

Title: Jesus Not Jerusalem

Text: Galatians 1:13-17

Central Idea: Part one of Paul's defense of his thesis (vv. 11-12)

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### **[i] Scripture Reading and Prayer**

**13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; 14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my people, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. 15 But when He who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased 16 to reveal His Son in me, in order that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles, I immediately did not consult with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me; but I went up to Arabia and again returned to Damascus.**

### **[ii] Paul's Thesis for this Section (last time - vv. 11 & 12)**

**11 For I would have you to know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but [I received it] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**

*Paul's gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel!*

12a For I neither received it [i.e. the gospel] from man,  
12b nor was I taught it,

Paul didn't receive t/Gospel through t/Jerusalem Apostles.  
They didn't convert him & they didn't teach him.

“Where then did you get it, Paul?” ==>

12c but [I received it] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

### **[iii] Why is that significant?**

Rem., t/Gal. opposition (Judaizers) were saying that Paul was a 2d rate apostle. He wasn't of t/same pedigree as those in Jer. In fact, they contended that he was subject to those in Jerusalem (under their authority) & that he his message lacked authority. Therefore, he was to be ignored.

### **[iv] Paul always had his critics**

Anyone so powerfully used of G. will be polarizing.

Even today, theol. libs who deny t/inherent auth. of Script. refer to him as a misogynistic bigot.

Can go back in time to t/2d c. A spurious 2d c. writing known as “The Ascension of James” had this to say of him: Paul was a man of Tarsus—indeed, a [Greek], the son of a [Greek] mother and a [Greek] father. Having gone up to Jerusalem and having remained there a long time, he desired to marry a daughter of the (high) priest and on that account submitted himself as a proselyte for circumcision. When, however, he didn't obtain the girl, he became furious and began to write against circumcision, the sabbath, and the law.” [from “The Ascension of James” - late 2d c., cited by Longenecker, 26]

Late 2d c. "Kerygmata Petrou" ("Preaching of Peter") refers to Paul as "the enemy man" who proclaimed "a lawless and absurd doctrine." Slander wasn't anything new to Paul.

### **[v] As far as the Judaizers were concerned . . .**

“I didn't get t/gospel I preach from a man. I wasn't converted under t/authority of t/Jer. A's – and I wasn't taught by them after I came to faith, either.”

“They didn't convert me // disciple me.”

**[vi] Paul is establishing his unique authority as an Apostle**  
W/that he defends t/truth of t/gospel he proclaimed.

Yes, God did a work in Jer. (Acts 2). But t/work that God did in Paul's life was indep. of that. Same work, just separate circum. That's vv. 11&12.

*Paul's gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel!*

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**[vii] A Courtroom Drama**

Beg. w/v. 13 we have what's been cf. to a courtroom drama where Paul takes on t/role of defense attorney as he syst. unfolds a 4-part defense of his unique authority as an A. (thru chap 2).

What we have in vv. 13-17 – Paul's first defense of his thesis.

"Jesus Not Jerusalem"

In saying “JNJ” I'm not suggesting there was anything wrong w/Jer., or t/Gospel that was being preached by t/Apostles and elders there. I'm just pointing out that Paul's encounter with Jesus was apart from what was going on there.

That's t/message of vv. 13-17.

**[viii] Overview of vv. 13-17**

These 5 vv. sum up t/entirety of Paul's existence, starting from his life apart from X (how he lived as a pious Jew), to his actual conversion (how he was called to salvation), along w/his post-conversion activities (incl. his calling as an A.).

Put another way: He demonstrates how certain events before he was saved, when he was saved, and after he was saved all prove that his message was received from God alone.

### **I. Paul's First Defense: Jesus Not Jerusalem (vv. 13-17)**

Using t/1st person in our outline (3 pts.)

*A. "Who I Was" (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14*

*B. "What I Am" (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a*

*C. "Where I Went" (Paul's Post-Conversion Trip to Arabia) – vv. 16b-17*

**A. "Who I Was" (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14**

Who he was before he came to know & love JC.

#### **1. Public knowledge**

**13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism . . .**

##### **a. Paul was a notorious convert**

So much so, he could say before King Herod Agrippa II ==> Acts 26:4-5 “. . . all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.”

