

Believers Should Despise the Honor and Glory of the World

The earthly ministry of Christ revealed the contempt which he endured from the world. After you read and seriously consider the lesson of poverty exhibited by our Saviour, take also a view of the deep and unaffected humility, which was so eminently seen in His whole life and conduct. Never did he revel at the applause of men; never was he taken by ambition, or thirst after temporal honor, gain or greatness: on the contrary, whenever men offered to bestow honors and praises upon him, he refused them, both by word and by deed: never did he accept any honor from men; nay, not even when "they would take him by force to make him a king". John 6:15.

On the other hand, with what inexpressible humility did Christ bear all the insults and the reproaches with which his enemies loaded him? He was execrated as a Samaritan, and his miracles were maliciously ascribed to the power of Beelzebub. John 8:48; Matt. 12:24. The sound doctrine which he brought down from heaven, was denounced as blasphemy; and he who taught it, was everywhere insulted by foul and uncharitable censures, and such base lies and slanders as the malice of men could contrive. He was betrayed and sold; he was denied and buffeted; he was spit upon and crowned with thorns; he was derided and scourged; he was beaten, and sentenced to death; he was rejected, and condemned to undergo the ignominious "death of the cross" Phil. 2:8. He was forsaken by God and men; and being stripped of all raiment, was executed in the midst of criminals, hanging on the tree like one accursed. Gal. 3:13. He was made the common gazing-stock of all his enemies, and derided by all. His prayers were turned into ridicule; his garments were parted by lot; and at the approach of the very pangs of death, he had nothing to refresh himself but vinegar mingled with gall. Matt. 27:34.

At last, when all was finished, Christ expired on the cross, amid the reproaches, hatred, and indignation of the world; his body was pierced with a spear, and he made his grave with the wicked. John 19:34; Isa. 53:9. Yet, his enemies continued to fume with rage and malice, even when he had given up the spirit; and called him a deceiver. Matt. 27:63. Being risen at last from the dead, and triumphing over his enemies; they boldly denied the truth of his resurrection. And even now, thousands of years later, the lost in our present world still continue this diatribe. Thus was the Messiah, in the beginning and end of his ever-blessed earthly life, "despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief".

In the course of our Lord's life, there is not only displayed to us the abounding treasure of redemption gained by Christ; but it is also most clearly demonstrated, that in this scene of suffering, he is our great teacher and master, our prophet and shepherd, our instructor, light, and constant monitor; that also we, by looking toward Him, may learn to despise earthly pomp, pride and

greatness; and by closely adhering to him, like true members to their head, "grow up into him in all things" (Ephes. 4:15), being rendered conformable to His example, "and rooted and grounded in His love." Ephes. 3:17.

When our lives are contrary to the life of Him who is designed to be our Savior and Master; when in our actions, words, and endeavors, we do not entirely aim at God's glory, but our own; it is more than evident, that Christ does not live in us, but rather the prince of this world. It is then plain, that we have not yet learned to love Christ, and that we are not yet loose from the various ties of this world; for "whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4); and so of course is not overcome by it. Nor does such a one any longer love the world; for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15); and consequently, that of Christ must be absent likewise. For the whole life of Christ teaches us how to die to the world. Consider then the beginning, together with the progress and conclusion of His life, and remember the profound humility with which Christ bore the contempt and reproaches of all those that love the world.