

10.27.24

## Galatians

### Chapter 6 - Spirit Not Flesh

#### Rejoices Not in the Flesh (vs.14-16)

**Galatians 6:14-16:** But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

I like when things are brought down to a point. They become succinct and clear, and when we come to this passage, it fundamentally says, "Just make sure you walk by this rule." So, it's this rule that we're going to be talking about, and as we've been looking at the Book of

Galatians, we've been talking about the flesh and the Spirit, and we've been talking about the Law and liberty and the really the dichotomy between those; more specifically, really, religion and faith; the difference between those.

As we were going through last week, I listed a number of examples of the difference between religion and faith. Let me just go over some of them with you once again. I would state, first of all, that religion goes for show, and we touched upon this last week. It always is pursuing the outward appearance, but God is telling us to live by faith, which is always of the heart. Faith is always of the heart, because fundamentally faith is you putting your trust in somebody. That's not something that you could do out of show. That's something that you actually do because you believe this in your heart. It's not surprising that when you see the word "faith," or same word, "believe" or sometimes translated "conviction," that it relates that sense of this is something that you have inside of you. It's really Spirit. So, when we talk about religion, we talk about faith, we're making a clear distinction. As Galatians

will tell us in Chapter 5, the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. What it's telling us is that religion has no place in our faith because once again, it's external; it's appearance. As Colossians 2 makes reference to religion as being self-made religion, it is that sense of this is something we do. Now, we know that religion has a sense of piety, and all those things that are external, but that's fundamentally what it is. True and undefiled religion, as James will say, would be you ministering to the widow and the orphan and you're keeping yourself unstained by the world. If there were such a thing as true and undefiled religion, that would be it. You'll never see throughout the Scripture and the epistles the writer's encouraging religion, they will encourage faith. "Walk by faith, not by sight" and you'll also see once again, as we were talking about the dichotomy of the flesh and the Spirit, because of course the flesh is all that outward appearance, the Spirit is that which is in the heart. So, religion goes for show and faith goes to the heart and really is the emphasis of this.

One of the statements that he makes in Galatians 2:6, he talks about those who were of reputation. In other words, those who have some sense of recognition because of their greatness, so to speak, in the world of Judaism. His statement is, "That they have reputation makes no difference to me." And Paul is emphasizing, stop looking at the outward appearance. Let's judge according to "Is God pleased with us?" And it goes back to Galatians 1:10, "Do I seek to please men or God?" So, religion goes for show; faith, for the heart. Religion drives and dictates. Religion will oftentimes drive by fear and intimidation. It'll get people to do what they do because of this, and it'll dictate rules and regulations. If you don't have enough laws, they'll add another one to get you to do it, and they'll think in terms of really defining. Of course, the Jews were very good at this, with the taking the Torah and then expanding it to the Talmud, in which they began to describe all the sort of things that you should do or not do. We've oftentimes talked about even when they consider the Sabbath, and how many feet you should walk. That's why you see in Scripture, "a Sabbath day's journey," (Acts 1:12) because they actually had it

measured out. “You shouldn't work on the Sabbath. So, we have defined what work is and this is how far you can walk.” And they actually even had a law on how much you would lift to feed yourself. So, you would weigh how much you would lift, because if it was a certain amount, it was too much and it was work on the Sabbath. You could actually eat, but it would have to be in smaller bites on the Sabbath. You know, it might not hurt us. So, anyway, religion drives and dictates, but faith will always beckon and inspire.

One of the great passages of Scripture that I oftentimes refer to is found in 1 Corinthians 11:1, as Paul says, “Imitate me as I follow Christ” and if you think about that, that’s inspirational. In fact, he touches upon that in Philippians 3 as well. He says, “As many as of you are perfect,” actually, making reference to mature, “have this mind in you,” and he begins to declare a mindset that is pressing on towards the mark of the high calling. If you think about it, he's inspiring us to do that. He's not oppressing us with laws. He's saying, “Come on, let's go.” And the same thing that he does with Timothy, when he

