
HOME GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Some Bible students say that Paul's thorn in the flesh (II Corinthians 12:7-10) was a disease of the eyes. This is the reason he had helpers write out his epistles.

Romans 16:22; I Corinthians 16:21; Colossians 4:18; Galatians 6:11; II Thessalonians 3:17.

- A. Do you have a spiritual or physical thorn?
 - B. How is Paul able to endure his thorn?
2. Paul said that he "gloried (boasted) in the cross". Galatians 6:14.
 - A. How did Paul boast in the cross in relation to
 - (1) his suffering?
 - (2) his hopes?
 - (3) his goals?
 3. What is meant by "a new creation" as stated by Paul in Galatians 6:15?
 - A. How does John 3:1-17 and II Corinthians 5:17 affect your understanding of being a "new creation" in Christ?

THE CROSS IS THE MAIN THING

Galatians 6:11-15

11 See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! 12 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.

1. I write about the cross (11).

A. With large letters.

B. With the help of others.

Romans 16:22—I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord.

C. With my own salutations.

I Corinthians 16:21—The salutation with my own hand—Paul's.

Colossians 4:18—This salutation by my own hand—Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen.

II Thessalonians 3:17—The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write.

2. I suffer for the cross (12-13).

- A. I don't compromise the cross with ritual.
- B. I teach the limitations of the law of God.
- C. I expose the Judaizers motives.

3. I glory in the cross (14-15).

- A. Because the cross was God's radical solution to the problem of sin.

Matthew 27:45-46—Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

- B. Because the embracing of its meaning determines your eternal destiny.

Ephesians 1:7-9— In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

- C. Because it expresses the loving heart of God in providing an ultimate rescue for the lost.

Titus 3:4-7— But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- D. Because its effect on our lives brings about changes that are impossible through any other means.

II Corinthians 5:17—Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

- E. Because of the comfort it provides for us who must endure suffering and other thorns in the flesh.

Isaiah 53:2-6—2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.