In that ch. Paul goes on to share his testimony of his atrocities against t/Xns & how that all ended w/his transf. by t/hand of JC.

Ends ==> 26 “For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.”

**(1) Of course – that refers to Jews in/around Jerusalem**  
T/Galatians were largely Gentiles from Asia Minor 100s of miles away. But they knew of his past, likely having learned it from Paul himself.

**b. He refers to it as his ==>**

**13 . . . former manner of life in Judaism**

Paul was a Jew (that didn’t change), but he was no longer part of that system which he puts in apposition to t/CH of Gd

Phil. 3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

**2. Ἰουδαϊσμός (Judaism) only found here and v. 14**

**a. Refers to a well-defined religious worldview**

We see this in an ancient inscription from Italy which eulogizes a woman who “lived a gracious life inside Judaism”—Judaism understood as ‘a sort of fenced-off area in which Jewish lives are led.’ (Y. Amir, ‘The Term Ioudaismos: A Study in

Jewish-Hellenistic Self-Identification’, *Immanuel* 14 [1982] 35–6, 39–40) . . . [Dunn, 57]

Be like commending a dearly departed sister in X by saying that she lived a gracious life inside of t/true Xn faith.

### **3. He goes into details / specifics – does so negatively and positively**

#### **a. Negatively (v. 13)**

**13 . . . I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;**

#### **(1) Note the two verbs: Persecute - Destroy**

Both verbs in t/imperfect tense indicating past repeated action

These weren't fleeting moments of immature behavior for Paul. His persecution of t/CH was his life.

**(a) Second verb  $\pi\rho\theta\epsilon\omega$  (“destroy”) was used of sacking or destroying a city**

Paul was out to destroy t/City of God which was a fortress that could not be conquered. Cf. Acts 26:14.

**(b) Nonetheless - Paul was on a seek and destroy mission (we saw that in Acts chapter 9)**

Acts 9 1 NOW Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, 2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Acts 26 (before Agrippa)

9 “. . . I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 “And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. 11 “And as I punished them often in all

the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.

“pursuing” = διωκω – transl. “persecute” in v. 13

Something Paul never forgot . . .

1 Cor. 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15).

***a. Negatively (v. 13)***

**13 . . . I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;**

***b. Positively (v. 14)***

**14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my people, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.**

Paul had brawn and brains.

**(1) Words used here ==> advancing . . . beyond**

Picture of great achievement. Paul was blazing thru t/Jewish hierarchy like a fire thru dry timber.

In track terms—Paul was t/Usain Bolt in t/race of t/up & comers.

Usain Bolt being t/fastest man in history who set a world record time of 9.58 seconds in t/100 meters. Clocked at nearly 28 mph. (faster than many dogs).

## **(2) How zealous were you, Paul?**

14b . . . being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

T/body of oral teachings about t/OT law. Summed up in t/Jewish Halakhah which derives authority from 3 sources:  
1) Torah (Script.); 2) Rabbinic Law; 3) Customs.

Speaking of the Roman CH in his day, t/Reformer J.C. ==>  
“[they are bold] in formulating new doctrines by which they have turned the wretched people away from the original purity of God’s Word, ‘the wicked traditions’ with which they have ensnared them . . .” [Calvin, Institutes, Book 4]

### **(a) Paul was zealous for his ancestral traditions**

Phil. 3:6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church . . .

But his zeal was misguided . . .

Rom. 10:2 [speaking of the Jews] . . . they have a zeal (ζηλωτής) for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

That’s t/same word ζηλωτής that’s used in verse 14.

### **(2) Judas “the Hammer” Maccabeaus . . .**

Paul may have seen himself as another Judas “the Hammer” Maccabeaus who led t/Jews in a successful revolt against t/madman Antiochus Ephiaphanes in t/2d c. BC.

Perhaps a better parallel would be t/father of Judas, Mattathias who pursued and killed apostate Jews w/i Israel.

1 Maccabees (Apocrypha) we read a fascinating account of t/kind of zeal that Mattathias had.



In response to a fellow Jew offering a pagan sacrifice as demanded by the king, Mattathias killed him on t/very altar he was sacrificing on. He went on to kill the king's officer and then destroyed the altar.

Mattathias then organizes a large company of warriors who pursued all of t/apostate, wayward Jews (those who offered pagan sacrifices and t/king's army).