goes into 2 Timothy 2, he says, "Come on. Be a good soldier with me. Let's fight this battle together." And you can hear the inspiration. You can hear that sense of beckoning instead of really weighing something down on somebody, and then religion, it will be always very sanctimonious and hypocritical. I think, one of the things that religion doesn't like, it doesn't like you to be transparent, and it doesn't like to admit that they're sinners, people that are very religious. Like when you go to Matthew 23, and you begin to see the Pharisees and how they liked those seats that are admired and they liked the respectful greetings. You know, if you tell people that you're a sinner just like they are, whoa, then you just lost your seat. The robes that they wear, they broaden their phylacteries, which have the Bible verses on them. More specifically, probably Deuteronomy 6. So, they broaden these things so that, well, the bigger the verse, the more holy you are; the more righteous your garments look, obviously, you're a very, very righteous person because you wear a particular garb. This is why it's never been good to get into that way of thinking. Religion does, but it's never been good to do because people will in

some way equate faith with the way that you look and that's the last thing you want to do. We walk by faith, not by sight. It's the very opposite of those things. So, religion will be sanctimonious and hypocritical, but faith will always walk humbly before God. It's basically what Micah 6:8 says, what does the Lord require of you? To love kindness and do justice; walk humbly with God. That's a far cry from looking sanctimonious and hypocritical, and yet that's the big difference between those two. Religion will always persecute; faith will be the one persecuted. Then today specifically, we're going to be emphasizing this one, religion always seeks the praise of men. It'll always seek to please men. Once again, I think that's one of the great themes of the Book of Galatians, and what makes the gospel that we have, which is not of men, so clearly not of men, because all the other messages that are of men are about show. They are about being sanctimonious and superior to everybody else, but the Gospel of God, we come in humility before God, and it's not about us. As John the Baptist say, "I have to decrease; He has to increase." Well, that's just the opposite of most religions. In fact, the closer we get to God, the more

acutely aware we are of our need for Him. I have found the closer I draw to God, the more sinful I feel. Now, that's not a bad thing because when God begins to reveal the sin in my life, I begin to confess that sin and wow, the burden that's taken off. Think of it this way, the closer you are to God, the lighter you get. Pretty soon we'll just go heavenward. That's what Enoch did anyway. So, really what you realize is that faith will strive not to please men at all. Faith always strives to please God, and this goes back to Ephesians 5:10, where it says, "I'm trying to learn what is pleasing to God." This is always our focus if in fact we're walking by faith.

I like one of the epistles that Paul writes to the church, and he says, "I'm so thankful that you obeyed God not only in my presence, but when I was absent" which is telling all of us that they actually believed that God existed. We believe that God is omnipresent, and we believe that God is the One we need to please. When Paul writes to Timothy, and in Chapter 4, it comes to an end, he says, "I want to tell you something, Timothy, in the presence of God." Think about that. I mean, do we

actually talk as if we're in the presence of God and think in those terms? That's the way we should be thinking.

So, as we come to Galatians, what were we focusing on, especially today, is that sense of praise and the glory to God. That really is what differentiates us from religion. Religion will always elevate man, exalt man, what he does, what he accomplishes, how well he sings. It's all about man, but we say, "Not to us, Oh Lord. Not to us, but to You be given glory." And that's what makes faith different.

As we come to this, I'm reminded of the fact that God is Spirit. There's a verse in John 4 as Jesus was speaking to the woman at the well and she's thinking very much in the world; when she wants water, she would like it to be water that she drinks. Jesus is going to talk to her about water, she'll never thirst again, but she's not catching all of this. She's going to be talking about, "We worship up in the mountain in Samaria, but you worship down in Jerusalem," and she's talking about a place. So, Jesus is going to make this statement to her,

(John 4:23) “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.”

