

# Galatians 2 Commentary-Barber

## Galatians 2 Commentary Verse by Verse Exposition

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### Galatians 2

#### Galatians 2:1-11 Paul in Defense of Paul – Part 2



We are talking about Paul in defense of Paul, and this is part 2 of that. Over and over in Gal 1 Paul defends the gospel; over and over, because he is building a platform. Well, what we saw last time and we are seeing today is Paul defending Paul.

Well, would you turn with me today to Galatians 2. You are wondering, how is he going so fast? Well, this is narrative; narrative always flows quickly because it is story form. Paul is giving his testimony, and this is why we are able to cover so many verses. Today we are going to start in chapter 2. We are talking about Paul in defense of Paul, and this is part 2 of that. Over and over in chapter 1 Paul defends the gospel; over and over, because he is building a platform. Well, what we saw last time and we are seeing today is Paul defending Paul.

Now, he does not do that much. He does it in 2 Corinthians. It is just a rare thing for him to do it. However, he has been accused of plagiarizing his message from the apostles, and not only that, of masquerading as an apostle. And so he comes out of his corner. We saw last time his humiliation. Paul is so transparent, and that is what I love about him. You know, when you walk with God there is no reason not to be. You do not have to worry about what other people think. You need to worry about what God thinks. And when you know that He knows, why does it matter if everybody else knows? See, we are always protecting a reputation and it is so sad. Paul is not protecting anything. He is very transparent in his humiliation. He humbly shares what he used to be.

And he was one of the [Judaizers](#) that are plaguing the church there the Galatian believers, those churches in southern Galatia. He was one of them. And that is the whole point of this. He is trying to get across to them, "I have been there. I know who these people are. I know what they are saying. I used to be one of them." The difference is the apostle Paul took it to a level they would never dare to take it. He did not try to deceive anybody. If you did not agree with him he put you to death. I mean, that is the way he lived. He took it far beyond the false teachers that are plaguing the southern Galatian churches.

It says in Gal 1:13-14, as we review, "For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism." You've heard it; I told you. "How I used to persecute (*dioko*) the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries, among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions." You see, Paul took it far beyond these false teachers. He has been there. He has been one of them. He has done that. What they are trying to buy back into, he has been completely set free from. And that is his whole point.

Then Paul sets out to show that he did not receive the gospel message from any man. To accuse him of plagiarizing another man's message is a false charge, and he wants to make sure they understand that. It was revealed to him by God Himself. He vindicates himself in Gal 1:15 and following. Gal 1:15 and Gal 1:16 he says, "But when God, who had set me apart (*aphorizo*) from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood."

What a beautiful two verses, and we could almost go back and preach on them again. God had a plan for Paul before Paul was ever born. And it was God, not man, that revealed His Son in Paul; that inward revelation of the resurrected Christ. And when he saw it he was changed forever. Paul did not seek after God. God sought after Paul.

Paul shows that he did not get his message from the apostles in Gal 1:17. He says, "Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were **apostles** (*apostolos*) before me; but I went away to [Arabia](#), and returned once more to Damascus." He said, "I did not go get it from the apostles. How could I plagiarize their message? I did not get it from them." In fact, he preached that message of the gospel that God had revealed to him for three years before he even decided to go to Jerusalem. And the reason he went to Jerusalem was just to meet Simon Peter while he was there. James dropped in. It says in Gal 1:18, "Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted (*historeo* #2) with Cephas." That's the Aramaic name for Simon Peter. "And stayed with him 15 days." His visit was not to get credibility. His visit was not to see that if his message was approved. He just went to see Peter.

What a beautiful picture. Simon Peter walked with Jesus and he, Paul did not have that experience and he wanted to know what it was like. And, you know, it is beautiful what God did. He sent James over while he was there. James was the Lord's brother, grew up with Jesus. Here's one who grew up with Him. Here's another one who walked with Him. And that is the only reason he went to Jerusalem.

He says in Gal 1:19, "But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother." Evidently Paul had been accused of lying by somebody. See, that is the way to do it. You just try to discredit the messenger so that you can discredit the message. That is the way people work. If you do not understand that, look at the political system and what goes on in our newscast every day. Tear the man down and then somehow you can go against what he is saying. That is exactly what they did with Paul. They tried to tear him down. In light of it, they said he is a liar. In Gal 1:20 Paul says, "Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God." That means God is my witness. It is stronger than taking an oath there to assure his credibility. "I assure you before God that I am not in any way, shape or form lying."

He says after his first visit to Jerusalem in Gal 1:21, "Then I went into regions of [Syria](#) and [Cilicia](#)." Now, why would he do that? He just continued preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, what God told him to do. And those were Gentile areas. Paul even documents that not even the Judean churches gave him the message. How could he even plagiarize the message from anybody? He did not hear it from man. He says in Galatians 1:22, "I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; but only they kept hearing [now I love this. What a beautiful picture here], 'He who once **persecuted** (*dioko*) us is now **preaching** (*euaggelizo*) the faith (discussion of "the faith") which he once tried to destroy.' And they were glorifying God because of me." Paul did not receive the gospel from any man. God revealed it to him. He did not get it from the apostles. He did not get it from the Judean churches. On that [Damascus](#) road some marvelous things took place and beyond. And God revealed to him the message He wanted him to preach.

Well, today we are going to begin with a consultation he seeks with three of the apostles in Jerusalem. And then we are going to begin to look at the confrontation he has with Simon Peter. I hate to tell you, but we are not going to finish that one. We are just going to introduce it because it is going to take too much time. In Gal 2:1-11 Paul is going to take the message of grace, the message that he preaches to the Gentiles, and he is going to go to the apostles. Now listen carefully, he is not going for them to approve him. He is going to see if he approves of them. He is going to find out where they stand on the message of grace. It is not really Paul being tested here. It is going to be the message of grace and see where they are standing there in Jerusalem. He will not back down. Paul will not back down from the integrity (cf Integrity - A Few Thoughts) of the message of grace.

Have you ever wondered why Simon Peter sometimes will back down, but Paul never would? Have you ever wondered about that? You see, Paul was so steeped in this message that God had to break him, blind him for three days and turn him inside out, and he was never one to go back. He said, "I will never go back to it." Simon Peter, however, did not have quite that same experience. And you see the differences in the two.

I would rather have a legalist, I mean one that knows the law down to the very A's and B's of it. I would rather have one of them come to know Christ than I would somebody that just comes in, understands grace, and never understands the seriousness of sin and responsibility and what cleansing is all about and what the cross is all about. I would much rather have somebody who has been the other way and God had to completely turn him inside out and bring him here on the other side. Paul is not about to back down as you will see in the verses today.

Well we have seen his humiliation. We have seen his vindication. Now we are going to see his consultation with the apostles. Let me read the text for you; Gal 2:1-10.

"Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking [Titus](#) along also. It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the **gospel** (*euaggelion*) which I

**preach** (*kerusso*) among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of **reputation** (*dokeo* = hold an opinion based upon appearances), for fear that I might be running or had run, in **vain** (*kenos*). But not even **Titus**, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. But it was because of the false brethren **secretly brought in** (Smuggled in, brought in secretly, surreptitiously - *paraeisaktos* - from *para* = beside - the false were "smuggled" in along side the true brethren!), who had **sneaked in** (*paraeiserchomai* = *para* - alongside + *eiserchomai* = to enter = to come in beside the true) to **spy out** (*kataskopeo B-1*) our **liberty** (*eleutheria*) which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to **bring** us into **bondage** (*katadouloo* = to enslave utterly! Reduce to absolute slavery - A strong word! Used in the Lxx of Ex 6:5). But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do."

There was 14 years before Paul finally went before the apostles. Now he had been before Peter, but only to visit and, and met James at the same time. But he went for a consultation. He had been preaching the message of grace all this time, and you see, he did not seek their approval beforehand. He had been preaching it. And now he goes and seeks a consultation with these men.

Now there are five visits that we know for sure that Paul made to Jerusalem. This causes some confusion. The only reason I am bringing this up is if you are one of those who, who love to go to a commentary to check out and see if your preacher is right, you will find a divisive opinion on this. Let me show you where you are going to run into trouble. Five different visits he made to Jerusalem. Which one is he talking about. "After 14 years I went again to Jerusalem." Which visit is he talking about?

The first visit he made was the one we just looked at in Gal 1:18-20 when he visited Peter and he met James. The second visit was to take money to people in Judea, the Christians in Judea who had suffered from a famine. Acts 11:28-30 ([note](#)) tell us about that visit. It is not brought up in specifically in Galatia, but yet I think that is what he is talking about. It says, "One of them named Agabus" the prophets had come down, "stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there was great, there would certainly be a great famine all over the world." This is Acts 11:28. "And this took place in the reign of Claudius. And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders." That is his second visit to Jerusalem, to take that money that was taken up from the believers to help out those that are suffering from the famine in Judea. His third visit; this is where a lot of the complications come, was to attend the Jerusalem Council which is indicated in Acts 15:1-30. That is his third visit. His fourth visit was at the end of his second missionary journey, recorded in Acts 18:22. And his fifth and final visit to Jerusalem, which resulted in his imprisonment, is in Acts 21:15-23, 35.

Now, here is the problem: many people are divided over two visits that he made to Jerusalem. Was it the famine visit I call it, or was it the third visit for the Jerusalem council? That is when they made up the decrees and sent them out to all the churches that talked about they were free from the law and from the bondage to the law. Well, my personal view on it—and this is why when you study you are going to say, well, my preacher is wrong, or maybe you might decide he is right; he is not inerrant either way we go—but my personal feeling is it is his famine visit. And I will tell you why. He mentions Peter, James and John. He does not say one word about James who is the head elder in Jerusalem and of that council. He is the one who made the final decision. And he does not say anything about the decrees which they came up with in that Jerusalem Council. And it just seems to me like that this is another visit on its own. It had to be the famine visit when he took the money in.

That is my personal view. Now if you disagree, that is alright. And you will say why did you waste my time? Well, you just have to understand, if you take it to that level there is a lot of discussion about which visit it was.

Gal 2:1, "Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also." Now Galatians says he took **Titus** with him. Oh, this is ingenious. You talk about how God set this thing up. Paul and Barnabas were Jews. Where are they going? Jerusalem. Hey, man we are going to fit like a glove. I mean, we are with all home folks over here. Hey, Barnabas, how you doing? Hey, Paul, it is good to see you. But who is Titus? Titus is a Gentile redneck. He has nothing to do with the Jewish traditions, the promises, the covenants, or anything else, and they take Titus with them.

And, you see, Paul admits this was not his idea. This was not an afternoon committee meeting when they decided this would be a good thing to do. No, God said go to Jerusalem. God said take Titus. Look at Gal 2:2: "It was because of a revelation that I went up." In other words, he did not go on his own. God had revealed to him this is what I want you to do. The word for "**revelation**" is

the word we have seen several times, **apokalupsis**. *Apokalupsis* simply means to uncover something, to reveal something. And in this particular context it reveals an instruction to do something. He did not have that idea himself. God gave him that idea and told him what to do. This had to have come from God. For what is going to happen next only God could have set this up, to take Titus with them was, was such an incredible plan.

Gal 2:2: "It was because of a revelation that I went up, and I submitted to them the **gospel** (*euaggelion*) which I **preach** (*kerusso*) among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of **reputation** (*dokeo* = hold an opinion based upon appearances), for fear that I might be running or had run, in **vain** (*kenos*)."

Now, if I am correct and this is his famine visit, then what I see happening here is he just sees the opportunity and found Peter, James and John, and said "I want a private consultation with you. I want to talk to you a little bit. I want to submit to you the gospel which I preach, which by the way, has nothing to do with the law. It does not require circumcision. It does not require bowing down to the mosaic law." He said I want to submit that. I am going to submit this to these three men. I want to see where they are.

Paul says, "But I did so in private to those who were of reputation." Now this was wisdom only could have given him. He did not seek the whole group. He sought the big three, Peter, James and John. Now is it not funny, that he goes on later on to say, "God does not really show partiality," but this is people. People single them out there, they are the big three. And we know it is Peter, James and John how? By Gal 2:9. Drop down and look at Gal 2:9. It's clear. "And recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James," and it names them, "and Cephas, Simon Peter and John, who were reputed to be pillars." So we knew exactly who he went to talk to.

Now when Paul said at the last of the Gal 2:2, "For fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain," what does he mean by that? Does he mean that he might talk with them and feel like he has been a failure? Is that what he is saying? Absolutely not! Paul is totally convinced of his message and nothing will ever change him from preaching it. But what he is saying is if these three men, if they would for a second say that if you had to add law to grace, that that would cripple the message that was going out to the Gentiles. It would not stop him from preaching it, but it would cripple people from understanding it. And he said "I do not want to be running in vain. I want to find out if you guys are where you ought to be. You are over here in Jerusalem. Now where are you when it comes to the law and when it comes to grace?"

Titus, a Gentile, who had never been circumcised—which was the first initial rite of the physical sign of Abraham, he had never been circumcised—was the test case to see where these guys were. Now listen to me, this is critical moment in Christianity in the New Testament. If these three apostles would have said he needs to be circumcised, then Paul would have said, "Well, I need to pack up and go home. It is going to be even tougher now preaching the message that God has given to me." But the beautiful thing is, they did not. Is it not awesome? They did not.

