



# SERMON SINGLES

## Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

#### **Casting A Long Shadow**

Galatians 6:14

## NOTES INTRODUCTION Today's key verse amazes me coming from a man who had a lot to brag about. When he was alive, he was the greatest preacher in the world, the greatest missionary in the church, the greatest teacher of the faith, the greatest theologian, and the greatest religious author. He wrote more books than anyone else in the New Testament. He had a lot to brag about. Yet, Paul said, "There is only one thing I'll brag about. There is only one thing I will ever show pride in. There is only one thing that will make my heart swell, and it is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul is saving that, as believers, our lives should be lived in the shadow of the cross of Jesus Christ. In this message, we're going to see exactly what it means to live in the shadow of the cross. Let's dive in together. **KEY POINTS** 1. We Should Take Pride In The Cross I want you to notice something immediately. It is not the cross that makes Jesus Christ so special, but it is Jesus Christ that makes the cross so special. We are not to just be proud of a cross. Our pride should be in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Crucifixion was actually a very common way of execution in biblical times, especially in the days of the Roman Empire. In fact, there were over 30,000 Jews who were put to death by crucifixion. But do you know what is really strange? Nobody in this world, for all the money in the world, could name 29,999 of those Jews. The only Jew we can name who was crucified was Jesus Christ. It is not the cross that makes Jesus so special. It is Jesus that makes the cross so special. It is Jesus Christ that makes the cross so unique. It is Jesus Christ that makes the cross a reason for us to live a life every day praising God. 2. We Should Find Passion With The Cross It is not without irony that Mel Gibson's magnificent depiction of the death of Jesus Christ was called "The Passion Of The Christ." The common definition of passion is "A compelling emotion or desire that drives everything you do." Why do we refer to the death of Jesus Christ as "The Passion"?

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For one simple reason – the cross of Jesus Christ points to	NOTES
everything that God is passionate about. God is so passionate that	
we spend eternity with Him that He sent Jesus Christ to die on that cross. Jesus Christ was so passionate that our sins be forgiven so we could spend eternity with Him that He willingly gave His life	
on that cross. The truth is you know what you are really passionate about when you are willing to lay down your life for it.	
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So in the shadow of the cross, you should see both God's passionate love for you in Jesus's death, and you should show your	
passionate love for Jesus in your life.	
3. We Should Receive Power From The Cross	
There is a power that is found in living in the shadow of the cross	
that is greater than nuclear power, political power, intellectual power, financial power, and physical power. That power is found in the next statement in this verse: "May I never boast except in	
the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me" (Galatians 6:14).	
When Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross, God also made sure	
that the world was crucified on the cross. I don't mean the	
physical world, but rather the moral world, the ethical world, the philosophical world, and all that this world has to offer us that would drag us down or trip us up. All of that was crucified on the cross. Because of the cross, every follower of Jesus Christ has the power to do something that no one else has. We have the power to	
overcome the world, the flesh, the devil, temptations, and sin.	
4. We Should Give Priority To The Cross	
In the shadow of the cross, not only is the world crucified to you,	
but you are crucified to the world. Has it ever occurred to you that crucifixion is one form of death that you cannot inflict upon	
yourself? You can shoot yourself, drown yourself, hang yourself,	
stab yourself, or poison yourself, but you can't crucify yourself. Crucifixion is something that must be done to you that you must	
surrender to and that is why the cross is the key to the Christian life.	
It is when you voluntarily surrender every day to be crucified to	
this world, to die to your ego, die to your ambitions, die to what	

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you want, die to what you think and you surrender everything in the shadow of the cross to the God that loves you, the Christ that died for you and the Spirit that wants to fill you that you find your victory in life. That is something we all ought to give priority to.

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#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1.	How does Paul's humility in today's key verse challenge you to brag about
	Jesus rather than yourself?

2. How does it feel to know that Jesus was so passionate about having a relationship with you and spending eternity with you that He was willing to die to make that happen?

3. How can you more evidently portray your passion for Jesus to others so that they might come to know Him?	t

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