Sabbath as the crown of His creative work, the evidence that His work was finished, the seal of perfection.

Therefore He says, "Moreover I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between

Me and them, that they might know that I the Lord sanctify them." Ezekiel 20:12
So we see that the Sabbath, the seventh day, is the true sign of the cross. It is the memorial of creation, and redemption is creation, creation through the cross. In the cross we find the complete and perfect works of God and we are clothed with them.

Crucified with Christ means the utter giving up of self, acknowledging that we are nothing, and trusting absolutely in Christ. In Him we rest. In Him we find Sabbath. The cross takes us back to the beginning into "that which was from the beginning." The resting upon the seventh day of the week is but the sign of the fact that in the perfect work of God, as seen in creation, in the cross, we find rest from sin.

The cross means death, but it also means the entrance into life. There is healing in Christ's wounds, blessing in the curse that He bore, life in the death that He suffered. *Who dare say that he trusts Christ for everlasting life if he dare not trust Him for a few years or months or days of life in this world?*

Now say once more, and say it from the heart: "Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." If you can say that in truth, you will find tribulations and afflictions so easy that you can glory in them.

It is by the cross that everything is sustained. "In Him all things hold together," and He does not exist in any other form than that of the crucified One. But for the cross there would be universal death. Not a man could breathe, not a plant could grow, and not a ray of light could shine from heaven if it were not for the cross.

Now "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork." Psalm 19:1, KJV. They are some of the things that God has made. No pen can describe and no artist's brush can depict the wondrous glory of the heaven.

Yet that glory is but the glory of the cross of Christ. This follows from the facts already learned, that the power of God is seen in the things that are made, and that the cross is the power of God.