Gal 2:3 says, "But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." Man, you have to see the thrill that is in his voice when he writes this. The word for compelled is *anagkazo*, and it means made to do something by force in order to set an example. It is interesting here. They did not make an example out of Titus. Here is a Greek, here is a Gentile. What is he doing over here in Jerusalem? And what are we doing here? They did not make him be circumcised, that Mosaic rite, they did not make him do that in order to be saved. They said, no sir, Jesus is enough. "But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." What a powerful statement. What a powerful statement.

You know what? That even frees us today to get up and say, "Jesus is enough. You do not need law. Jesus is enough. He is sufficient to save you. He is sufficient to sanctify you. And no religious law is going to help you attain anything. He is your attainment. He is your spirituality. And it is basically what they affirmed. In Gal 2:4 it says, "But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to **bring** into **bondage** (*katadouloo* = to enslave utterly! Reduce to absolute slavery - A strong word! Used in the Lxx of Ex 6:5).

Now Paul's victory did not come easily. Now the three men, Peter, James and John, he had no problem with them, but there were some others who found out about the meeting and came there. No doubt these were the Judaizers. They were secretly brought in. That is interesting. Someone must have found out about the meeting. They came in uninvited, party poopers. They came in to this secret private meeting just to throw in their two cents worth. These Judaizers chief slogan is found in Acts 15:1. Now remember this. It says "Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'" That was their whole doctrine. "Christ is not enough, grace is not enough. You have to have an external sign, external mark on your body." These Judaizers were very malicious people. And they were like spies going behind the enemy lines to find out what they were doing so they could go back and contradict it in a different way. In this case they infiltrated. The word means sneaked in alongside. They intruded without invitation into the apostle's private conference.

When I was going to Romania under those years of communism I could always spot the communists that were there. They would always come to see what we were saying so that they could get in their little meetings and tear it down. And one fellow showed up

almost every meeting I went to. He had little round, dark glasses, and this was at night in a room that wasn't very well lit. I was thinking, what in the world is he doing wearing those little things, and sit there and just stared at me the whole time I would preach. That just made me preach stronger. I tell you what, I do not know what God did during those days. I have never had any more boldness than I had over, over in Romania in under the communistic times, but he was sitting right there. They would sneak in. They had to hear what was being said so that they could go back and get their information to where they can contradict it.

But it was because of the false brethren **secretly brought in** (Smuggled in, brought in secretly, surreptitiously - *paraeisaktos* - from *para* = beside - the false were "smuggled" in along side the true brethren!), who had **sneaked in** (*paraeiserchomai* = *para* - alongside + *eiserchomai* = to enter = to come in beside the true) to **spy out** ([kataskopeo B-1](#)) our **liberty** (*eleutheria*) which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to **bring** us into **bondage** (*katadouloo* = to enslave utterly! Reduce to absolute slavery - A strong word! Used in the Lxx of Ex 6:5).

The word **skopeo** is the word we get the word "scope" from. I have these little bitty binoculars I used when I would go hunting. And that is the idea, get in closer, get in closer. Magnify it even more.

They came in to **spy out**. Their intent was hostile as they purposed to observe the freedom that these believers had from the Mosaic Law and from a set of rules and regulations. So first of all it was to spy out the message.

By the way, from time to time we are going to have that right here in our church. You may be here this morning and I have a word for you. I just want you to know that we know who you are. You come in to find out what the believers are saying about grace so that you can go out and you can use what we say, twist it, as 2 Peter 2:1, 2, 3 (note) talks about, and then use it to contradict what we say. But we understand that you are here. That happens all the time. But they will be here.

But then secondly, the whole purpose was to make Christians slaves to the law. They wanted to bring believers back under bondage. And he says that. He says "in order to **bring** us into **bondage** (*katadouloo* = to enslave utterly!)." They cannot take away our salvation, so they say. okay, since you cannot take away their salvation, let us get them while they are saved back up under law. Let us cripple them. Let us take away their joy. Let us put them back up under religious system so that they can lose all the joy of a relationship. Well, these were those folks and they came in to see whether or not Titus was going to be circumcised or not. And they really emphasized that he should be.

This is the contention that Paul went through. He just set up a private consultation, but here comes these uninvited people trying to make it look like they are trying to sway those three apostles to have him circumcised.

Gal 2:5: "But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you." Are you not glad the apostle Paul was who he was? I tell you, I love him. I just love studying his epistles. I love what God did in him. He would not budge. He would not budge because the truth of the gospel was at stake, and he understood the seriousness of this moment. Even though a private consultation, it was as important as the Jerusalem Council that happened later on.

Well, to impose circumcision upon Titus would have been to deny that salvation is by faith alone, by grace. It would be to completely deny that message. And it would have stated that faith in Jesus Christ is not enough. The fundamental truth of the gospel would have been at stake. It was at stake, and therefore Paul did not budge. You have people today to say you have to be baptized by water in order to be saved. You understand what I am saying. That is a physical act, and do you realize this is the proof text right here? If you add anything, an external act to the grace of Jesus Christ you have just detracted from His sufficiency and His deity and His ability to save us.

"But we did not yield," Gal 2:5, "in subjection to them for even an hour; so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you." The apostles, Peter, James and John, affirmed Paul's message. It says in Gal 2:6, "But from those who were of high reputation." And I love how Paul does this: "(What they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)." I just love that. He is not enamored by who somebody is. "Well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me," Which means they did not add one single thing to my message of grace that I was preaching to the Gentile world.

Gal 2:7: "But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the **circumcised** (*peritome*)." This gets exciting. The word "**seeing**" is [horao \(A-2\)](#). It means to come into a clear perception of something. It is used when something finally clears up and you see it without a shadow of a doubt. How many of you are teachers of some kind? Now, you know; you are just like I am. You cannot wait for that look on somebody's face when it finally comes clear. I mean, one of those looks is good for the whole year. You will go back and teach the next year, and if you can just get one of them to see it. You are teaching for that, "I got it! I got it! Aha, I have it! It is clear! It has come clear to me! I see it!" That is exactly what he is talking about right here.

These apostles were not sure exactly what they were getting into in this private consultation with Paul and Barnabas and Titus. But



now it has come clear to them, just as clear as a bell. And what is it that came clear? “Seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised.” They saw it. That is the beautiful thing.

I want you to keep understanding what I am saying. God sent him up there. It was not to affirm him; it was really to test them; but God threw in this as an extra blessing. He got affirmed because they saw it. They saw it. They saw that he knew the gospel. They did not tell him the gospel. They knew that. They knew the Judean churches did not tell him. And they said, “Look at this, God has raised this man up to be an apostle to the Gentile world.” And they affirmed him. They affirmed him.

Boy, God spoke to me last night as I was preaching. I did not it prepared, but God reminded me that many years ago when I was just beginning in the ministry, I kept wanting people to affirm me. You know, some Baptist churches in the south will have a day when the congregation gives a vote of affirmation to affirm the pastor. But as I have gotten older, it has dawned on me over and over that in Scripture you do not have to worry about others affirming you, for it is God Who will affirm you. And when God affirms you, you are truly affirmed! And so, if you are living what you say (walking your talk) and you are seeking to do what He told you to do, He will be your affirmation.

And that is exactly what happened to the apostle Paul. He did not have to be affirmed. He knew he was already affirmed in God's eyes. But God affirmed him through the apostles. “But, on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised.” They realized hey, we understand Simon Peter. We understand the commission God gave to him. But look at this, God has done the same thing with this man by the name of Paul. He has given him the ministry to the Gentiles. He knows the gospel and nobody taught it to him. It is exactly what we preach. That was a God thing.

In Gal 2:8 it says, “(For He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles.)” Totally a God thing. The word for “had worked effectively, the word “worked” is [\*energema\*](#) (See also *energeo*). ***Energema*** means to cause something to happen, and it points to the result. God caused it to happen that Peter would be assigned the ministry to the circumcised and He caused it to happen and they saw it. They saw it, that Paul was commissioned to the Gentile world.

Well, Galatians 2:9-11 says,

“And recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I was also eager to do.”

So Paul's consultation with these three, probably on his Jerusalem famine visit, paid off big time. In fact, it set the stage for what was going to happen in the Gentile world of which we are the benefit even today in America being believers. It turned out awesome for the cause of the gospel. Jesus is enough.

We have seen Paul's humiliation, his vindication and his consultation. Now we come to that point that a lot have been waiting for, his confrontation. He is about to stand in the face of Simon Peter, Paul is. What is going on? I mean, it looked pretty congenial in Gal 2:1-10. What in the world is going to happen now? Well, let me introduce it first of all. What happens next may really catch you by surprise. It is so interesting to me how some people have the power, the demeanor about them that makes us want to feel like we have got to do something.

## GRACE WORKS

Do you know anybody like that? Maybe it is in your family. See, grace works. This is not a passive message. Jesus was obedient to His Father unto death. And so therefore, He is going to be obedient in us. He is going to perfect that obedience in us, that willingness to do (read Php 2:13NLT-note). We will become doers of the word (Jas 1:22note). We will not go out and do it (in the strength of our fallen flesh); we will become doers of the word if we are living under grace. The works will take care of themselves. But have you ever been walking in that freedom, just enjoying Jesus and, I mean, being responsible to the things that God has put in front of you? And somebody comes around, maybe it is in your family, maybe it is in your family. Do you have a mother or a father who was never pleased with you? You never can quite attain. But when you are around them, suddenly you lose all the joy of walking with Christ, suddenly you feel like you have got to go do something to prove yourself so that you can win from them something (eg, affirmation) that you should have already had.

Does that ring a bell with anyone? When they come around you are more under a "works mentality;" when they leave you again begin to walk under grace. You see, this can occur anywhere. It could be in a job. It could be someone with whom you work. Now I am not talking about responsibility in jobs and gifts and callings. I am not talking about that. I am talking about the personality of someone you work with who is never pleased with anything you do. That is what I am talking about. And this makes you feel like an idiot, and you come home at night thinking, well, God, I am certain I can do something more than this. But when they are around you, it puts you up under that old guilt that you have got to go out and do something in order to attain something.

Well, of all people who should be exempt from this kind of thing, it would be Peter, Simon Peter. I mean, isn't he the one who stood there and said, do whatever you have to do; we cannot shut up. We have got to talk about what we have seen and heard. Is he not the one who did that? Isn't he the great guy that, after the Pentecost and the Spirit came to live within him, isn't the bold one? Something about Simon Peter I can relate to is that the only time he ever opened his mouth was to "change feet." You are going to see in Peter a fickle individual in this section. Of all people you would think Simon Peter would be the one never to cower to people like that. He did not in Gal 2:1-10. He stood his ground.

You mean Simon Peter is guilty of this? That's right. The very one you would think would not be is the culprit. Gal 2:11:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned."

These are tough words here. Remember that in Gal 2:1-10 they had been in Jerusalem. That is his hometown. Hey, Pete, how are you doing? Good to see you. Now he is in Antioch. Antioch is Gentile territory and is a little different. "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face." Now, why would Paul do that? He said, "because he stood condemned." The word "**opposed**" is *anthistemi* and it means to stand against. *Anti* means against, and then *histemi* means to stand, to get right in his face. I mean, Paul got right in Peter's face and stared at him. The word "**condemned**" ([\*kataginosko\* - A1](#) = find fault with) doesn't mean Peter lost his salvation. It means he was guilty. And Paul had to rebuke him.

Now what happened? You ever notice that Paul was very gentle when somebody did not understand grace, when a weaker brother came along? He was very gentle. In fact, in Romans 14:1-15:33 and then 1Cor 8-10 deals with the weaker brother. Paul is so gentle with them. He says, "Do not ever use your freedom under grace as a license to walk over your weaker brother." And so he is very, he is very sensitive to the weaker brother. Later on in his ministry Paul had Timothy circumcised because of the effect it was going to have on those weaker brothers. He says in Acts 16:3, "Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek."

You say that is so inconsistent. He would not circumcise Titus and he turns right around and circumcised Timothy. No, no, no, no; it is not the same thing. Timothy's mother was Jewish and his daddy was Greek. And he knew he was going into Jewish areas and a lot of these were believers and they would not have understood had he not been circumcised, so therefore that never became an issue that would come up in the conversation, debates that would be brought up. That is just divine discernment. Paul understood that. He was very tender to the weak. You have to understand that. However, to the strong, to those who understood grace he was a bear. Buddy, he would get right in your face. If you were a weaker brother he had all the time in the world. If you were a stronger brother he would get right in your face.

Gal 2:12: "For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision." Now watch; Simon Peter who was comfortable around the Gentiles when he was by himself—now this is just a beautiful picture in my mind—he cowers now to the pressure of the [Judaizers](#). But I love to see his comfort around the Gentiles before they came. He says, "For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles."