(John 4:24) “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

At the beginning of John 1, it says no man has seen God at any time, but the One begotten of the Father, He has explained Him. And I have oftentimes thought that clearly, the Spirit of God, of course, which is omnipresent, there's no place that God is not, and clearly knows all things. You can't put Him in a box, but the fact that the Spirit of God would be encased in flesh and then dwell among us is such a mind-boggling thought, isn't it? It's such a magnificent thought, “and the word became flesh and dwelt among us.” That somehow flesh could encase, as Paul will say, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels.” (2 Corinthians 4:7) The treasure is, of course, clearly the Spirit of God that abides within us that will be eternal. This flesh, one of the things we know about it is it is decaying, but we have the eternal Spirit of God within us, which will last forever. The Spirit of God is what is real,

the flesh is not because it is temporary and anything temporary has no value in the real. So, what Paul is going to be emphasizing is clearly that we walk according to Spirit, we don't walk according to flesh. The flesh only thinks about gratifying the flesh. So, because of that, it incarcerates. It puts yourself in bondage and it puts everybody in bondage around you. Because if in fact you're pursuing those things, according to James, you're going to be very angry; you're going to be very violent; you're going to be very frustrated. I think in many cases, you're going to be in fear and in deprivation and degradation in your life and hateful. Why? You've invested in things that are fake, unreal. You've invested in the insincere, the hypocritical, in appearance, in the facade rather than what is real.

So, we come to this passage in Galatians 6, and as we come to the close of this book, we begin to realize that Paul must establish that we can never, never, never boast in the flesh, because in the flesh, well, to quote another passage, "dwells no good thing," but more specifically, I would say, dwells nothing of any lasting value.

So, his statement is in verse 14,

(Galatians 6:14) “But may it never be that I would boast, except...”

And this is strange because he actually puts a tangible in the text which all the way through, we've been talking about walking in the Spirit of God, and now we have this tangible of the cross.

“But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

(Galatians 6:15) For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”

He's stating within the passage that, of course, religion has these outward things. I mean, man, if you think about it, he really talks a good game. I was thinking about even some of the movies that he makes or the way he parades himself. Man parades himself as being great and wonderful and marvelous, and he even makes movies, if you think about it, on valor and selflessness. I've seen some great movies on that. Sometimes these actors come

forward and they begin to give us all their opinions, and I'm going, "You're just an actor." Sign language, I don't know, but they just don't seem to get it. They're just acting and that's what we begin to live with. We begin to live with these grand ideas, but nobody's really sacrificing. You're not going to find those individuals willing to sacrifice. In fact, they're trying to avoid dealing with humanity in a way that would be sacrificial to them. Most of them try to pursue the things that are valuable to them. If you also think about it, you could probably get most people to actually be kind to you, if in fact you paid them enough, but the point is that these are all outward manifestations of something that has absolutely, positively no spirit in them. So, what Scripture is trying to reveal is if you have no Spirit, you have no value, and that's why he states, "If you sow according to flesh, of the flesh, you reap corruption; if you sow according to Spirit, you'll reap life." In other words, there has to be a motivation of the heart. There has to be longing.

Paul will touch upon this in 2 Corinthians 5 in particular, he uses an interesting way of putting it.

(2 Corinthians 5:12) “We are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an occasion to be proud of us...”

And you go, “So, to boast in you?” And he would say, “Yeah, I want you to boast in me.” But what he wants them to boast about is not flesh, but Spirit and he is going to convey this to the Corinthians.

“... that you will have an answer for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart.”

You think about people that have meant a lot to you in your life, if you just stop and think about it, it's the people that just really cared for you. You might ask the person, “What'd they look like?” He goes, “Not important. I know they loved me.” You know what you fell in love with? Spirit. You didn't fall in love with flesh. I mean, there may be somebody that you run into that looks exactly like them, but they're not the ones you fall in love with.

So, Paul makes this interesting statement. Now, it's in the context of his selflessness to them, and if you look in Chapter 4, you begin to see this as he talks about basically,

(2 Corinthians 4:3) “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

(2 Corinthians 4:4) in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving...”

His point is that the enemy is trying to get us to be superficial. The one thing that would cause the gospel to be blurred is for the church to function in the realm of the flesh. So, if in fact the church functions in the realm of show or performance then we just blind the eyes of those. If we do what we do for money, we just blind eyes of those that are seeking.

(2 Corinthians 4:5) “For we do not preach ourselves but Christ...”

Right? We're His bondservants. That's a clear picture of the fact that we're not lifting ourselves up, we're pointing to Him.

If you drop on down, he begins to describe as we've already quoted, “we have this treasure in earthen vessels,” (2 Corinthians 4:7) and what is the treasure?

