

# The Glory of Living under the Cross

by

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## Leader's Guide

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### Using the computer disk included in this Bible study kit

Thank you for purchasing an NPH Bible study kit. The computer disk included with this Bible study offers resources to help you prepare to teach God's Word to his people.

#### What will I find on the disk?

Each disk contains two text files, GUIDES.TXT and RESOURCE.TXT, and two directories, GUIDES and RESOURCE.

Read the short text files first. The GUIDES.TXT file tells you what is in the GUIDES directory. It lists the various formats for the student's guide copy masters. The RESOURCE.TXT file tells you what is in the RESOURCE directory. It contains a list of articles and resource material you may find helpful in preparing to teach the course.

#### How do I open the text files?

There are no programs on this disk. In other words, there is nothing you need to install on your computer and run. These are simple files, such as a letter or sermon you might save on your hard drive. To use these files, simply open them as you would any other file.

Most word processors have a window in which you can navigate to various places to locate files. You will need to tell your word processor that you want to find a file on the drive in which you inserted the Bible study disk. This will usually be drive a: or b:. If you are using a Windows™ word processor, click on drive a: or b: in the Open File window. When you have selected the appropriate drive, it will list the files and directories that are on the Bible study disk.

What if no files or directories appear? Some word processors are set to show only files created by or for that program. You need to indicate that you want to see *all the files* on the disk. A pull-down menu in the Open File window gives you the options for the types of files you want the program to list. Choose "all files" or the equivalent. All the files and directories on your disk should appear. At this point you should be able to open the two text files. By navigating to the GUIDES and RESOURCE directories, you will be able to view the file names and open their contents as well.

#### How do I use the files in the GUIDES directory?

The GUIDES directory contains the student's guide copy masters. They are supplied so that you can adapt them to fit your teaching style and the makeup of your class.

NPH used Microsoft® Word version 6.0 to edit and print the student's guide copy masters. The GUIDES directory includes the actual files and document template we created. If you have Microsoft Word 6.0 or later, you will be able to use the file with the .DOC extension. The display on your computer screen will look exactly like the student's guide copy masters.

If you have WordPerfect 5.1 or later, use the appropriate .W51 file. If you have another word processor, use the file with the .TXT extension.

#### Technical information about the files in the GUIDES directory:

We have made every effort to provide you with the capability of adapting this Bible study to your needs. However, some degree of reformatting may be necessary to use these files on your computer.

##### *Microsoft Word Users:*

The Microsoft Word 6.0 file included on this disk can be used by both IBM and Macintosh systems. MS Word 6.0 is a cross-platform word processing program, and Macintosh computers can read this IBM PC-formatted disk. The normal font of this file is Times. Systems not equipped with Times fonts may experience subtle differences in line or page breaks. Otherwise, no additional formatting should be necessary.

*WordPerfect Users:*

We have included WordPerfect files for WordPerfect versions 5.1, 6.0, and 7.0. These files were created in WordPerfect. WordPerfect 5.1 users may have to replace the Courier font in some headings.

*ASCII Text File:*

An ASCII text file contains only text. All formatting has been removed. This text will import into all word processing programs. Users can then apply formatting to the text according to their own preferences. The ASCII text file contains no headers and footers. You will have to create your own. Please note that each student's guide page should contain the permission notice as noted below.

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If you have any questions about using the disk, please call NPH at (414) 454-2102.

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SAMPLE

# The Glory of Living under the Cross

## Lesson One

### We Glory in Christ's Cross

#### Worship

**Responsive Reading: Psalm 73:23-28**

A: I am always with you;

**B: You hold me by my right hand.**

A: You guide me with your counsel,

**B: And afterward you will take me into glory.**

A: Whom have I in heaven but you?

**B: And earth has nothing I desire besides you.**

A: My flesh and my heart may fail,

**B: But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.**

A: Those who are far from you will perish;

**B: You destroy all who are unfaithful to you.**

A: But as for me, it is good to be near God.

**B: I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.**

**Prayer:** Help me, dear Jesus, to glory in your cross. Forgive me for the shame I have brought to your cross through weakness and failing faith. Lift my eyes during the short time of this life to see your great and final victory on Calvary. Encourage me during my deepest and darkest hour to look, as you did, to the exaltation and joy in the Father's presence. Move me by your patient love to glorify your cross in all my daily work. Make my life a willing worship of your enduring sacrifice. Let my soul live in confidence of your forgiveness and eternal reward. Amen.

#### Introduction

We believe that the church, while on earth, is the kingdom of the cross. It is the church militant, not the church triumphant.

Many teach that the church already on this earth operates as a kingdom of glory. The Evangelical and Reformed churches do this to a greater or lesser degree. The Bible, however, says that the church, while on earth, will always be the church militant—always on its guard and ready to fight. Only in heaven will we be the church triumphant, living in the visible glory of God's presence.

The teaching that the church will enjoy outward victory over its enemies already in this life is called triumphalism. This wrong idea is closely related to "success theology" and the false teaching of a Millennium. Success theology teaches that if people believe in Jesus they can avoid trouble and enjoy success in their personal lives and secular businesses. Millennialism holds various views that Jesus will return before the final day and lead his people to military victory and bring about mass conversions.

Already in this life, however, the believer enjoys glory under the cross. But it is a hidden, inner glory. Jesus summarized the Christian's lot in this life when he predicted and promised, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). The glory we have now is known and witnessed by believers, but the world cannot see it.

Calvary's cross is a beautiful symbol of the glory we share with Jesus in this life.

## The world sees only shame in the cross

The cross was a most shameful means of execution. And because it was used by the Romans, its humiliation was even more degrading to the Jews. It was a slow and torturous way of dying. The excruciating pain it caused was intensified by its public nature. The cross lifted the criminal off the ground so that friend and enemy alike could see his shame.

1. What is the world's idea of glory?

It wants to win right now. Whatever gives it instant fame, money, skill, and honor is considered glorious.

2. Where do the unconverted of the world get their impression of what is glorious and what is shameful?

The unconverted gain their impression of glory from the devil, from the world around them (sports, media, entertainment), and from their own sinful nature. Whatever has to do with repentance and self-denial they consider to be shameful.

*Read 1 Corinthians 1:18.*

3. What, specifically, does the world think is "foolish" about believing in a cross?

The cross is a symbol of suffering, punishment, and defeat. To the lost, it is foolish to trust in a "loser." The cross is the opposite of glory.

## Only the eyes of faith see the glory of the cross

*Read Galatians 3:13.*

1. There is a short-term way of looking at the cross and a long-term way of looking at it. How does Paul look at the cross?

He looks at it as satisfying the long-term need for people to be freed from the curse of the law.

2. How does this explain why unbelievers see shame where the believer sees glory?

Unbelievers see only the short-term defeat of the cross. Because they do not have faith, they do not see that God put our shame, punishment, and defeat on Jesus at the cross. The believer takes a long-range view of the cross. He or she knows by faith that Easter's victory followed Good Friday's shame. Easter is God's own declaration that God accepted the cross as full payment for our shame. Thus, long term, the cross is our glory.