Now, what comes up in my mind, because you understand my mind is a little quirky, but I get into a mental picture of what is going on here. And here he is coming over into Antioch. He sees his buddies. Peter was the one who had the vision of the foods that came down and he saw that anything is clean now. There is nothing unclean anymore. We are free from that law. And he would walk over to Ralph, would walk up and say, "Hey, Pete, come on over for dinner tonight." He says, "What are you going to do?" "We are going to barbeque." "Barbeque, son, I cannot wait to be there!" "What are you going to have?" And they said, "Pork." Oh, you missed that. Good grief! Pork! And Simon Peter, who could not eat pork all those years because it was unclean, probably said back, "Make mine medium well, throw in some French fries or a big orange potato, and give me some salad with honey mustard dressing." Wouldn't that make you hungry? That is what he would probably say.

Well, he did that until they came. Oh, my! Who are the "they" in your life? Oh, do not get on Simon Peter. We are the same way aren't we? All of a sudden you feel like you have got to do something in order to be pleasing to somebody else when they came. "He began to withdraw and hold himself aloof." The word "**withdraw**," *hupostello*, *hupo* is under, and *stello* means to place yourself. If this was a big table he would get down behind the table. And everybody would say where is Peter? I do not know. I do not find him anywhere. He is over there hiding. That is what he would do.

Peter would do that? Why would he do that? He did not want to be seen eating with the Gentiles. And then the word "hold himself aloof" is the word *aphorizo*. *Aphorizo* means he drew a line and said I am not fellowshiping with you. Ralph would walk up and say, "Pete are you coming over tonight. You were there last night." "What? I do not even know who you are. Now you leave me alone and get away from me." Why? Because they were there. That is amazing. How many times we can walk one day under grace, and, because they come around, we get right back into our works mentality.

To hold himself aloof. "Fearing the party of the circumcision." You know why he feared them probably? It does not say. They are from Jerusalem. And remember, right after this, I believe, is when the Jerusalem council met, and they sent out a decree and said, "Look out, look out. There are people coming to church to church and they are saying, we are sending them. We are not sending them. You better watch them." And sure enough, he "feared the party of the circumcision." Why? Because they came from hometown, folks. They can hurt him when he goes back. They can hurt his reputation. They can do to him what they were doing to Paul, so Peter cowered down, chicken, cowered down, backed away. Peter gave into them. Do not point your finger at him. Any of us are susceptible, any of us are susceptible. If it can happen to Simon Peter it can happen to me in a minute. It has happened to me.

Well, what happened next? This is as far as I can go. I am out of time. But next week we are going to really get in the heat of the confrontation. And I will tell you, what Paul says gives us the foundation of the message of grace and what it is all about. And it will show you the difference in religion and in a relationship.

But what I want to leave you with today, who are the "they" in your life? Some of us are like yoyos. I call us mugwamps. You know what a mugwamp is? It is a bird that sets on a fence with his mug on one side and his wump on the other and just cannot make its mind which side it is going to get on. On Sunday mornings Oh, grace, grace, God's grace. On Monday, we will work till Jesus comes, we will work. Will you make up your mind which side of the fence are you on?

You see, when they come around look out, they will put back up under a mentality that says you have got to do something in order to accomplish what only Christ can give to you. And that is what works we are talking about. We are not talking about the doing of Christianity. That is going to take care of itself. We are talking about works with a motivation of attaining righteousness. And some people will put you right back up under that mindset.

## Galatians 2:11-19 Paul Confronts Peter



We are going to be looking today at Galatians 2:11-19. In case you have not realized it, the apostle Paul was in no way a politician. Have you picked that up? When he stood in Peter's face there, he did not mince any words, did he? It did not matter what was politically correct, buddy, he wanted to stand on what was biblically correct.

Well, would you turn with me to Galatians 2 as we move right along in this wonderful epistle. We are going to be looking today at Galatians 2:11-19. In case you have not realized it, the apostle Paul was in no way a politician. Have you picked that up? When he stood in Peter's face there, he did not mince any words, did he? It did not matter what was politically correct, buddy, he wanted to stand on what was biblically correct. It is so interesting, in our day when somebody makes a stand like that, people think they are arrogant. I have even heard people talk about the fact that Paul was a real egotist. And, of course, that came from people who do not know a whole lot. They have never studied Paul, a very transparent, very broken man, blinded for three days when he first met Jesus. You think that would not get your attention?

It is interesting how in a day of relativism that we are living in in the 21st century, no absolutes. I will determine what is absolute or not. In that kind of wishy washy culture that we live in, we see somebody that has conviction and resolve and the best way in the world to get around it and not have to deal with what they are saying is to call them arrogant. A good example of that is what people are doing to our president right now. And I will tell you what, here is a man of resolve and a man of conviction. I know folks that work with him and I know his walk and I know he unashamedly loves the Lord Jesus Christ. And here is a man that the world stands up and says is arrogant. Why? Because nobody knows what is absolute anymore. Nobody really has many convictions, at least in our world as we look at it.

The apostle Paul would have fit into the same type of thing, a man that did not mince words, a man that when he said something it had been thought through and prayed over. He is deeply convicted about the gospel of grace. There is no doubt whatsoever about Paul's heart when it comes to the gospel of grace. He is convicted of the freedom that it offers and really had offered him. He has experienced it. He is aware of the dangers of the performance mentality, what religion does to rob a person of this joy that they can have in walking in that relationship with Christ.

This is why he stands in the face of Simon Peter. This is why he rebukes him the way he does, because he is a man of conviction and a man of resolve. He has seen that Peter has compromised the message of the gospel. Well, we began to look the last time at this confrontation beginning in Gal 2:11. Now, just to review in a second, that followed Gal 2:1-10 which is his consultation. This is so interesting. He had to rebuke the same man that over in Jerusalem sang a different song when he was over there in Gal 2:1-10.



He took Titus with him and Barnabas. He went to see the big three, Peter, James and John.

I want you to make sure you understand he did not go for them to approve his message. He went to see if he could approve theirs. Do these guys really know what grace is? And he wanted to make sure that they were on the same page. He did not go for their approval. He went to see and to check them out. They beautifully passed the test. Gal 2:6, "But from those who were of high reputation," and I love this. Paul did not care what reputation somebody had. He said, "(What they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality.)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me." And what he says is, "they added nothing to my message." In other words, "they did not correct me." What they were saying is, "We are preaching the same message to the Jews that you are preaching to the Gentiles. Jesus Christ is enough. He is enough. Faith alone in Christ alone is sufficient for salvation and for sanctification." And they said this is the same message we preach.

But in Gal 2:11 Peter has gotten out of his comfort zone. Sometimes God does that, doesn't He? And he came over to Antioch. Uh oh! Antioch is a Gentile area. When he came over, this is when the confrontation takes place. You see, we found out how weak Simon Peter could be when certain people were around, how wishy washy he could be on that message of grace when it threatened his reputation. It says in Gal 2:11, "But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face." I got right up in his face and rebuked him. "Because he stood condemned." The word "condemned" means guilty.

What was he guilty of? Gal 2:12: "For prior to the coming of certain men from James he used to eat with the Gentiles." We went over that the last time. "But when they came," this particular group that said they were coming from James, when they came, "he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision." You see, Peter could not take the pressure of these Judaizers coming around him. They said they were from James and that was a lie. In fact, the Jerusalem Council meets after this and they put into a letter that was sent out to the churches "Watch out for people that are coming saying they are coming from us. They are not coming from us. They are the party of the circumcision. They believed that the law of Moses is the path to righteousness, not faith in Jesus Christ." When they went over to Antioch "Peter withdrew and held himself aloof."

That word "withdrew," as we studied the last time, means he hid himself. He did not want to be seen with these Gentiles with whom he had been fellowshiping and eating. It says, "he held himself aloof" which means he drew a line and said, "I do not want to fellowship with you anymore." And Ralph would come up to him, and say, "Hey Pete, you coming over to our house for dinner tonight? You were here two nights ago." And he would say, "I do not even know who you are. Get away from me." And refused to associate with them. Why? Because these people that had come amongst them were the same people that had criticized Paul and attacked him and tried to ruin his reputation, and Peter knew the power that they would have over him. The big coward!

Who is it in your life that causes you to do the same thing? You are living in the freedom of Jesus. You need to get up and start your day saying, "Lord, I can't (live this supernatural life in my own strength). You never said I could. You can and You always said You would." You begin to experience His love and His joy and His peace until someone comes around you such as someone with whom you work. It may be a family member. In any case it is someone who puts on you something that you cannot attain, and suddenly you feel like "I have got to do something to earn their affirmation and be pleasing to them" and you just walk right out from under the message of grace and right back up under the message of law.

Peter did it here in Galatians 2 because he was weak. And if it can happen to Simon Peter it can happen to any of us! And that is why we cannot be too quick to point a finger. Nevertheless, the apostle Paul had to confront him. It is obvious in our text today who is the most convicted about the gospel of grace. It is the person, who, in the midst of no matter what reputation people think of him, he is going to make his stand. He is going to stand and he does not care what people think. And Paul takes his stand.

Three things that I want you to see in our text today. First of all, we see Paul's stern opposition. Now, before I get into the text, I want to make sure we understand something. There is no time in the Christian life that we are to get in a brother's face and rebuke him in a fleshly manner over a difference of personal opinion. No, sir, that is pure flesh. It may originate from our being anxious. It may come out of pressure that someone has put on you, but before God we never have that right. We are always to have the character of Jesus, Who would not crush a bruised reed or nor quench the smoking flax (Isa 42:3). The gentleness of Christ should mark us as walking in His Spirit. We do not have that right.

I had a staff member with whom I worked, and he had the gift of dissension. I believe he woke up every morning wondering whose life he could make miserable. And he always used that Scripture out of Ephesians, saying that he must speak the truth in love. He used that as an excuse to brutally bash other's emotions. And by the way, that passage in Ephesians (Eph 4:15) has nothing to do with this sort of behavior. The context of that passage is pastor teachers equipping the body for the unity of the faith. That is what Paul is talking about when he says you are to speak the truth, which uses the definite article and so refers to the Word of God. When you speak the Word of God it has got to be couched in the love of the Spirit or it cannot be received in people's hearts. It does not mean you can walk up and brutally bash somebody's whole existence by telling them the truth in love. We never have that. If you ever find somebody who is brutal that way, who is just mean-spirited, you have someone who is not walking in the Spirit and has no clue what grace is all about.

But that is not what is going on here in Galatians 2 at all. It is an exceptional situation. If you ever see this happen and it is of God, it will be an exception, never the rule. So this is in a time when a man (Peter) has great influence and has compromised the message of grace. You have to understand Peter is an apostle and has done a deplorable act, and has compromised the entire message of grace. Others have given in and they are already being affected. Peter knows doctrine. He understands the message and yet has to be reprimanded to his face, so that he is shaken and jolted him regarding what he has done. It is a very critical, exceptional time when you see this type of confrontation in Scripture. If the message of grace is in any way threatened someone must take a stand. The Word of God has got to be defended. Paul could not let time pass without confrontation, but it had to take his stand then so that others would know that Peter had made an error, and had stepped away from the truth of the message of grace.

Gal 2:12 is a bit redundant, but I want to get you into the flow of it again. "For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came [these men of the circumcision, these Judaizers] he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof." Why? Because he feared the party of the circumcision, what they could do to him, how they could hurt his reputation. The fact that these men came posing as men from James is not really a surprise. These type of men are "a dime a dozen."

What is surprising is how Peter responded. And when he responds others respond. That is the thing about Simon Peter -- if he is going to do it wrong, someone is going to follow him because he is a leader. He always has been a leader. Most of the time leading the wrong way, but at least he has been a leader. And here is what happens. In Gal 2:13, Peter stepped aside and drew a line. He has not said anything, or at least the Scripture does not tell us, but it is his actions which contradicts the gospel of grace for which he stands. Gal 2:13 adds that "The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy." This fact emphasizes what a leader he was. Peter is not just a little guy who does something and people never know about it. Oh, no. People listened to Simon Peter. And when he defected they defected with him.

The word "hypocrisy" or "joined in hypocrisy" is made up of three Greek words: *Sun*, which means together—they joined in with him; *hupo* means under; and *krino* means to judge. That is the word for "hypocrisy," [\*sunupokrinomai \(B-1\)\*](#). *Hupo*, under, and *krino*, to judge (see also **hupokrisis**). This verb is from classical Greek stage. What would happen is that an actor would go on a stage they would not wear make-up, but instead would wear a mask, and that mask would have a frown or a smile. You never saw the person because he was hiding behind the mask. How many people here today are hiding behind a mask? That is the essence of hypocrisy. You want others to think something about you, but you know that on the other side of the mask you are really someone else. That's hypocrisy.

And so what is the mask they all joined in with Simon Peter to hide behind? They hid behind the mask of hypocrisy, of Judaism. And you see what it is it is not by what they say; it is by how they went about doing what they did. All of the Jewish believers sided with Peter and by their actions put their masks up in front of their face that implying that they were agreeing with the Judaizers that had come saying they were from James. You can see where Paul is going with all this. Look at the rest of the verse. "With the result that even [now listen to this] even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy." Barnabas! Oh no, no way! It is hard enough for me to admit that Simon Peter fell into the trap. But not Barnabas, he is a good guy. You know that Barnabas is called the Encourager in Scripture. I get the feeling that Barnabas is a peacemaker. And everybody went with Simon Peter, so rather than to make a stir up a fight, he just goes with them.