Mattathias has been compared to Phinehas in Num 25, who took a spear & killed a fellow Israelite along w/his pagan love interest thus staying God's judgment on t/people.

Num 25:11 records God's words to Moses: “Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned away My wrath from the sons of Israel in that he was jealous with My jealousy among them, so that I did not destroy the sons of Israel in My jealousy.

In 1 sense, Paul was of t/same pedigree as that of Israel's most ardent zealots, men like Phinehas and Mattethias, and Judas Maccabeaus.

However, his zeal wasn't according to the truth.

I think of the 16th c. German reformer, Martin Luther, who reflected on Paul's words here and wrote of himself ==>:

I too may say that before I was enlightened by the Gospel, I was as zealous for the papistical laws and traditions of the fathers as ever a man was. I tried hard to live up to every law as best I could. I punished myself with fasting, watching, praying, and other exercises more than all those who today hate and persecute me. I was so much in earnest that I imposed upon my body more than it could stand. I honored

the pope as a matter of conscience. Whatever I did, I did with a single heart to the glory of God.

I crucified Christ daily in my cloistered life, and blasphemed God by my wrong faith. Outwardly I kept myself chaste, poor, and obedient. I was much given to fasting, watching, praying, saying of masses, and the like. Yet under the cloak of my outward respectability I continually mistrusted, doubted, feared, hated, and blasphemed God. My righteousness was a filthy puddle. Satan loves such saints. They are his darlings, for they quickly destroy their body and soul by depriving them of the blessings of God's generous gifts. I tell you I stood in awe of the pope's authority. To dissent from him I considered a crime worthy of eternal death. I thought of John Huss as a cursed heretic. I counted it a sin even to think of him. I would gladly have furnished the wood to burn him. I would have felt I had done God a real service. [Luther, Galatians]

That's Luther describing his condition before he was justified by faith.

Unlike Luther, however, TAP's conversion was abrupt. Seemingly was no prep. for it. No long hours of conviction; doubt; seeking a sufficient Savior from t/devast. conseq. of sin.

For Paul ==> Suddenly, unexpectedly, the

**A. "Who I Was" (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14**

Gave way to the ==>

**B. "What I Am" (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a**

How did he go from a former life in Judaism persecuting the church to a servant of Jesus Christ?

First 2 words: “But when” (cf. Eph. 2:4)

15-16a 15 **BUT WHEN He who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased** 16a **to reveal His Son in me . . .**

Paul's conversion was dramatic w/a cap. “D”.

No one could point to anything in his past that might give a psychol. explanation for his conversion. Only explanation is G's sov. work in calling him out of darkness into light.

Would be like a Muslim leader in Al Quida or ISIS, responsible for t/torture & murder of 100s of others, being converted to X. 1 day he's holding a lit. sword made of steel, t/next day he's wielding t/Sword of t/Spirit, t/WOG. He's been utterly and inexplicably transformed.

Warren Wiersbe observes:

No matter how you look at it, the conversion of Paul was a spiritual miracle. It was humanly impossible for Rabbi Saul to become the Apostle Paul apart from the miracle of God's grace. And the same God who saved Paul also called him to be an apostle, and gave him the message of the Gospel. For the Judaizers to deny Paul's apostleship and Gospel was the same as denying his conversion! Certainly Paul was preaching the same message that he himself had believed-the truth that had changed him. But no mere human message could effect such a change. Paul's argument is conclusive: his past conduct as a persecutor of the church plus the dramatic change that he experienced prove that his message and ministry are from God. [Wiersbe, 687]

***B. “What I Am” (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a***

3 things here: God's Choice; God's Call; God's Commission

## **1. God's Choice**

**15 But when He who had set me apart from my mother's womb . . .**

### **a. This is what we call “electing grace”**

God's choice, before we were ever born, that we would be recipients of His saving grace.

Romans 9 – God’s purpose according to His choice . . . There is no injustice with God, is there? . . . . “I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION.” . . . it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. . . . He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

Idea of being set-apart from before birth isn't just apostolic privilege.

Ephesians 1 – . . . He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will . . .

R.C. Sproul once said that in all of the years he has taught theology and the doctrine of election, he's had lots of people ask him, "Why are some people not chosen," but he's never had someone ask, "Why was I?"

