

**Grace Bible Church**  
**Adult Elective Fall 2016**  
**Topic: Galatians**  
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**Galatians Chapter 2 Cont. and Chapter 3**

**Chapter 2**

- In Chapter 2 Paul shows the truth of his message by showing he has unity with the Jerusalem apostles regarding his message and his ministry to the gentiles.
- 2:1-2
  - Paul's fear was not that his message was in error or that he had been teaching false doctrine. His fear was that all of his toil and labor would be for nothing if the Judaizers had their way of adding works to the gospel message.
  - The Antioch group (Paul, Barnabas, Titus, etc.) did not want a public battle which would hurt the Gentiles and so chose to use discretion in addressing the problem.
  - Paul and those from Antioch did not exercise hot-headedness. Instead, they were level-headed.
    - **Application Point:** How should we react when conflict arises in the church amongst believers?
- 2:3-5
  - One of the major issues, literally, was that the Judaizers wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised. Paul notes that not even in the center of the Jewish world did Peter or James (or anyone else) compel circumcision.
  - Paul calls the Judaizers secret spies who were sneaking around. This negative view implies that their loyalty was not with Christ. Their loyalty was with the Law. They were purposely seeking to overthrow grace and destroy the foundational doctrine of Christianity.
    - the Law
      - There are prerequisites for salvation.
      - There are works needed to enact salvation.
      - There are works necessary for the maintenance of salvation.
- 2:6-9
  - The Judaizers looked at Peter, James, John (etc.) as the "real" apostles. No doubt they were more than irritated when their very own heroes accepted gentiles and the ministry to the gentiles. Perhaps just as irritating was the fact that their very own heroes considered Paul an equal.

- Essentially, God's grace (through Christ) was driving Jerusalem and Antioch's doctrine, mission, and practice.
- 2:10
  - The church needs both orthodoxy and orthopraxy!
    - The message of God's grace and mercy is worth fighting for at any cost.
    - With right doctrine must come (follow!!!) right living: loving others as God created them
- 2:11-13
  - This section really deals with hypocrisy and what our response should be.
  - As background, recall that Peter (Jerusalem) and Paul (Antioch) had agreed upon both message and ministry.
    - the Law does nothing towards salvation
    - the Law does nothing towards sanctification
  - Despite their mutual agreement (and despite the fact that Peter had openly fellowshiped with the gentiles - Acts 10), Peter acted contrary to this when he visited Antioch. In fact, his actions were not only hypocritical, but they swayed other Jews (Barnabas, etc.) as well!
  - Paul is clearly livid. He calls Peter out on his hypocrisy. This serves two major purposes:
    - 1. Shows Paul's authority as an apostle.
    - 2. Clearly reaffirms the simplicity of the gospel message.
  - NOTE: It should be noted that it was common for the Jews to live like Jews in order to reach the Jews. cf. 1 Cor. 9:20. Even Paul advocates for this. James, the leader of the Jerusalem church, was known for this. This was intended to not offend brothers and to draw them to Christ. It was not intended as legalism, but was intended as adapting to the culture in order to not be a stumbling block. There is a big difference between 1 Cor. 9 and what is being describe by Paul in Gal. 2.
  - In fairness to Peter, it should be noted that Peter was not a Judaizer nor was he of the "Circumcision Party". It is hard to say what led to his hypocrisy, but in fairness and charity, it is likely he was trying to avoid persecution and unrest in his home church in Jerusalem. In giving him the benefit of the doubt, it is very possible Peter was acting for the sake of others (which may have been necessary in Jerusalem, but was very detrimental in Antioch).
- 2:14-21
  - This passage is a condensed manual on grace and salvation.
    - v.14: Peter is verbally lashed. This unveils the true issue which is at stake.
    - vv. 15-16: Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ without any works attached (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 10:1-4, 9-13)

- the Law saves no one. It functions to show the need for God and the depravity of man.
- No Jew (save Jesus) could truly follow the Law. All still needed a priest to mediate before God the Father on their behalf. cf. James 2:10
- vv.17-18: Paul rejects the charge of a license to sin. It was just not true that grace gives a license for sin.
  - 1. There are repercussions to sin!
  - 2. A truly changed heart will result in less and less sin (not more!).
  - God does not advocate sin (He cannot, and will not.).
  - The Judaizer argument went like this: If gentiles (or Jews) disregard the Law, they will be "found sinners". Christ supplies the grace to disregard the Law, so Christ enables a sinful life. Paul says "May it never be!!!" Clearly, the Judaizers misunderstood grace and a changed life/heart.
- vv. 19-20: The Law showed Paul (and us!) that he was a sinner and actually pointed him to Christ. This follows logically. The Law show our utter "lostness". Christ calls us to Himself. Our response is to turn from sin and turn to Christ (in faith). cf. Romans 3:19-22
  - we are born again and our new nature is one that will more closely follow the Law (as opposed to our former sinful natures which fought the law.)
- v.21: Christ did not live and die in vain. Yet, we say that he did if we use works for salvation (Christ needed to die and rise for us as the God-man) or for sanctification (Christ's work was and is sufficient and complete).