You see the difference in some people that have a compassionate heart and everybody should have, but in some people who are leaders, Paul is a leader. He does not really care who went with Simon Peter. He is going to stand for the truth. But Barnabas gave in. "Let us not make a stir. Everything is fine, everybody is all right. Calm down. I will just come on over here." Barnabas! Barnabas did the same thing when John Mark and Paul had to split company. Paul got upset with John Mark because he had defected them on their first journey, and I think personally—you could not show this in Scripture—but I think John Mark defected because he could not stomach the message of grace. He grew up as a Jewish boy and he could not take the fact that it was only Jesus and just Jesus and he bailed out. And the apostle Paul said "I am not taking him with me on my next journey." And Barnabas said "Oh, come on Paul." He said "I am not taking him. No sir! I do not need the man." So he took Silas. And Barnabas and Paul literally split up because of John Mark, and Barnabas took John Mark.

Good old Barnabas. I mean Barnabas, why are you doing this? That is the encourager. You see how quickly sometimes having a compassionate heart or a merciful gift can cause you to fall quickly into error, because you do not want to hurt anyone's feelings. You do not want to stir up the crowd. That is what happened to Barnabas. He fell right into it with Peter.

What a predicament. Here is Peter; here is Barnabas and here are all the other Jews falling into the same hypocrisy. Somebody has got to do something. Paul has got to act fast and act he does. Gal 2:14:

"But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel."

“When I saw” is a beautiful word which we have looked at before. It’s the word *deido* which means to perceive something clearly. When Paul stepped back, he saw what they were doing. Everyone else was just milling around. They could not see the difference. Paul had discernment God had given to him and he realized what they were doing was contradicting everything that they were teaching. What did he discern? “That they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel.”

Now that “not straightforward” is an incredible word *Oorthopodeo* (#6). As you know, I get excited about words. *Oorthopodeo* (#6) means to walk in a straight line. When you are walking in a straight line it is not hard for somebody to follow. But Paul says they were not walking in a straight line according to the truth, “not straightforward about the truth of the gospel.” The gospel of grace, not the gospel of law. There is no gospel of law. There is no good news in law. The contrast would be a drunk who staggers and never walks in a straight line. It is basically, he is seeing here is that, remember in chapter 3 it says, who has bewitched you? Who has put you up under their spell? You act as if you are drunk. You do not even realize what you are doing. You are not walking in a straight line. You are causing all kinds of confusion.

Years ago I was in charge of the gymnasium. And we had to refinish the gym floor. The first thing you do is you sand it, and then you buff it, and then you put your chemical on it which makes it have a beautiful finish to it. You have seen this on hardwood floors in your home, but this is a gym floor. Well, I made some huge mistakes. I made the mistake of not having proper ventilation. You put a big fan, and you open the doors and you pull that air in cause it is toxic fumes that you are dealing with. Instead I turned on the air-conditioner. That really was not wise. And all of a sudden the fumes are just being circulated through the air conditioning system. Well, by the time we got to the foul line on the end of the court I was not walking straight. I have never had a drink in my life, but I do now know what it means to be drunk. I know what it was like. You do not walk in a straight line. As a matter of fact, you do not even talk clearly.

You see that is the contrast of what he is saying here. You do not walk in a straight line when you are under the spell of something else. That is exactly what he is talking about here. It is just another reference to what happens when you get off the track, when you get off the track. Would it not be great if we had that kind of discernment? When we are with somebody who teaches one thing, but lives another way, and immediately we could pick that up, the discernment would hit us. That person is not walking straight. That person sounds good when he preaches or teaches or shares, but that person is not living what he says, we can pick it up. His very lifestyle is contradicts his message. He is walking to the left or to the right but he is not walking straight when it comes to the truth. And Paul discerned that.

And Paul continues and said, “I said to Cephas [or Peter] in the presence of all.” You see, this was a public confrontation. Rarely do you ever see this justified as a believer. If you are going to go to your brother, go to him in private (Mt 18:15). But here is a man who has, first of all, made his choice to walk off the track publicly and publicly he has had an effect and publicly he is rebuked. This is an exception.

So Paul says to Peter, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?” Oh, this was affecting everybody. He says, “Peter, you are a total contradiction to everything that you are saying. If you are going to be a Jew, if you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?” Now, what is he talking about? He says, “Peter, do you realize you came over here and you have eaten things that the law says you cannot eat, and you of all people know that you can do that because God gave you the vision? (cf Acts 10:13, 14, 15). But if you are going to back away and side with the Judaizers, you are going to take their law and put it back on the Gentiles. By living amongst the Gentiles the way you have you, have just shown that the law of the Jews is not yours. You do not even live accordingly. So what are you doing now saying that they have to live like the Jews? You are a contradiction in terms.” Peter, by hiding, and by his actions and by refusing to fellowship with the Gentiles was a complete contradiction to everything that he stood for. Over in Jerusalem he sung a beautiful song. But now over in Antioch he is walking a different way.

I wonder how many of us tell our children to be one thing and we turn around and live differently in front of them, totally contradicting the message we are trying to get across to them. The way we fall into this trap is to preach and teach and share a message of grace and then turn right around and confuse the message by not walking straightforward according to the truth.

I had a staff member work with me one year; I love him to this day. He came in the staff meeting one day and he said, “Wayne, this is the most unspiritual church I have ever served.” I honestly was taken aback by statements like that, and I thought, well, what beautiful revelation did God give you to come to that conclusion? He said, “Well, at Thanksgiving I put a name in the bulletin that the people needed food and I told the people that they need to respond and only three couples responded. Can you believe that, a church that says they love Jesus, only three people responded?” And I said, “Wait a minute. Let me see if I understand correctly what you just said. Number 1, God gave you a burden for this family. Number 2, you took it and dumped it on the church. And number 3, only three families bought it. So now the rest of the church is unspiritual. Is that what you are saying to me?”

He sat there for the longest time and tears welled up in his eyes because he came out of a legalistic background, a works mindset. And he said, “Oh my goodness, I have done it again, have I not?” I said, “You sure have. You cannot take your burden and force it

on anybody else.” You see, what happens is we fall in that trap of performance mentality in so many different ways. By telling somebody they are not spiritual unless they do this or do that, and it is amazing how we do this. There is a 1000 different ways that we can get off the track. We say one thing with our lips and yet we turn right around and live in a different way.

No wonder Paul got in his face and opposed Peter. No wonder! He was a total contradiction in terms. Here is a man that taught the **message of grace** and stood for it (cp 1Pe 5:12-note), turned right around and by his lifestyle showed that he was still giving under the law. He hid behind the mask of Judaism on one hand while he was preaching the **Good News of Grace**. This is a situation that called for strong rebuke!

But the second thing I want you to see is, Paul makes some serious observations. And these are serious; so serious that we need to hear them even this morning. His first observation starts with the fact that they were Jewish boys, both of them, him and Peter. He says in Gal 2:15,

“We are Jews by **nature** (*phusis*).”

Now, I think he is still talking to Peter, but he is writing the story and the account to the Galatian church, so in a way he is talking to both of them here. This is after the fact. He is going back. He is rehearsing a story, but he is making it very germane to what is going on in the churches in Galatia. “We are Jews by nature.” That is easy to understand. He is saying “We were born of Jewish parents. We did not have any choice. We were born that way.”

I cannot help where I was born. Can you? Oh, I am sure. You were in the womb and you said “Momma, I do not want to be born here, let’s move over here.” You cannot help that. You cannot help that you are Caucasian or you are oriental or whatever. You cannot help that. You were born by nature as you are. That is what he is reminding Peter of here. And his contrast is “and not sinners from among the Gentiles.” Now isn’t that interesting? The Jews thought that the Gentiles were all pagans and sinners. In fact, the Jews referred to Gentiles as “dogs.” And they basically had nothing to do with them.

Well, he said we were not born of Gentile parents, and this introduces several observations. We are not proselyte Jews. A proselyte Jew could be a Gentile who chose to be a Jew later in life and was circumcised and who went up under the law of Moses. But no, we were not born of Gentile parents. We are not proselyte Jews. We were born of Jewish parents. Now he is making a point. If you are born of Jewish parents it means you were raised under the law, circumcised on the eighth day and from that point on you were put under the law. And when you were old enough to know what was going on you had the law drilled into your mind. But look at Gal 2:16. This is so powerful.

“Nevertheless, knowing that a man is not **justified** (*dikaioo*) by the works of the law.”

The word “justified” means declared righteous. And justification has to do with acquittal of the guilt of sin. Paul says, Peter, we were born of Jewish parents. We grew up as Jews. We grew up under the law, but that law could not justify us (declare us righteous) before God. No way whatsoever.

“Nevertheless, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through **faith** (*pistis*) in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 2:16)

Oh, I want to say to you this morning, if you are doing things for God and you think He is aware of it and somehow you will get brownie points with Him, I am telling you that those things you do will not justify you. Works never justify anybody. And here is the passage. Paul says, “Even we.” It has got to be “through faith in Christ Jesus.” He says “Even we,” Peter, you and me, “we have believed in Christ Jesus so that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law.”

Do you understand what’s taking place in this conversation? Two of the most religious Jewish boys you could ever find, and Paul is trying to get him to understand, all of that Judaism (*ioudaismos* - B-1), all of the works of the law, did nothing to save us. He says, Peter, don’t you remember? I was just over in Jerusalem and you affirmed that. Have you forgotten it so quickly?

He says,

“Since by the works of the Law, shall no flesh be justified.”

Peter and Paul both came in the same way, came up the same way, grew up the same way. But the way they came into the kingdom was not by the works of the Law, it was by faith in Jesus Christ, not by the works of the Law.

Now comes Paul’s strongest observation. He continues, he staying in the thought, Gal 2:17.

“But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found [What is the next word?] **sinners** (*hamartolos*).”

How could they be sinners? They are good Jewish boys. Paul says in Philippians “as to the righteousness which is in the Law, (he

had been) found blameless.” (Php 3:6-note) Paul asks

“is Christ then a **minister** (*diakonos*) of sin? May it never be!”

Oh, what were they seeking? To be justified in Christ. At some point in their life they realized it was not going to go this way. So what is the way? And Christ is the way. **Justified** is aorist passive. Passive means somebody has got to do this for us. We cannot do it ourselves. Man cannot justify himself while seeking to be right with God.

Do you realize that what he is saying is everything we ever did and called it right in God’s eyes, God saw it as sin? God saw it as sin. Now, if you don’t think this doesn’t knock in the face of religion, you are not understanding what Paul is saying here. There are many people who think, “Well, I gave last year. Well, I went on a mission trip. Well, I am in the choir. Well, I come to church as much as I possibly can, at least once a year. I do these things. I own a Bible. Does that not make me a good person?” You are not a good person. There is no man born on this earth as a good person. (cf Ro 3:10-note, Ro 3:12-note) We are born as sinners (cf Ro 5:12-note) and that is what we all must understand.

“Is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!” (Gal 2:17b)

You know what Paul is saying? Paul is saying, if you are going to side with the Judaizers you are telling the Gentiles that now they have got to be circumcised. They have got to be back up under the law. By your actions you are going back to religious works. And he says, “If that very law that you want to put them back up under, if that very law did not save us and that every good work that we ever did was sin (cf Isa 6:4:6KJV), then you are making Jesus a minister of sin,” because He is taking sinful works and putting them on a Gentile people. And then Paul says, “May it never be!” That is one of the key phrases in Romans, by the way (Ro 3:4, 6, 31, 6:2, 15, 7:7, 13, 9:14, 11:1,11). It means “That is absurd!” It is like driving up to a sign in a parking lot and it says “Don’t even think about it!” It is like my son saying “Daddy, can I borrow your golf clubs?” May it never be! He borrowed my last set and I never got them back!

He continues, watch, in Gal 2:18. Here is the key thought. Everything leads up to this thought. He says,

“For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a **transgressor** ([parabates](#) - #1).”

What he is saying to Peter is, “Peter, by your siding with the Judaizers, by your coming back to the old works, by hiding behind the mask of Judaism, what you have done is you have rebuilt what we was “once destroyed.” I did not see this years ago when I was trying to study this thing, but I saw it this time. The word “**destroyed**” is not *apollumi*, which means utterly destroyed (but not to cause it to cease to exist). It is a different word, *kataluo*. *Kataluo* means to be cut loose from something, to cut loose something that has been binding you. (**Ed**: To abrogate or abolish by authoritative action, treating as non-existent, bring to naught.)

## JESUS CHRIST CUTS YOU LOOSE

And, man, I cannot help it; my heart is just overwhelmed by that. When you bow before Jesus Christ He cuts you loose from that which has been holding you into bondage. That is what Paul is telling Peter. Peter, you don’t want to go back and put yourself into handcuffs! You have been set free from a religious system. You have been set free from condemnation and control of the Law. Why would you want to go back under the Law? You would be rebuilding what you had once destroyed.

Well, Peter and Paul grew up as Jewish boys thinking that every time they went to the temple and every time that they did what the law said somehow they were earning God’s favor. And then one day they found that every bit of that, as Isaiah said, was filthy rags in His sight (Isa 64:6KJV). They both realized that when they bowed before Jesus, Judaism and the Law (which had been good in the sense that it kept them in check) had now become a boundary or tutor as we will study in Gal 3:23-2. They had been cut free from it: free, free, free! So now when Peter sided with the Judaizers, Paul is saying that Peter has just put the handcuffs back on. Why would you do that, Peter? Why would you do that? But when the Judaizers came, Peter bowed down, cowering before them and in so doing he rebuilt what was once destroyed.