That's the real issue; "Why is anyone chosen?"

But keep in mind that

### ***1. God's Choice***

Is pre-temporal. That is, it's eternal (before time).  
What God decrees to occur in eternity will happen in time.

## 2. God's Call

a. That's t/middle part of these 2 verses (end of v. 15, beg. of v. 16)

15b . . . and called me through His grace, 16a was pleased to reveal His Son in me . . .

Being ==>

15a . . . set me apart from my mother's womb . . .

Past; eternal.

Being ==>

15b -16a 15a . . . called . . . through His grace, [God being] pleased 16a to reveal His Son in me . . .

That's in time. That's regeneration and conversion. That's t/new birth & faith. That's what it means to truly be "in X".

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### b. Note how this is phrased

15-16 . . . [God] was pleased to reveal His Son in me . . .

We have "in me" not "to me" (even though it could be translated "to me" that's not t/most natural rendering).

### (1) So what does that mean? ==>

15-16 . . . [God] was pleased to reveal His Son in me . . .

### (a) Paul's saying t/same thing he said in v. 12 ==>

12 For I neither received it [the gospel] from man, nor was I taught it, but [I received it] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

He's not talking as much about t/message as he is the Person.

*Paul's gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel!*

“I received the Gospel when JC was revealed to me in all his Glory.” X is the object, the substance.

Paul's choice of t/preposition *εν* here reinforces that thot. T/rev. of God's Son had a transformative power 'in' his very being. That happened to him on t/road to Damascus.

**15-16 ... [God] was pleased to reveal His Son in me ...**

“I didn't get a new religion, I was utterly transformed by JC.”  
So much so, I can say (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 in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Union with Christ (we are in Christ and Christ is in us).

**15-16 He ... had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me,**

**c. These words ring w/God's sovereignty – His delight in being God**

Words like (*ἀφορίζω* = set apart, idea of being marked out from t/rest for a particular purpose or task); “reveal” (*ἀποκαλύπτω*) & “pleased” (*εὐδόκω*) implies God's good pleasure to do & act.

Same word used of Christ in Colossians 1:19 ==>

For it was t/Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

Our salvation in Ephesians 1:5 ==>

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention (lit. “good pleasure”) of His will,

Used in Philippians 2:13 ==>

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

### **(1) 100% the work of God**

1 Peter 1:3 . . . the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again . . .

1 Peter 2:9 [He] who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

100% the work of God.

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Where there's a choice and a call, there's also a commission. That's is, God calls us to service.

### **3. God's Commission**

16b . . . **in order that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles . . .**

**a. Clearly Paul sees himself in the line of the OT prophets**

In fact, I'd argue that t/OT parallel to an Apostle was t/Prophet.

Jer 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Isaiah 49:1–2 . . . The LORD called Me from the womb;  
From the body of My mother He named Me. He has made  
My mouth like a sharp sword . . .

God had commissioned Paul to be an Apostle to the  
Gentiles.

**b. If you know JC you have been called for a purpose –  
for ministry (1 Peter 4:10)**

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving  
one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

*I. Paul's First Defense: Jesus Not Jerusalem (vv. 13-17)*

*A. "Who I Was" (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) –  
vv. 13-14*

*B. "What I Am" (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a*

Thirdly ==>

*C. "Where I Went" (Paul's Post-Conversion Trip to  
Arabia) – vv. 16b-17*

**16b . . . I immediately did not consult with flesh and  
blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were  
Apostles before me; but I went up to Arabia and again  
returned to Damascus.**

Paul was called and commissioned.

**a. What does he do next?**

He doesn't find some Xn leaders to consult with. He doesn't  
go to Jerusalem to meet w/the Apostles there.

He does what? He goes to Arabia and returns to Damascus

**b. Arabia here isn't Saudi Arabia (Arabia of t/Sinai  
Peninsula, cf. 4:25)**

Likely refers to t/territory of t/Nabatean Arabs who  
controlled what is today southern Jordan & t/Negev of Israel.



These are t/Arabs who heard t/G. on t/Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11).

These NABATAEANS as they were called, had settled in t/area during the 3rd c. BC.

Their capital was the red-rock city of Petra.