### Chapter 3

- BIG IDEA: Abraham, the father of the faith, was counted righteous by his faith in God (Gal. 3:6). The Law did not (and does not save us), but serves to show both God's standard and our sinfulness.
  - Grace (with faith and repentance) had brought the Galatians into right relationship with God.
  - Returning to the Law was like a slave returning to a master who could never be pleased (chapter 4 of Galatians).
  - Their return was termed "backsliding". Elsewhere in the Bible (Jeremiah, etc.) backsliding refers to apostatizing and turning away from a positive course to a negative one. Worse, they had turned away willingly.

- vv. 1-5
  - This section focused on legalism and how it assaults both justification (the sinner must add to Christ's work so God will accept him/her) and sanctification (even once saved, the redeemed sinner must work to please God). -> The focus of both these assaults is on ourselves ("It's all about me...").
    - God the Father has provided the plan of atonement which was enacted by the life, death, and resurrection of the Son. The Holy Spirit (upon Spirit baptism at salvation) has brought us into right relationship with God and continues to give us the power to live rightly before Him.
  - Key Words:
    - *anoetos* (Gk): "foolish", mindless, thoughtless, ignorant.
      - Galatians are literally "unthinking" regarding their departure from grace back into works
    - "bewitched": spiritual powers were at play in leading the Galatians away from grace back into works
  - The Galatians were reminded that they did not receive the Spirit by the Law, but by simple hearing and response to the Gospel.
  - If the Spirit started the work, only the Spirit can finish the work (not the Law!!!)
  - Both justification and sanctification are through the Spirit. Both.
  - The Galatians had been persecuted because they had embraced the Gospel (not the Law!!!). Going back would ease the persecution, but would void the very Gospel itself in their lives. cf. Acts 13:49-14:22
  - God was the one Who had testified to the veracity of the Gospel. He had done so with signs and miracles to confirm His message. The Galatians were turning against God's own testimony of the Gospel.
- vv.6-9
  - Paul here fights the Judaizers on their own turf - the Old Testament
  - Paul goes back before Moses to Abraham. In Genesis 15-17 Abraham is seen responding to God's word in faith.
  - Paul then goes on to show that the Gentiles, like the Jews, are the spiritual descendants of Abraham if they respond to God's word similarly (in faith). Their justification (being declared righteous before God while even in a sinful state) is by grace through faith. This was predicted in Genesis 12:3!
- vv.10-14
  - We only relate to God by grace (through faith and repentance). There is nothing else, there is no other option. That's it. No more and no less.
  - Anyone may try to live by the Law, but they will inevitably stumble (cf. James 3:2, Eccl. 7:20, Romans 6:23, Deuteronomy 27:26).
  - the Law:
    - moral, civil, ceremonial (liturgical)
      - all parts of the Law had to be kept!!!

- Anyone trying to live by the Law (to receive a blessing) actually receives a curse!!! They are cursed because they can in no way attain the perfect standard of God when in sin.
- v. 13 uses the Gk word *exagorazo* which is related to the Gk word *agora* (marketplace). We were like slaves in the marketplace, and under bondage and slavery to our master (sin as revealed in the Law). Christ's sacrifice has taken that bondage off from us and has ransomed us from sin (the true Ransom Theory of the Atonement) and the Law. We are essentially freed from the penalty of our own actions and consequences given God's perfect standard. We need forgiveness from God, and Christ satisfies the debt that we owe God.
- vv. 15-22
  - Only a person with perfect character and perfect power can successfully fulfill a promise (with no chance of that promise being broken). -> GOD!
  - This kind of promise (in the form of a covenant) is *berith* in the Hebrew.
  - When God makes a promise, that promise is iron-clad.
  - Normally in a covenant promise both parties had obligations. The sacrifice (being split down the middle and both parties walking through) ceremony signified the significance of mutual responsibility.
    - God's promise to Abraham was different, however. In Genesis 15:17-18 God solidifies the treaty unilaterally! Only He passes between the sacrifices.
  - Paul argues that if the Jews (mere humans) respect a covenant (*diatheke* in the Gk), how much more will God keep His word? The method of argument is from the lesser to the greater. God's word is fixed and iron-clad. Nothing can change it (nothing can be added and nothing can be taken away!!!).
    - God's promise to Abraham was land (Israel), descendants, and blessings (the Messiah ["the Seed"]) and a spiritual heritage of Jews and Gentiles).
  - The function of the Law: Practical - set Israel apart and keep them from apostasy; Theological - express God's standard and drive them toward mercy and grace (showing sinfulness).
    - The Law is bilateral, whereas God's promise to Abraham is unilateral. The Law is temporary and inferior whereas God's promise is eternal and superior.
      - The Law is not inherently wrong. We are inherently wrong!!! cf. Eph. 2 and Rom. 3
  - **Application Point:** How good are you? Have you kept the 10 Commandments? How well? Read Matthew 5:21-22 and 27-28