**Let me ask you a question this morning? Have you rebuilt what was once destroyed? Would you rather have a set of rules? Would you rather feel like you are accomplishing righteousness, or would you rather receive it by faith? Have you rebuilt what once has been destroyed?**

How do we know that, Wayne? Oh, it is easy. Every time you feel guilty when you did not fulfill one of the rules you put on yourself, you have just rebuilt what once had been destroyed. Every time you do what you do something to be pleasing in God’s sight, you have just rebuilt what was once been destroyed. Remember, you are already pleasing in His sight, because you are in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every time you do what you do to be loved by God, you have already rebuilt what has once been destroyed; because He has already loved you in Jesus Christ (cf Eph 1:6KJV). We do not do what we do in order to be pleasing in God’s sight. We do what we do because we are already pleasing in His sight! That is the **message of Grace**. But the **message of Law** arouses our old



**flesh nature** (cf Ro 7:5-note) and stimulates in us a performance attitude and we rebuild what has once been destroyed. And this puts us right back in bondage!

**I wonder how many believers here this morning claim to be a believer, and perhaps you are, but you are miserable, judgmental, condemning of other people?** You have an agenda bigger than Dallas and you, and you are someone that no one really wants to be around. Why? Because you have rebuilt what once has been destroyed. You go back up under the law, you lose all of it, not in a **positional** way—oh, no, you are still saved—but you lose that **experiential** understanding of it. The fruit of the Spirit is not being born in your life. You do not have a true love for other people in the body. The joy is not there. The peace is not there. There is no trust in your life. You are scared to death of everything, worried about the Social Security, worried about the war. Worried about what is going to happen in our world? Why? Because you stepped out from under the **message of grace** and rebuilt what was once destroyed.

Paul had a stern opposition to Simon Peter; he had some serious observations. But finally he had a single obligation, one single obligation. Paul kind of backs away and he says, "Peter, I cannot speak for you anymore, I am just going to speak for me." And he says in Gal 2:19,

For through the Law I **died** (*apothnesko*) to the Law, so that I might live to God.

A much better translation is "For through all I did die, that to God I may live." He is very forceful in his declaration. He died to the Law. The verb "died" is aorist active indicative. You know what that means? Aorist tense, happened at a certain point in time; active voice, I made a choice. Notice that Paul is not talking about what God did to him. He is talking about what he himself did. He made a choice. You either live by **the Law** or you live by **grace**. And Paul said "I chose to abandon the Law." What? Now wait a minute! Whoa! Hold on! You have got to be kidding! This is the same guy who was the greatest legalist who ever lived. According to the law he was found blameless (Php 3:6-note). He said, "I walked away from the Law, Peter. I walked away from it. I abandoned the Law as a means of achieving righteousness (right standing) before God. I have left it forever!"

Somebody became really upset with me on one of my programs the other day and wrote in asking "How in the world can you talk about being free from the Law?" Oh, brother! And I had to say back, "I did not say that." "You did too, I listened to you." "No, no, no. Paul said it!" I wish people would take what Scripture says and get upset with it. They just do not like the messenger sometimes, you know. Paul says, I backed away from the Law. I died to the Law. Now, how clear can you be? Is there any problem?

Well, the **message of grace** is that Christ, the God-Man, did for us what we could never do for ourselves under the Law. That's the **message of grace**. That is what Paul is explaining to Peter. Why would you want to go back and try to do what has already been accomplished by Christ?

(Jesus said) Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to **abolish** (*kataluo*) it, but [*What?*] to **fulfill** (*pleroo - in sense of fully accomplish*) it [*How?* as a Man, "in the likeness of sinful flesh"]. (Matthew 5:17-note)

Not one man could fulfill the Law (cf Ro 3:20-note). But Jesus came as the perfect, sinless Man to accomplish what all mankind could never have accomplished under the Law...

For **what the Law could not do**, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. And as an offering for sin He condemned sin in the flesh." (Romans 8:3-note)

Now, listen carefully; you and I, Paul, Peter, James, John, all the Galatian believers, and all believers after the Cross... We could never accomplish what the Law demands (or *requires* - cf Ro 8:4-note). But Jesus came and did it for us. He is the one Who lives in us (cf Col 1:27b-note, Col 3:4-note), Who has accomplished what the Law demanded. Did He do away with it? No, He fulfilled it. Now which would you have preferred? Christ fulfilled the Law. Now, freedom from the Law does not mean freedom to live anyway I want to live. Christ in me and His grace now gives me the freedom to become what I ought to become. (Ed: Under the message of grace, freedom is not the right to live as I please, but the power to live as I should.)

"For through the Law I died to the Law," and for people who think this is a passive message, oh no; you have not finished the verse: "In order that I might live [*To Whom?*] to God."

Do you realize what Paul has just said? If you place yourself back up under Law, you are not living under God, no sir, you are not living under God (and His grace)! That performance mentality is nothing more than religion and you can find religion all over the world! But when you live unto God, you abandon the old performance mentality and come just as you are, a person who is willing to walk by faith (cf Col 2:6-note).

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law [*How did I die to the Law?*] through the body of Christ, that you may be joined to another, to Him Who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for

God. (Romans 7:4-note)

But now we have been **released** (*katargeo*) from the Law. (Romans 7:6-note)

Do you see what Paul is saying in Romans 7:6? We have been released from the Law! The chains have been taken off. I love that old hymn, "[And Can It Be?](#)" especially the words...

**My chains fell off, my heart was free:**

I rose, went forth and followed Thee.

"But we have now been **released** (*katargeo*) from the Law, having died to that, by which we were **bound** (*katecho*), [*Why?*] so that we **serve** (*douleuo*) in **newness** (*kainotes*) of the Spirit and not in **oldness** (*palaiotes*) of the letter (the written code)." (Romans 7:6-note)

Well Paul was so put out with Simon Peter. "Boy, you were brave in Jerusalem, but you sure are a coward over here in Antioch. When certain people get around you, you "put on the mask" of Judaism again and you hide behind it." But Paul did not let him get away with it. He said, buddy, this time you have messed up because I am going to confront you. And he rebuked him to his face. Paul knew that he had a covenant Friend Who lived within him (cf Col 1:27b) and that he was obligated only to Christ, never again to the Law. Paul, a once greatly "renowned religionist," takes his stand.

And then he says in Gal 2:20-21 (and I cannot wait to get to it)

"I have been crucified with Christ."

Now he turned away from the Law. What did Jesus do? He was crucified and Paul was crucified with Him...

"I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live."

The old religionist is gone forever.

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 delivered Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law then Christ died [*How did He die?*] needlessly. (Gal 2:20-21)

If you think you can do something to please God other than bow before Him (you are already pleasing to Him in Christ), you are most deceived. Paul says if there is one thing that you can do in your **flesh** to please God, then Christ died needlessly!

**I wonder how many people here have gone back and rebuilt what has once been destroyed? How are you doing today, by the way? The world is at war, how are you doing? How are you doing? Peace in your heart? Full of joy because you know Who is in control? Do you have a burden to pray?**

That is the **walk of grace**. But I want to tell you, if you have rebuilt what has once been destroyed, you don't know the walk of grace.

## Galatians 2:20 Christ Lives in Me



We're going to be looking at Gal 2:20 today. And I've been telling you now we're coming to a place that's going to get a little deeper. Remember that? I've been in a narrative. It's been fun to follow the story line, but now we're going to dig down and I want you to go down with me. I've already prayed, God, take us on down so that we can understand what Your Word has to say.

Gal 2:20 is all we'll be looking at today.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself up for me." Now, to get into that, I have to review.

I want to keep explaining to you why I review. You can't look at this passage unless you understand the context in which it's found. The apostle Paul, in Gal 2:11-19, has had a bold confrontation with Simon Peter. Peter had grown weak. Boy, you talk about growing weak, he had. He had just cowered down when certain men, legalizers, Judaizers, the party of the circumcision, had come over to Antioch. Man, he was brave when he was with James and John. But when he went over into Antioch it was a different story

all together.

Now, these were the same people that were discrediting Paul, which caused him to write what he writes in this epistle to the Galatian churches. And Peter for sure knew how they could hurt him back at home. These were the Jews who believed that circumcision, the Law of Moses, was the way of attaining righteousness; and, of course, they didn't even look at salvation by faith which is the path of righteousness. In Galatians 2:12 Paul says that Peter "withdrew and held himself aloof from those Galatian believers." He is in their territory, and here are the Gentile believers. Here he was in their territory and all that had to happen was for these Judaizers to come among them and this was enough to cause Peter to cower. He drew a line and said "I can't fellowship with you Gentile believers anymore because they're here." That was a big mistake. The apostle Paul got right in Peter's face!

The odd thing is how strong and clear Peter was in Jerusalem, but how weak he was in Antioch when these Jewish men came. They were called the party of the circumcision. You know what this does to me? It shows to me the pull that the Law and those who preached the Law still had on Simon Peter. Let me ask you a question. **How much pull does the Law have on you today?** You hear the **message of grace**, but there are certain people that influence you a different way. And when you're around them you act different like Peter did.

Well, let's review. Gal 2:11:

"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned."

And the word "condemned" means guilty as charged.

"For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles."

Now, the Gentiles were brothers in Christ. He saw that.

"But when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision."

Now, one word I've not brought out is that word "**fearing**." It's [phobeo \(D-1\)](#). [Phobeo](#) means to be terrified in this context. Now, can you believe that? When these Judaizers arrived, Peter, of all people, was terrified of them! These legalistic Judaizers were so threatening to him that his fear caused him to withdraw and hold himself away from the Gentile believers. He fell into the trap of pleasing men instead of pleasing God (Cp Gal 1:10-). How often that happens in our life. We would rather see a man or somebody smile back and be nice to us than we would God's pleasure.

Well, Peter's hypocrisy was contagious. It says in Gal 2:13,

"And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy."

Somebody had to do something quick; and do something quick Paul did. In Gal 2:14,

"But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas [Simon Peter] in the presence of all, 'If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?'"

You see, what happened was, when he went over to the Gentile believers, he ate with them. There were no food laws. He demonstrated to them that the Law was not his master any more, that he now was saved by grace, just like they were saved by grace. And the Law had no place in it. Now, by siding—it was non-verbal commitment—but by siding with these Judaizers, what he was saying now is, "the Law that I said that I am not even under any more, we're going to put it upon you." And what Paul is saying is "you're a total contradiction in terms, Peter. I mean your whole lifestyle is messed up here by what you're doing."

He says in Gal 2:15,

"We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles."

Peter, we were born Jews. Now, what that means is not only they were not proselyte Jews—that could be a Gentile who later in life wants to become a Jew, goes through the rite of circumcision, etc., gets back up under the Law of Moses. He said we didn't come in that way—we were born of Jewish parents, circumcised the eighth day, put up under the Law of Moses. We were raised up to obey the Law. But Paul's point is, did all of that save us? Did our obedience to the Law do anything to justify us? Just because we're Jewish, does that do anything? He says in Gal 2:16,

"Nevertheless, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus."

That word "**knowing**" is that little word we have seen so often, *eido*, to perceive clearly. There came a point in time—as they grew up the only path to righteousness that they were ever taught was the Mosaic Law—but at some point in time the Holy Spirit

revealed to them, gave them a clear perception that that Law could not save them. There was nothing in it that could save them. They had to be justified through faith in Christ Jesus.

Now, this is so powerful. Peter, you didn't get saved because you were Jewish. You didn't get saved because you obeyed the Law. That kept you intact; that kept you behaving yourself; but that didn't cause you to be saved. And then he goes on. He says, "Even we," and he is talking to Peter. Peter, both of us, "even we have believed in Christ Jesus." He says, Pete, as two Jewish boys, we have believed in Christ Jesus. We realized that the Law could not save us, "that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law. Since by the works of the Law shall [how much flesh be justified?] no flesh be justified."

Then he says in Gal 2:17, "But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners." And, boy, this is something we all need to understand. We're born into this world either Jew or Gentile. And every person that's born is born into sin. And that's what he is telling you. Whether you're Jewish, whether you're Gentile, whether you're religious or whether you're rebellious, you're all born into sin. We're all born into sin.

He says then, "is Christ then a minister of sin?" And what he is saying is, all of those laws we obeyed, Isaiah classified it where it's just nothing more than filthy rags, sin before God, because man can't produce righteous works. Then he says, "Are you telling me that if we put the Law back on these Gentiles, make them circumcised, that somehow that's going to save, do anything for them?" He says, "No, you're making Christ a minister of sin." Basically he's saying, this is the most ridiculous thing, Peter, you have ever done. And he says, "May it never be!"

And then in Gal 2:18, the most powerful statement to me, he says, "For if I rebuild," and Paul is speaking for himself right now. He says, "For if I rebuild what I've once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor." And that word "destroyed," I had never seen it before until the last time I spoke. It's *kataluo*. It means to cut you free from something. And what a beautiful picture salvation becomes. The moment you bow before Jesus you cut yourself free from the bondage and the condemnation, the control of the Law. And he says, "Peter, why in the world would you want to go back and put the handcuffs back on?" And Paul said, "I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to go back and rebuild what I have once destroyed."