Well, this old flesh is being sacrificed for the sake of the

Spirit. If in fact you were to see somebody sacrifice for you, you would have to be drawn to them because they gave their life for you. Now, what they did was they used their flesh to show you their spirit. That's a very interesting point. So, what he states is,

(2 Corinthians 4:7) “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

(2 Corinthians 4:8) we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

(2 Corinthians 4:9) persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

(2 Corinthians 4:10) always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”

It's like, yes, we're in this flesh, but we can send a message that there's something more powerful than the flesh, and the way we do it is we demonstrate our willingness to crucify the body.

So, the sacrifice, in fact, he states in verse 11,

“For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

(2 Corinthians 4:12) So death works in us, but life in you.

(2 Corinthians 4:13) But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE,” we also believe, therefore we also speak.”

Now, when we read that, it’s an interesting phrase, but we really don't feel the depth of that, but if you would just take a moment and turn to the text where it comes from, you begin to see.

It’s Psalm 116, if you look there with me, that he quotes from. In Psalm 116 you can hear the psalmist crying out to God, as he oftentimes does, and how he loves the fact that God hears his supplication. He hears the request. Clearly, in the context that he's dealing with a situation that is so intense that the cords of death have surrounded him. He states that in verse 3,

(Psalm 116:3) “The cords of death encompassed me  
And the terrors of Sheol came upon me;  
I found distress and sorrow.

(Psalm 116:4) Then I called upon the name of the LORD:  
“O LORD, I beseech You, save my life!””

Those are the most intense moments, aren't they?

So, his statement in the passage is,

(Psalm 116:5) “Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;  
Yes, our God is compassionate.

(Psalm 116:6) The LORD preserves the simple;  
I was brought low, and He saved me.

(Psalm 116:7) Return to your rest, O my soul,  
For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

(Psalm 116:8) For You have rescued my soul from death,  
My eyes from tears,  
My feet from stumbling.

(Psalm 116:9) I shall walk before the LORD  
In the land of the living.

(Psalm 116:10) I believed when I said...”

This is actually the text in the passage,

“... I am greatly afflicted.”

Well, it's not exactly quoted that way, is it?

(Psalm 116:11) “I said in my alarm,

“All men are liars.”””

The passage is, “I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE...”

Now, the question is, what is it he spoke? This passage is telling us what he spoke, what he spoke was, “In my great affliction, I realized I couldn't trust man to save me.” Now, in this sense, he is drawing on the sense of faith because as you go on, there is this feeling that he really hasn't been saved from this, whatever it is, as it says,

(Psalm 116:3) “The cords of death encompassed me

And the terrors...”

He says this,

(Psalm 116:12) “What shall I render to the LORD

For all His benefits toward me?”

(Psalm 116:13) I shall lift up the cup of salvation

And call upon the name of the LORD.”

(Psalm 116:14) I shall pay my vows to the LORD,  
Oh may it be in the presence of all His people.

(Psalm 116:15) Precious in the sight of the LORD  
Is the death of His godly ones.”

There's a sense that he may not even make it out of this. Now, his point is that "I believed, therefore I spoke." He's not only speaking that I can't trust in man, but he's also speaking, "I believe God will ultimately save me." The point of the text is, in the midst of all the pain and the suffering and a sense of literally hopelessness, he declared faith, "I believe. I believe that God is full of righteousness and lovingkindness. I believe that I will lift up, one day, the cup of salvation. I believe that it will be in the presence of all His people. I believe that I will offer to Him in the midst of this, in faith believing, an offering of thanksgiving.

His statement is,

(Psalm 116:17) “To You I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving,

And call upon the name of the LORD.

(Psalm 116:18) I shall pay my vows to the LORD,

Oh may it be in the presence of all His people,

(Psalm 116:19) In the courts of the LORD’S house...”

It's going to happen, and what you have is a sense of confidence in the midst of all the trials. This is why Paul uses this particular passage, because if you look,

(2 Corinthians 4:8) “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

(2 Corinthians 4:9) persecuted, but not forsaken...”

What is he saying? Presently we are in this situation, but “I believe, therefore I declare with great confidence.”

If you look within the passage, one of the most comforting things that he states as he goes on, he says in 2 Corinthians 4:14,

“Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.

