

In What Do You Glory?

by Bill Crews

Both the Hebrew verb (in the O. T.) and the Koine Greek verb (in the N. T.) for “to glory” have the meaning of “to glory, boast, vaunt,” and even, “to joy or rejoice.” The English verb is defined, “to exult with triumph; rejoice proudly.” That fits also.

Things in which we are not to glory:

“Thus saith Jehovah, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches” (Jer. 9:23).

In Jer. 49:1-6 Ammon is condemned for glorying “in the valleys, in her flowing valley, and trusting in her treasures.” This was vainglory.

“As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh” (Gal. 6:12-13). Paul spoke of Jewish brethren who had become Judaizers, binding circumcision and the law of Moses on Christians.

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God For it is written, He that taketh the wise in their craftiness: and again: The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. Wherefore let no one glory in men.” (1 Cor. 3:18-21) We are not to glory in self, in human wisdom, or in men.

We have no grounds to glory before God in the matter of our salvation, except in the Lord. “For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many noble are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God” (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

“For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? (He is referring to their various spiritual blessings from God. -bc) but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not receive it?” (1 Cor. 4:7). Their arrogance and conceit were contributing to the contentions among them.

“For if Abraham was justified by works (Paul is referring to works of law, and perfect law-keeping), he hath whereof to glory; but not toward God” (Rom. 4:2). The same is true of anyone who has been justified or forgiven of his sins by God; Eph. 2:8-9 addresses the same subject.

“For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel” (1 Cor.9:16). Doing what God requires of us does not give us grounds for boasting; compare Lk. 17:10.

“We are not again commending ourselves unto you, but speak as giving you occasion of glorying on our behalf, that ye may have whereof to answer them that glory in appearance, and not in heart” (2 Cor. 5: 12). Notice that glorying on Paul’s behalf and glorying in heart were permissible, but glorying in appearance was not.

Things in which we are to glory:

“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he hath understanding, and knoweth me, that I am Jehovah who exerciseth lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith Jehovah” (Jer 9:24).

“Glory ye in his holy name:/ Let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah” (Ps. 105:3).

“Rejoice in Jehovah; glory in the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 41: 16).

“All the seed of Israel shall glory in Jehovah, and shall be justified” (Isa. 42:25).

“The nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him shall they glory” (Jer. 4:2).

“That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Cor.1:31; read vss.26-31).

“I have therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus, in things pertaining to God” (Rom. 15:17; read vss. 14-21 to see what Paul is talking about).

“But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6: 14; read vss. 12-15).

Paul said to the Corinthian saints: “Great is my glorying on your behalf” (2 Cor. 7:2-4), and to the Thessalonian saints: “So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure” (2 Thess. 1:4). Paul was not boasting in his own accomplishments, but rejoicing proudly in the wonderful fruits of his labor. “And not only so, but we also rejoice (KJV-glory; same verb as in the above passages) in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness” (Rom. 5:3). Compare 2 Cor. 11:30 and 12:10 and the contexts there. “And not only so, but we also rejoice (KJV-joy; same verb as in the above verses) in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation” (Rom. 5:11).

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