You know, you can understand the pull of the Law on a Jewish person like Peter. Even Paul, which Paul has gone beyond being pulled back to it, but you can understand the pull. They grew up that way. That's all they ever knew. And you can understand why it continued to be a tendency to go back to it.

But my problem is, this epistle is not written to Jewish people that have continued under the bondage of the Law. This epistle is written to Gentile believers who have bought the lie. They have been taught grace like nobody has ever been taught grace. Paul taught them. And they have gone back up under the Law. Now, what appeal did the Law have to these Gentile believers? I can understand the Jewish guy, but I can't understand the Gentile. And then it dawned on me. All of our flesh—it doesn't matter if it's Gentile or Jew—all of our flesh responds to the Law. We enjoy doing something for God. Granted, it might be for different reasons, but we all enjoy the credit we get for that which we have attained. And it just hit me that nothing has changed. Like Ecclesiastes says, there's nothing new under the sun.

You say, that's not true today. Now, get off my back, this is back then. This is the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Yes, that's exactly right. But when we in the 21<sup>st</sup> century start emphasizing "doing" over "being," then we have fallen into the same trap. See, we're not recognizing it, but we're falling into the same trap. Anytime I think I've got to do something so God will love me more or be pleased with me more, then I've automatically fallen back into that trap. My flesh would rather do something for God than have God do something through me. It's the old playing-church game. That's all it is.

Well, in Peter's case, by withdrawing fellowship from the Gentile believers, he didn't make a verbal statement. It was a non-verbal statement, but he denied everything he stood for back in Jerusalem with James and with John. He said by his actions that circumcision and the law was necessary to achieve righteousness. By withdrawing and holding himself aloof, he was embracing the message of Law without having to say a word. And this is why Paul had to get into his face. When it came to the message of grace nobody defended it and nobody stood for it like the apostle Paul. And we'll see why in just a few moments.

He says in Gal 2:19, "For through the Law [I love this] I died to the Law, that I might live unto God." You see, Paul was just as much a part of the Law as Peter when he grew up. But he says "I died to the Law." What he means by that is the Law told me to do certain things that I couldn't accomplish. The Law can never accomplish what it demands, and therefore he died to the Law. It demands death for failure to accomplish what it, the Law says. And he said, "I died to it."

But there's something else here. The tense of "I died" is aorist indicative active. Aorist indicative active is the tense that means "I turned my back on it; I chose not to go that route anymore." There came a point in time in my life, he tells to Peter, Peter, I turned my back on it. I'm not going back to it. You're still falling into that trap, but I'm not going back to that Law." If one single act of obedience to any Law could produce righteousness, he says later on, then Jesus died needlessly.

Now, my mind begins to work when stuff like this happens in Scripture. When was it that Paul came to that conclusion? I know he was not seeking after God. I know he was not in a seminar or a revival meeting when he got saved. What was he doing? He was on the Damascus road going to arrest Christians, hopefully to kill them. That was his whole purpose in life, get rid of this thing called the Way. Get rid of these people called believers. And on that Damascus road he met the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. And in that instant, on that road, automatically, he understood it was something beyond what somebody could teach to him. It was something the Holy Spirit of God had to reveal that all of his years of righteous, of obedience, obedience to the Law, and all those years of what he gained according to that Law, all of a sudden was nothing when he was made prostrate there before the risen Lord Jesus Christ. All of his past came clear to him in that moment as the Holy Spirit revealed the Lord Jesus to him. He felt condemned in the presence of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what has to happen to every one of us. That's what salvation is all about. You can try to do good things all of your life and that won't save you, and God is not impressed. But when you are bowed before Him and the Holy Spirit of God has revealed the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, you know in an instant you're condemned. But you know in an instant He loves you and wants to save you, and that's where salvation takes place. And that's what happened to the apostle Paul. And look what he says on the Damascus road. He said, "Lord, Lord, what would You have me to do?" Not "Law, what would you have me to do," but "Lord, what would You have me to do?" He had a brand new Master in an instant of a moment when the Lord Jesus Christ was revealed to his heart.

And he tells Peter, "Peter, in that instant I saw the futility of that Law. I saw everything about it. I could not attain what the Law demanded, and I fell and I bowed before the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter, you can go your way if you want to, but I will never go back. I will never go back to a Law that held me in bondage for so many years." Paul's righteousness is now only through Christ, not through the Law. All that he used to be is dead. All of his religious efforts to be righteous are now dead. The Law has no condemning power over him because the sentence of death has been carried out through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So what's Paul's argument? He says to Peter, "If we as Jews live such religious lives, and that didn't come close to saving us, then, Peter, what are you doing? Why are you siding with those who say that obedience to the Law is the means of righteousness?" When we add anything to grace we destroy the message at that moment. Righteousness can only be produced through our surrender to the Lord Jesus and His Word. You see, Christ living in Paul now enabled him to be what God demanded him to be. This is where we're headed. This is what grace is all about. It's either religion or it's grace, one or the other. You can't have both. They can't mix.

Now, it's so important here what Paul didn't say. Sometimes you have to be careful to notice this. Paul didn't say he was free to do as he pleased, and we'll see that in a moment. He's not free from his responsibility to God; no, sir. You're going to be a slave either way you go. But he is free from the means of the Law to attain and to accomplish that responsibility before God. That's why he says in Gal 2:19, "For through the Law I died to the Law [why?] that I might live unto God." So a person who goes back up under this "I've got to do" mentality, performance mentality, is a person who is not living under God. He's living unto himself and doesn't even know it. He's not serving God, he's serving a Law and he's trying to attain something that God has already won and bought for him. Paul had become a brand new creature in Christ. Christ now lives in him. He wrote in Philippians 2:13, "for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

And now we enter into Gal 2:20. Do you see the context? You see a man that, like Simon Peter who has been so bold at certain times, who denied Jesus and now he even denies the message of grace for fear of what people are going to say about him. And it shows the fact that he hasn't yet become resolved that the message of grace is the only way. It's the only way. It's what the gospel says.

Well, let's ease into Gal 2:20 and see what Paul says about himself as he continues. First of all, Paul makes a proclamation: "I have been crucified with Christ." Now, that little phrase "I have been" is perfect passive indicative. I want you to learn it. It's not in English, and that's why we do not understand it. Perfect tense means something happened over here that puts me into the state of being I'm in over here. And we've got to understand that. You people who believe you can lose your salvation wrestle with the perfect tense. Perfect tense means it happened; it happened, therefore, this is why I am where I am right now. And in passive voice means that Paul didn't initiate the action. You say, what's that? In Gal 2:19 he is active voice; he initiated it. He turned his back on the Law. In Gal 2:20 it's passive voice; God did something. When you turn away from the Law and you bow before the resurrected Christ, He then does something in your life.

What is it He did? What happened back here that puts Paul in the state of being he is in right now? He says, "I've been crucified with Christ." The word for "crucified" there is *sustauroo*. It comes from two Greek words: *sun*, which means intimate, can't be separated; and *stauroo*. Now the word *sun*, again, is with. There are two "withs," and we'll talk about that later on. There are two "withs." There is the "with of association," like we're with each other right now, but anybody can leave at any moment. So, therefore, we're with each other right now; that's *meta*. *Sun* means we're together and nobody can separate us. That's the "with" he uses



here. And then the word *stauroo* means to crucify, to destroy or to kill, to put to death. And Paul says "I have been crucified with Christ." There has been a death.

Oh, we need to understand this. Technically, when Christ was crucified, Paul says, "I've been co-crucified with Christ." Now, think about this. This is where we're going to go down another level. When Christ was crucified, what he's saying is, I was on the cross with Him. By the way, you were there also. He not only had you on His mind, He had your sins upon Himself, and He became sin for you and me. He took our sin to the cross.

Christ took all that Paul was as a sinner to the cross. Paul had no awareness of this, that the debt had already been paid. These people that have to do this and do that and do this to earn their salvation, what do you mean? Jesus has already paid the debt. You say, "well, that's universalism, isn't it. If that's the case everybody is saved." No, no, no, no. Until you put your faith into Jesus it doesn't become yours. Technically he was on the cross with Jesus, but experientially and positionally, that had to occur when he received Jesus into his heart.

You see, even though He technically died for the sins of the whole world, not everybody has received what He has paid for; and that's what salvation is all about. Experientially it came into Paul's life on the Damascus road with the Lord Jesus, the resurrected Christ stopped him in his tracks and he understood that the Law will never cut it and he received Jesus into his heart. What had happened on the cross now became his and he was a believer.

Crucifixion means death. Now, listen to me, when Christ came into Paul in the person of the Holy Spirit, the old Paul died. All of his rights to himself died. All of his rights to think as he pleased died. All of his rights to do as he pleased died. He signed the death warrant to his rights to himself when he received Jesus into his heart. He turned all of his emotional impressions, all of his intellectual beliefs, into a moral verdict against the disposition of sin which says I can do what I want to do as I choose. He says, "I have been crucified with Christ." The old legalistic Saul became the apostle Paul. He's a brand new person.

What made him different? The Holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ came to live in him. Second Corinthians 5:17 says "Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, new things have come." So there has been a death. I've been crucified with Christ. I have no rights to myself. I have no right to do as I please, to think as I please. I bowed down and I lost them when I received Jesus into my life. The Law is not my master. Jesus now is my master.

Turn to Romans 6:1-5. Romans and Galatians are commentaries on each other. Remember, Galatians is Paul writing Romans when he's mad. And so it's the same. He just expands what Galatians is talking about. Only two epistles that you can find this beautiful doctrinal teaching of grace as clear as it's in Scripture; Romans 6:1-5, Paul does a wonderful job explaining this. "What shall we say then?" he says to these Romans. "Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?" You see, what I just said a moment ago has got to start you. The moment you become a believer you have to understand that grace never means I have the right to do as I please. You never have that right. And so he starts off that way, and he says, "Do you think that grace allows you to do what you want?"

Then he says in Ro 6:2, "May it never be! How shall we who died to sin," and another way of explaining sin is the right to do as I please. That's what sin is. You take the middle letter of the word "sin" and you've got everything you need to talk about. The middle letter of the word "pride" is the same thing. We died to the right to do as we please. "How shall we... still then live in it?" We died. The big "I" has been taken out of the equation.

Then he says in Ro 6:3, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?" That word "baptized" means immersion, yes, but it also means identification. If you have a bowl of dye, a great big bowl of red dye and you took a white cloth and you that white cloth and baptized it into the dye, you have submerged it into the dye. Well, that's good. It's in the dye. But something else has happened. The cloth has become identified with the red dye and now, not only is the cloth in the dye, but the dye is in the cloth. You don't have white cloth anymore, you've got a red cloth. And this is what happened in salvation. Not only were we baptized into Him, but now He lives in us.

Ro 6:4: "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness." And the word "newness" kind of means total qualitatively different way of living. You don't live unto yourself as you did before you got saved. Now you live unto Him and He is your Lord and He is your Master.

He says in Ro 6:5, again, "For if we have become united with Him [Oh, I love this!] in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection." Now, the word "united with," that little word *sun*, "with;" which "with" is it? Is it *meta*, "association with"? Or is it "intimate with"? It's *sun*. That's the word. And *phutos* is the second part of the word. It means to be two things are grafted together. They become one, never to be separated again.

Now I've used the illustration of a biscuit here so many times you're tired of hearing it, so I'm going to change it and use another

one. This past week we were talking about how you make sweet tea. And I don't know how to make anything. They said, well, you have to get the tea boiling and hot, then you add the sugar. I said, that doesn't make any sense. Why don't you put the sugar in it when it's cold? And I was told very clearly it won't dissolve when it's cold. It only dissolves when it's hot. And the difference is, when you put the sugar in when it's hot, it will be sweet from now on, friend. You can't ever take that sweet taste out of it. Why? Because there's something about when it's heated up, the sugar and the tea just sort of melt into one, and two different things become one, changing the dimension of both.

And that's exactly what happens when you got saved. You are sweet tea for Jesus. And it dawned on me that, hey, that sugar won't in any way dissolve in cold tea. It sits right down in the bottom of the glass. You've got to keep stirring it and stirring it and stirring it. And if you could do something to keep it in the bottom of the glass you could separate the two, but if it's hot and put the sugar in, you can't separate it.

That's what he's saying. He's saying, listen, the Lord Jesus, you have been united together with Him. Remember, Jesus doesn't like anything that's cold or lukewarm. He kind of likes it when it's hot, although He did say, "I wish you were cold or hot instead of being lukewarm." Just get us hot. In salvation you're spiritually hot, and the sweetness of His presence comes and meshes itself into us and forever more we're changed, we can't be separated from one another.

Now, what happened at salvation? Jesus came to live in you. There has been a death and a resurrection of a brand new person. Now, when we become a believer, what we were in Adam is gone. I hope we understand that everybody is either in Adam or in Christ. You only have two options: You are born into Adam; and only by putting your faith into Christ can you ever be in Christ. That's what we call born again, or born from above. When we're in Christ, all of our sinful past has been erased. All of the believer's rights have been surrendered to Him. Christ has come into the believer to rule and reign in us. We, as Peter says, have partaken of the divine nature. Christ has come in, helped us experience the newness of life. He has given us a brand new beginning.