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**(1) Timeline of events (“where does Paul's trip to Arabia fit in?)**

Damascus = where Paul was baptized where he begins to preach t/gospel.

We read in Acts 9 that he was w/the disciples there for several days. He preached Jesus in t/synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” Those who heard this were amazed, saying, “Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?”

Imagine – he's on his way to persecute t/Xns there; he's converted and now is suddenly preaching X! What a contrast! No wonder the Damascus Jews were baffled.

Acts 9:22ff. But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

It may be at this point when Paul travels to Arabia. He returns to Damascus (v. 23).

23 When many days had elapsed, the Jews plotted together to do away with him, 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were also watching the gates day and night so that they might put him to death; 25 but his disciples took

him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a large basket.

Paul refers to his in 2 Corinthians 11:32–33 ==>

32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, 33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands.

Aretas the King = Nabatean king Aretas IV, a monarch connected by marriage to the Herodian dynasty.

So . . . Paul was converted, baptized, began to preach in Damascus, went to Arabia for a time to preach there.

He suffered some kind of opposition and returned to Damascus where a conspiracy formed to take his life. He was lowered in a large basket at night to escape. Then he went to Jerusalem.

***I. Paul's First Defense: Jesus Not Jerusalem (vv. 13-17)***

***A. "Who I Was" (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14***

***B. "What I Am" (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a  
God's Choice // Call // Commission***

***C. "Where I Went" (Paul's Post-Conversion Trip to Arabia) – vv. 16b-17***

– Ends Paul's first Defense (vv. 13-17)

**II. Observations . . .**

Main thing I want to look at is Paul's conversion as compared to ours.

“There's no comparison! His was dramatic; miraculous – he was an Apostle, I'm just a laborer or a housewife.”

Same Jesus. Same salvation.

Borrow some thoughts from t/old 19th c. Bible scholar Charles Simeon [Horae Homileticae: Galatians-Ephesians, vol. 17 (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1833), 24–28]

**A. Our salvation is the same in its origin: the electing love of God**

Paul's salvation could only have been a result of t/sovereign will of God. Same w/us. If we know JC and are heirs of His grace, it's not a result of flesh & blood. He loved us before we ever loved Him. God gets the glory, honor and praise.

**B. Our salvation is the same in its means: the effectual grace of God**

We are saved by means of God's “effectual” grace alone.

Had G. not saved Paul “by His effective grace” he never would have been redeemed. Same for us. We have no inherent goodness//power to call ourselves out of darkness to light, to regenerate our dead spirits to life. Think about that.

Only God can bring about a true, spiritual resurrection.

John 1:13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Think about it: Each one of us has a “but when” (v. 15).

***A. Our salvation is the same in its origin: the electing love of God***

***B. Our salvation is the same in its means: the effectual grace of God***

### **C. Our salvation is the same in its manner: the revelation of Christ who is the Gospel**

This is v. 12 ==>

**12 . . . [I received the Gospel] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**

“When JC was revealed to me in all his Glory.”

X is t/object, the substance.

This is v. 16 ==>

**16 . . . [God] was pleased to reveal His Son in me . . .**

It's “in me” not about me: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me . . .

Like Paul, there ought to be a clear break from where we were and where we are. “Former manner of life” (v. 13).

### **D. Our salvation is the same in its goal: to make Christ known**

Simeon==> We are not all called, like St. Paul, “to preach Christ among the heathen;” but we are called, like Paul himself, to confess him openly, and to become his avowed followers, and to show forth in our life and conversation the power of his grace. We are all to “shine as lights in a dark world, holding forth the word of life.” We are to be his witnesses, even “epistles of Christ known and read of all men.” We are so to make our “light shine before men, that all who see us may approve of his ways, and glorify his name.”  
What do you truly treasure in life?

Have you counted those things that t/world calls “gain” as “loss” for t/incomparable treasure of knowing JC above all else?

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ . . . 10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

I'll give Charles Simeon the last word ==>

Let those in whose hearts Christ has been revealed, seek to know more and more of him—It is but little that any man knows of him. Paul himself, after preaching Christ for twenty years, desired to know more of him, in the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. Let us also seek to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of him.” The more we behold his glory, the more we shall be changed into his image: and the more we comprehend of his unsearchable love, the more shall we be filled with all the fulness of God.