(2 Corinthians 4:15) For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

(2 Corinthians 4:16) Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

(2 Corinthians 4:17) For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

(2 Corinthians 4:18) while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen..."

Our faith is Spirit. Why would you keep going? Why would you rejoice in your suffering? "Oh, I know God is doing great things in this. He's allowing me to give my life so that others may live forever? I can hardly wait." You go, "I don't see anything." He goes, "Right, but we walk by faith, not by sight."

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are

seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

I think, here again, one of the most comforting verses of 2 Corinthians is found in 2 Corinthians 12,

(2 Corinthians 12:15) “I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls...”

I can imagine that there are a lot of things that are going on in his life that if you were to catch him in a particular moment, things didn't look that rosy, but he wasn't walking according to flesh. I mean, if you walk according to flesh, any given day, you're going, “This is a terrible, horrible day.” But if you're walking in the Spirit, you can say, “This is one of the greatest days of my life” if in fact you lived and walked in the Spirit. That is to say, “Did I do what was pleasing to God this moment? Am I functioning in this realm of the real rather than the superficial or the temporal?”

Paul will write, if you look with me in 2 Timothy 2 to Timothy, and in 2 Timothy 2, you begin to hear, once again, this inspiration, and that's where we get inspiration, is inspirated, right? Where does inspiration

come from? Inspired. So, we are inspired by the Spirit of God to do things that we wouldn't naturally do. I've often thought, who in the right mind would enlist in the army? Yet, there is a reason why they would. So, if you look in 2 Timothy 2,

(2 Timothy 2:1) “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

(2 Timothy 2:2) The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men...”

(2 Timothy 2:3) “Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

If you look with me in Galatians, it's exactly the point that he's bringing out in Galatians 6, as he begins to bring up the cross of Christ and the crucifixion in which He crucifies the world and the world to Him. His statement as well has already been proclaimed in the earlier text, and we've quoted it a number of times,

(Galatians 2:20) “I have been crucified with Christ; and 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...”

“I live by the Spirit. I live to please God, not according to what I see, but according to the Spirit of God moving me to do the right things.” And you begin to realize that you function in something far more real than what man does. What is interesting to me in him bringing up the cross is that the cross, when you think about it, if I were to say to somebody, “I love you,” Jesus would probably ask me, “Would you die for them?” So, the cross is literally as real as it gets when it comes to putting your heart in action. It's you being willing to suffer for somebody else; it's you being willing to go through pain and suffering for them. Go back to 2 Timothy 2 because I want you to see what Paul says. He not only says,

(2 Timothy 2:3) “Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

(2 Timothy 2:4) No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life...”

But if you go on, he says, as he talks about the risen One and the One he serves,

(2 Timothy 2:9) “for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal...”

You’ve got to think, I mean, he was a Sanhedrin; he was a Supreme Court Justice. The one thing he loved was the Law, and now he's willing to suffer as a criminal for the gospel. You would say to Paul, “You know how this looks, don't you?” He’d go, “I know how it looks, but I'm not operating in how it looks. I'm operating in what God wants me to do and I'm operating to see souls saved.” So, the statement, if you look here,

“For which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

(2 Timothy 2:10) For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.”

You know what he's doing? He’s rejoicing in the Spirit. He's rejoicing in the cross because though man would say,

“Did you see all my accomplishments?” and in Philippians 3, he could clearly list a lot of trophies that he'd gotten and the accolades of men, but he says, “That was garbage to me. What is of value is, did they see Christ in me? There's nothing that will demonstrate Christ more than you willing to take this old flesh and sacrifice it for somebody else to draw closer to God. Literally, the cross is as real as it gets. As God will say in Isaiah about religion, “These people honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.” And we're very much into the pomp and circumstance, but that's not what our faith is about. He then goes on, and says, “So, anything outward that we do, circumcision or uncircumcision, has nothing to do with anything.

It's the same thing that he states in Colossians 2, he says this self-made religion and beating yourself with a stick on a body doesn't do anything to eradicate your sin. There are oftentimes things that we do that once again look sanctimonious, look righteous, but it's just outward appearance stuff. You can memorize Scripture, that's an outward show, but it doesn't mean it's in your heart.