But there's a problem, and this where people don't understand. This is why you've got to start off understanding He is Lord. We still have the potential to sin. Peter was a believer, fell right back up under the Law. You think that's not sin? You see, we all have the tendency to do that. Where does that come from? Well, Romans 6:6 beautifully brings it out. Paul uses the word "crucified" as a metaphor, and look what he does here. "Knowing this, that our old self, what we used to be in Adam, was crucified with Him." It's dead. It's gone. You can never be what you used to be because God lives in you. It was put to death. Why? "That our body of sin might be done away with."

Now, the first thing you've got to realize is you have a body of sin. Everybody is chasing around after the devil. That's convenient. What is he going to do if he catches you? Gum you to death? Jesus yanked all of his teeth out at the cross. It's not the devil that's my problem. It's not the devil that's your problem. What my problem is is what I look at in the mirror every morning when I get up. I want you all to do something for me tomorrow morning when you get up. Say, "Good morning, body of sin," just to understand where your problems are. It's not your wife; it's not your husband; it's not your children; it's not your neighbor; it's not that person that won't drive over 15 miles an hour in a 30 mile zone. You can't get around them. It's not that person; it's you. It's me. I've got to deal with me. I've got to deal with me every day of my life.

The word "destroy;" the King James version says "destroyed," The New American Standard says "done away with". Why they translated this way, I don't know. You check it out to see if it be so. The word is *katargeo*. It means to be shifted into neutral. *Kata*, down, *argeo* means to be disengaged. When power has been disengaged, when it has been made idle or inactive, disengaged. Now, when Christ came into our life He didn't take the transmission that causes sin and throw it out. But what He did is He disengaged the transmission. Are you with me? In other words, we still have the potential to sin, but because He lives in us now and He is our Lord, and if we'll live under His Lordship saying yes, to Him, then all of that power of sin is continuing to stay in neutral. It can't do a thing to harm me. But when I do like Peter did or others have done, and I step back up under the Law, immediately what I've done is shifted it right back into gear, and that's when sin takes over in my life. And all believers need to understand that. You start with the understanding when you come in, not only are you under grace, He now is Lord. The big "I" has been removed, and whatever He says we yield to; He empowers what He says. So that's what Paul is trying to clear up, what happened at salvation.

But one of the things it's doing in the context of Romans, in the context of Galatians, being in Christ now means that the Law has no claim over us anymore, no control. And it has no condemning power. Look in Romans 7. If this doesn't excite you, this would be a good morning to get saved. In Romans 7:1, he says, "Or do you not know, brethren?" And I love that *agnoeo*. Are walking around without this understanding? I want to say this to people all the time, especially when they blow up in your face and send you emails. I want to say, do you not have this understanding? Bless your heart. Are you walking around without this understanding? Do you not understand this?

He says, "Brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law)." Not the law—there is no definite article there—just anybody

who understands law. The Gentiles were in Rome; that's who made the law. The Jews understood it from a different perspective. What is the rule about law that we have got to understand? "That the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he [what?] lives." So as long as you're alive the law has jurisdiction over you. You can't get free from it.

He says, "Hey, as long as you're living, the law has jurisdiction over you." Now, he makes that very clear. Then in Ro 7:2 he says, "For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband." Now, don't make this a marriage passage. Make the main thing the plain thing. What is he saying? In order for me to be free from one relationship and have a relationship with Christ, what has to happen? There has to be a death. Oh, you see where he's headed? What did we just read back in chapter 6? "I am crucified with Christ." There has been a death.

He says in Ro 7:3, "So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man [she tries to have a relationship with another one], she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man." And what he's saying is, you can't co-exist with two relationships at the same time. It's kind of like what he's saying to Peter. Peter, what are you doing? You're either under grace or you're under law? You can't mix the two. One has got to go for you to be under the other.

And then he says in Ro 7:4, oh, I just love this, "Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law." Oh, praise God! How did that happen? He tells you, "through the body of Christ." What does he mean? When He was crucified you were crucified. And when you receive the One who accomplished all that the law demands and He comes to live in you, you're set free, cut free from the law. It can never control you. It can never condemn you again. The only way it has any potential is if you choose to go back up under it. That's what Paul is trying to get across. He says, "To Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit unto God."

There has been a death, the death warrant to our self-esteem has been signed. My right to do to myself has been revoked. I've died; I've been crucified with Christ. That's what Paul is saying. The law's demands have no power over a dead man. It's a magnet, yes, to the flesh. It continues to pull to the flesh. But as long as we turn to Him who conquered that pull and conquered that magnet, and as long as we're saying yes to Him, then that law can do nothing to us. The power of sin which it produces; sin functions, and it takes opportunity with the law it goes on to say in chapter 7. But as long as we're saying yes to Him the power of sin has been disengaged.

So Paul makes a proclamation. What I used to be is dead. I've been crucified with Christ. Peter, are you listening to me? Is your theology straight? Do you understand this? For you to be back up under the law is only a choice you have made. Christ has set you free. You have a new Master, not the law, but the Lord Jesus Christ. So he makes a proclamation. Does that excite your heart this morning like it does mine?

But then he states a paradox. A paradox is a statement that apparently contradicts itself. He said "I've been crucified with Christ." Then he said, "and it's no longer I who live but Christ lives in me." It's no longer I who live. So complete has Paul's death in Christ been that his whole personality is now merged with Christ. It's not me anymore. It's Christ living in me. Christ lives in me, present active *zao*. *Zao* is the verb, and it's the word that means the essence of life. And he's saying Christ is the essence of my life. You see something good in me, then point back to the essence of my life. He's my Lord. He's my Master. When I say yes to Him, He manifests His presence in my life. He's the essence of my life. That's what he says in Philippians 1:21: "For to me to live is Christ," same word. He says over in Colossians 3:4, "When Christ, who is our life returns." He says Christ, present tense, is living in me right now.

I don't know how many people come into the building and say "Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, shut up, you're in God's house." And little Johnny says, "Whose?" "You're in God's house." Little Johnny grows up thinking every time he gets near that big building down the street he better be quiet because God lives in that building. No, He doesn't. He lives in you and I. He came in. Yes, He is omnipresent, but He came in. We brought Him in here. He lives in you.

Now listen to me. The One who fulfilled the Law now lives in you. Now what are you doing trying to fulfill what He has already fulfilled? Are you with me? You see, this is the whole point. What are we trying to add to what He has already accomplished? And the One who gave the law, the One who fulfilled the law now lives in us. And when we obey Him, the fruit of His Spirit is love, against which there is no law. We read last week from Matthew 5:17. He said, "I did not come to abolish the law, but to [what?] fulfill it." We read in Romans 8:3, "for what the Law could not do weak as it was to the flesh, God did sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as an offering for sin." He condemned sin in the flesh. He took care of the law. How? As a man, the God-man. He represented us and then He went to the cross for us. What in the world are we doing going back up under the law mentality? Spurgeon said if I do something for God and ask Him to bless it, it's like taking dirty filthy rags and pinning them on His spotless garments and saying "Oh God, would You accept this from me?" He's not interested in what I can do for Him. He's interested in what He wants to do in and through me.

Let me just show you this. What a wonderful truth here. He lives in us, right? Now watch this. "For if while we were enemies," Romans 5:10, "we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled." This is the death, reconciled is. Watch this now. "We shall be saved" not by His death, "but by" what? "By His life." Now, where is that life? It's in me. Romans 6:10, "For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God." What is He doing? He lives in me, pulling me towards the Father at all times.

Do you realize how many hurdles we have to step over? He's given us a prejudiced will to do what is right. It's His heart, His nature, in us. When a person chooses to sin as a believer, how many hurdles he has to step over to get that far away of what God is saying. If you tell me, "You'd better leave here and live the Christian life," then Jesus better get inside of me. Now listen to what I'm about to say, because He's the only One who ever lived it. "Oh, I live it every day." No you don't. Quit thinking more highly of yourself than you ought to think. Get out of His way and let Jesus be Jesus in you. Stop trying to impress Him. He isn't impressed. The only time He's impressed is when He looks at us and sees Himself.

Well, how do I appropriate it? That's next week, but let me just read this to you. Oswald Chambers said this about Galatians 2:20: "No one has ever united with Jesus Christ until he is willing to relinquish not sin only, but his whole way of looking at things. To be born from above of the Spirit of God means that we must let go, we must let go before we lay hold. And in the first stages it is the relinquishing of all pretense. What our Lord wants us to present to Him is not goodness, not honesty, not endeavor, but real solid sin. That's all we have. That's all He can take from us. And what does He give in exchange for our sin? Real solid righteousness. But we must relinquish all pretense of being anything, all claim of being worthy of God's consideration. Then the Spirit of God will show us what further there is to relinquish. There will have to be the relinquishing of my claim to my right to myself in every phase. Am I willing to relinquish my hold on all I possess, my hold on all my affections, and on everything and to be identified with the death of Jesus Christ? There is always a sharp painful disillusionment to go through before we do relinquish. When a man really sees himself as the Lord sees him it's not the abominable sins of the flesh that shock him, but the awful nature of the pride of his own heart against Jesus Christ. When he sees himself in the light of the Lord, the shame and the horror and the desperate conviction come home. If you're up against a question of relinquishing go through the crisis. Relinquish all and God will make you fit for all that He requires of you."

## Galatians 2:20-21 Christ Lives in Me - Part 2



He's testifying that at salvation there was a death. The death warrant to our right to live as we please was signed at salvation. Our right to live as we choose was done away with. Paul is saying that the Law is no longer his master, but the Lord now is his Master. Christ coming into his heart broke Paul's independent spirit to live as he chose to live.

Turn with me to Galatians 2, as we continue in Gal 2:20 where we left off the last time, and we're going to go on into Gal 2:21. We won't quite finish it, but there is so much here. The last time we were together we saw the proclamation that the apostle Paul made in Gal 2:20, and it was so powerful. And each one of us can say the same thing if we're believers today. He said, "I have been crucified with Christ." A powerful proclamation.

Now, what does he mean by that? He's testifying that at salvation there was a death. The death warrant to our right to live as we please was signed at salvation. Our right to live as we choose was done away with. Paul is saying that the Law is no longer his master, but the Lord now is his Master. Christ coming into his heart broke Paul's independent spirit to live as he chose to live. The proclamation: we have been crucified with Christ. The big "I" has been taken out of the equation and we now are identified with the Lord Jesus Christ. We were on the cross with Him. We have been raised to walk in the newness of His life.

Well, that is just proclamation. But also we saw the paradox he states in Gal 2:20. As he continues he says, "It's no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." Have you ever thought about the divine exchange that takes place when we come to know Christ as our Lord and Savior? You see, all that we are is exchanged for all that He is. I don't know if it has hit you yet or not. The only thing I can offer Him is my sin and my pride and my selfishness. That's all I can offer to Him. There is nothing good about me. There is nothing good about you. We come as beggars, poor in spirit, as Matthew 5 would talk about, unable to help ourselves. "Oh God, we don't have anything to offer to You but our sinfulness." And God says "thank you, that's all I want. Now let Me exchange your sinfulness for all that I'm." You see, that's what Paul is saying. He is a brand new person; Christ has come to live in him. Christ wore our robe of sinful humanity to the cross so that we might wear His robe of righteousness.

Now, let's not forget the context in which this is said. Gal 2:11-18, the apostle Paul has had a confrontation with Simon Peter. Simon Peter made a foolish mistake. He bowed down to those Judaizers that came over to Antioch. In Jerusalem he did very well;

he stood for the gospel of grace. He said there is not one thing that needs to be added to the message that Paul was preaching to the Gentile world; whether it be to the Jew or to the Gentile the message is that Christ is enough. But when the Judaizers came over to Antioch, he cowered down out of fear. He was terrified of them for what they could do to his reputation; how they could ruin things; about what they said about him; and he cowered down. Paul had to get right in his face. He said, "Peter, you haven't said anything, but by your actions you have made a non-verbal statement, and you have sided with these Judaizers, which means you are a contradiction in terms. And everything you've been telling these Gentiles now means nothing, because now you're saying that you're back up under the Law with them."

And in Gal 2:18 the apostle Paul, it seems to me, gets tired of talking to Simon Peter and he puts it into first person. Even though the message is something for Peter to think about, he puts it into first person and he says, "For, if I rebuild what I have once destroyed I prove myself to be a transgressor." Paul says, "I destroyed something when I came to be a believer. That old right to live as I choose, that old religious part of me died, and now the Law is done away with in my life; the Lord Jesus is now my Lord. And if I go back and put myself up under the Law, Peter, as you have done, then I rebuild what I had once destroyed." Paul said, "I'm not going to do that. Christ lives in me. I found a new way of living. I found, not a set of rules, but I found the One who gave the set of rules, then came and accomplished them now lives in me. Now, why would I want to go back to a set of rules? I would rather walk in a relationship with Him."

Now, I haven't done this in a while, but you know where I'm going by taking my coat off. This coat can do nothing of itself. I don't know how many times I have used this and I'm going to continue to use it till Jesus comes back. This coat can do nothing of itself. The Law that Paul was under could not produce what it demanded. Why? Because Paul was weak and there was nothing good in him. He could not attain the righteousness that God demanded. So here, there is that old coat. It just cannot do a thing.