Now, memorizing Scripture can be good thing if it's in your heart, but “Thy word have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.” The whole key is it has to be a part of your heart. So, he says that none of this is anything, but if you look at the end of verse 15, what does he state? Underline these two words, a “new creation.” Those two words are really conveying a sense of something higher or superior. The word that he uses for “new” in the text is what does matter is that were brought into a higher way of living, and then he uses the second word “creation,” which probably refers to a class of people. So, God has called us into a higher class of living. That's a very interesting way of putting it, isn't it? What way had we been living? Flesh. “Does it gratify me? Does it make me happy? What's happening today? How does it affect me?” All those kinds of things. What is the higher way of living? “How can I please God and how can I serve Him in ministering to His people?” That's a higher way of living. It's a whole different way of life.

What's interesting to me is this verse 16 and it reads this way,

(Galatians 6:16) “And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.”

“Those who walk by this rule? Paul, I thought we were talking about freedom. Why are you talking about walking in a rule?” The word that he uses for “rule” is, have you ever heard the phrase that “Scripture was canonized”? That’s the word, “*kanōn*,” but what it’s making reference to is a measuring stick. His point is that we need to walk by this standard. Now, the question is, what's the standard that He wants us to walk in? Well, the very word “walk” is the same word that he uses in Galatians 5:25, “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.” Do you remember what it was talking about? It's actually a military term. Remember what it was? Falling in line. It's used in a number of different passages in the New Testament.

One of the passages in Romans 4:12, says this, “... (walk) follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham...”

So, it's actually following in the steps of somebody. It's a soldier falling in line. I know I'm running out of time, but I

just want to really want to hit this point. To me, what's interesting about this is that it's telling us, "Yes, you're free, but use your freedom to enlist." It's a very interesting point and the point that he's bringing out is that true freedom is being willing to die for somebody else. You know in America, we talk about our freedom. A lot of people talk about their freedom and how they value it and everything like that, but the guys that go over and fight for it, they're the guys that believe it. What Scripture is telling you is if in fact you have the spirit of freedom in you, then that spirit of freedom will cause you to enlist in setting other people free. It'll cause you to enlist in giving of yourself so that other people might have life. If you really believe in it, it'll cause you to fall in line with what God has called you to do, and that's a very interesting point, that we have this mind in us, which is also in Christ Jesus. As Jesus will even turn to His own disciples, and He says, "You want to follow Me? Take up a cross. Let's go." And as Paul will say to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2, "Fight with me in this battle. Now, you need to be willing to suffer with me." And it is in that suffering that the flesh begins to respond and be directed no longer by itself, but by the

Spirit, and the Spirit within us is now in charge of the flesh. Wow, what an interesting picture this is, and that's what the cross is a picture of. The cross is a picture of the Spirit being more powerful than the flesh because everything in your body says, "I don't want to go there." And yet to go willingly has got to be a greater power than anything else that you and I have ever experienced. It is truly the power of God.

I just want to end with this passage in Jeremiah 9. We'll just close with this, as he begins to talk about the fact that we need to glory in only God, right? Jeremiah 9 says it so perfectly, in verse 23,

(Jeremiah 9:23) "Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom..."

That would be in the flesh.

"... and let not the mighty man boast of his might..."

That would be in the flesh.

"... let not a rich man boast of his riches."

That would be in his flesh.

(Jeremiah 9:24) “but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD.”

If you're walking in the Spirit, you're going to be delighting in the same thing that God delights in and you're not going to allow the world nor the things of the world, nor the flesh of your body to detract in any way. You're just simply going to do what He tells you to do. That's a different way of living.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today and we ask You to change our hearts. We don't think this way. We need Your Spirit to move us. We would not give of ourselves. We wouldn't go to prison. We wouldn't be wrongly accused for somebody else. “To die for somebody else's mistakes? It's ridiculous.” And You would tell us, “No, this is divine.” Father, we come before You and we tell You

that we love You, we tell You that we want to serve You, we tell You that we want to follow You. We have no idea what we're talking about. You tell us, "The freedom I give you, you're now free to enlist." Are we real about this? Are we moved by the Spirit? The cross will tell.