However, if I get inside this coat it can do all kinds of things. I can say this sleeve raise up. Whoa! It can raise up. But I know something about the sleeve and why it raised up. It's not because of the coat; it's because of the life that is in the coat. Now do you want religion this morning? Do you want to go back up under the old set of rules that says you have to do this and have to do that and you want to try to attain it yourself? Or would you like to tap into that which God has given to you? All we can offer Him is our inability and what He offers to us is His ability in life. You see, Jesus living in and through the believer is as natural as breathing. We have to actually say "No" to Him to shut it off. It's not a matter of us turning it on. It's a matter of us turning it off.

You see, I don't know if you have ever thought about it, but in electricity it's that way. When you hook up a power line to a power pole and you run it into the house, anybody will tell you the power is on, and the switch is put on the wall not to turn it on, but to turn it off. And see, we have had it reversed forever. "Oh, dear God, empower us." God says, "I have already empowered you. The problem is you have turned the switch off. You have chosen not to enjoy the power that I have given to you." You see, religion turns the switch off.

If we can understand that the moment we decide that we are big enough and good enough to do something for God, we have just turned the switch off. If you can't see that I can't make it any clearer. You either go one way or the other. There is no middle ground. The two cannot peacefully coexist. And that's what Paul is telling Peter. You can't do that. So he makes a proclamation, "I'm crucified with Christ," in that wonderful context of showing Peter where he's wrong. "I have been crucified with Christ."

Then he states a paradox. And the paradox is "It is no longer I who live but it's Christ who lives in me." Have you discerned that yet in your life? If you see anything good in me, I want to promise you it did not come from me. It's Christ living in me. This is why we're not hung up in praising men. Why would we praise men? What is a man? What is he worth? It's the Christ who lives in the man; He's the one to be glorified in the church forever and ever as the book of Ephesians talks about. So we have a choice here; we either tap into the power He has given us or we can go back to playing church till Jesus comes. Now we have to make up our mind which way are we going to do it. Are we going to get a committee together and try to impress God with what we know we want to do, or are we going to let God do what only He can do in our life? That's what Paul's point is to Peter here.

Well, thirdly, after he has made the proclamation and stated the paradox, thirdly he reveals a principle. Now, this is the key to the whole verse right here, the last part of Gal 2:20. "I have been crucified with Christ; it's no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live [here it comes] in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and delivered Himself up for me." Now, this is the key to the whole verse. How is Christ living in me? How is that topic, how is that subject, how is that truth made understandable so that I can appropriate it in my life? Now, I'm sure that question has to be asked. And I want you to know I did not write Scripture. God wrote it and He wrote it so that the Holy Spirit could reveal it to our hearts. If you cannot understand this I cannot do anything more. It's right here in the verse.

To tap into the power that God has already given us is going to come out right here in this verse. It's a very frustrating thing to know you have something, but not be able to get to it. You ever thought about that? Now Paul is going to tell us how to do that. My prayer has been all morning long, "God, I'm too frail in trying to make this understandable. It had to be revealed to me." It has got to be revealed to us, folks. Now listen to what he says. It's so clear. It's on the last part of Gal 2:20: "And the life which I now live in the



flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and delivered Himself up for me.” It’s right there. You say, “That does not sound very hard.” It’s not. We are the ones who make it complicated.

First of all it says, “The life which I now live.” That is a very powerful statement. He’s not talking about before salvation. He’s talking about after salvation. So if anybody ever comes in this context and says Paul is talking about how to get saved, no, he’s not. He’s talking about how to live once you have been saved. “The life which I now live,” present indicative active. My very life right now; this is after salvation. “The life which I now live in the flesh.” Now the term “flesh” in Romans and perhaps in Galatians can be used two different ways. One is the body. But the other way it can be used is the mindset that we had before we became a believer. That is why our minds have to be renewed so that God can transform our life. Here it means the flesh and blood body. Paul says that “when you look at me I’m the same, I look the same to you as I did before I got saved.”

Now, if you think about it for a second, Paul had the same body after he got saved that he had before he got saved. Isn’t that a bummer? You haven’t thought about it yet, have you? I just want you to know, folks, if you were ugly before you got saved, you are ugly after you get saved. I can’t help that. That is just the way it works. If you were short before you got saved, you are going to be short after you get saved. If you were tall, you are going to be tall. Paul says, listen, “If you look at the outside of my body you are going to see the same person you saw when you used to know me as a Pharisee, when you used to know me when I lived under the law.” The change that has come in Paul is not something on the outside. The change is on the inside. You see, religion can only change your lifestyle on the outside. Christianity changes your life from the inside out. Yes, it will show up on the outside. But what Paul is trying to say is, “I still look the same on the outside, but, oh how different I’m on the inside.”

Now here is what he says. “The life which I now live in this body—the same body I had before, the one that gave me a fit before—continues to give me a fit. But there is something different on the inside. The life which I now live in the flesh [How does he do it?] I live by faith in the Son of God.” Now that’s it right there. You say, “Come on, give me something more complicated. Give me 17 principles. Help me out on this.” I can’t do it. That is all he says and that’s enough.

Let me ask you a question. Are you living by faith in the Son of God? Are you living that way today? And if you are not then no wonder the power has been switched off in your life. Yeah, you are saved. You are very saved if you have received Jesus into your life. But you are not experiencing any of the power of His life in the fullness of who He’s because you have chosen to live it your way.

“I live by faith in the Son of God.” Now that word means “living by faith,” it means totally dependent upon the Son of God. It’s a total trust in Christ, a total trust in Christ. Now you say, “What is the big deal about that?” What is the big deal? Paul used to live in a total trust of himself. He lived under law. Law demands that we do it ourselves and perform to attain. And Paul says, “I used to live, my total trust and focus was the law because the Law to me was the way to righteousness.” And that is why you go back to Gal 2:19 when he says, “I died to the law. Man, I realized something; the Law could not produce what it demanded in my life.” So he says, “Now I no longer live that way. My focus is not the Law. No sir, my back is to the law. My focus is the Lord Jesus. I’m going to trust Him till the day I die. I’m going to live dependent upon Him.”

Now, you cannot live dependent upon Him unless you live dependent upon His Word. How many times have we said that? Faith comes from hearing; hearing comes from what? The Word of God. Do you realize what we preach in here is not enough to take you through the week? This has got to become your spiritual refrigerator. You live out of this Book. It dictates to you how you behave. It dictates to you how you think. And Paul says, “I’m going to trust God and I’m going to trust what word He had.” By the way, he only had the Old Testament and probably some of the Gospels. He wrote three fourths of the New Testament. So what is he saying? I’m living off of the fulfillment of that which God has said and who He is. We live in a day when we have got the Word. It’s complete now. We have the Word of God. No man can say he lives by faith and totally trust God unless he lives in the Word of God, allowing the Word to get inside of him and to transform and renew his mind. He lives totally dependent upon Christ.

I used to have a little sign on my desk that said, “Yes, Lord!” In fact, now I have a new one. Somebody gave it to me, so I have got a brand new one now on my desk. And what that means; you say, “What is the question?” Hey, the question does not matter. It’s the answer is what matters. You have got to solve it before God ever tells you to do anything. God, yes! The answer is yes. The answer is yes. Whatever You want is what I want. I want Your desire to become my desire. And I want what You want in my life. Now you say, that is awfully simple. Yeah, simple to say, but it’s very complex when you think about it. It reaches into the every area of your life.

You see, Christ is not somebody you come to hear about on Sunday mornings. Christ is somebody you live with and know intimately moment by moment, seven days a week. And when we walk in here we just catch the overflow of the joy of people who have walked with God all week long. That is what the church is. It’s not to produce anything. It’s just to come along side and encourage what is already there.

Paul will never get over the fact of how much God loved him. The motivation of his life has been that he has been loved by God.

Look what he said, "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 for me." Now he knows that God continues to love him, but he's pointing to something here. He's pointing to the greatest demonstration of love that anybody could ever have. Anybody that says God is a hateful God, that God is an uncaring god, is a person who is either intentionally ignorant or he certainly is ignorant of what the Word of God shows. When Jesus came to this earth God never has to do another thing to demonstrate His love for you and me. Jesus came and died for you and for me. What does that mean? That means that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believed in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This is the greatest demonstration of love that has ever happened.

And when Paul understood that God had loved him; Paul was the one who stood there and caused Christians to die. He stood there when Stephen was stoned to death. And yet God loved him, and that is the motivation of his life. It says in Romans 2:4 that "It is the goodness of God, the kindness of God that leads you to repentance." When it suddenly dawns on you that in spite of you God loves you, that becomes the motivation of your life. No preacher has to stand up and beat people into submission to obey God. If you have to do that that is religion. But in Christianity there is relationship and the motivation is God has loved me; therefore I love to focus and obey Him who loved me and gave Himself for me.

"Loved me" is aorist indicative active or aorist active participle. This points to a specific event. It happened at one particular time. He's not talking about the fact that He loves me today because He knows He does. But he's talking back to that very act and he goes on to explain that. He says "and gave Himself for me." Boy, I want you to hang on to those words. Isn't it interesting how personal this has become to Paul?

I tell you what, the day I got saved, after being a minister for about eight years, quoting John 3:16 since I was little enough to learn it, it finally hit me it was not that God so loved the world anymore; it was God so loved Wayne, God so loved Wayne. I was telling a group earlier, I just had to confess it before God. I got up this morning; I have been irritable. I have been frustrated, short with my wife, and it just hit me as I was driving to church today, God still loves me. Doesn't that hit anybody here? Or maybe you think you deserve it today. I don't know, but I surely don't deserve it. And Paul does not deserve it and Paul is trying to bring this out. He so loved me. He loved me, says John the disciple, and kept saying, "I am the disciple whom Jesus loved. I am the disciple whom Jesus loved." And here he becomes the apostle of love in his last three epistles. What do you think he's talking about?

You see we think so highly of ourselves we think we deserve something. No, no, no! Haven't you seen sin yet? Haven't you seen the selfishness and pride of your life? Haven't you come before God as a wretched sinner and said, "Oh, God, I want You to know that I ask You to forgive me." And God just loves you, and that frames your obedience from that point on. If you are not walking in that kind of light, then you have missed the whole point of what Christianity is all about. The psalmist said it: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?"

You know what the word "gave" here is. "He gave Himself for me." It's the word *paradidomi*. It's a different word than *didomi*, to mean just to give. It means to hand oneself over. Do you realize what he's saying? Jesus could have at any point spoken and rid the world of everything that is here, because He's the Creator of it. But instead He chose as the God-man to give Himself over to His accusers, to those who would put Him on the cross. Why? Paul said it. He said for me, but it was also for Wayne. It was also for you. He gave Himself. He allowed Himself.

Can you imagine a fellow driving the nails into His hand? The man who was breathing air, the one he's nailing to the cross created the air that his lungs were breathing. But He gave Himself over. Why? Because He loved you and I. Jesus said it. He said, "Greater love had no man than to lay down his life for his brother." That is exactly what He did. He laid His life down for you and I. And somehow it has driven a spear into Paul's heart and he will never be the same. He will never be the same. The reason he lives, putting his faith in Christ is because he knows the character of the One he's trusting. He has given His life for him. This one act of love, Christ dying on the cross for the sins of the whole world, stands above all other acts of love that could ever be recorded. And it has so personally affected Paul that it has changed his life forever. Peter, if you want to ignore that kind of thing then go on and ignore it, but man, I cannot ignore it Paul says.

I have been crucified with Christ and Christ lives in me and the life I now live I'm not going back and live like I used to live, putting my faith into what I can do to please God. I'm going to walk over here; I'm going to live submissive unto Him. By faith in Him, total trust in Him, total trust in His Word; that is how we appropriate this life. And what is the motivation? The fact that He has loved me, He has loved you. This is the principle of how we appropriate the life of Christ. For us, if we trust Him, we now have His Word and that Word is what we love and we seek to obey.

I just want you to know I really do believe in the elder system. You know how I feel about that. I believe we as a corporate body have honored God. We have done what He said to do. Now you watch the blessings that He's going to bring into this congregation. You don't ever obey God that He does not immediately empower you with that, that which He has given you to do. And so we're going to experience that. I believe we're going to experience that corporately. But my pray is that we will experience it individually in our lives.

You say, "Wayne, I still haven't got it." Well, I'm so sorry. Let us do it this way; if you cannot get the concept then look at it situation by situation by situation and maybe it will get a little bit simpler to you. But the truth here is so clear: if I will trust God, trust His word, then I can walk and appropriate. The switch is back on. I can appropriate what He has already given to me.

I'm telling you, I cannot believe how irritated I was when I got up this morning. Have you ever done that? I just got up irritated. I mean, the grass irritated me. Everything irritated me. And I don't know why God allows that in our lives, but I think some of it is to just give us another glimpse at how wicked our flesh really is. It's kind of like when you pull up at the parking lot out here, "Well, reverend, what are you going to them today," you know. You are, you are a wretched man. Your flesh is wretched. Do you understand, Wayne, how much you need the very message you are preaching to others? It hit me this morning. It hit me this morning how desperate I am for this message. Has it hit you yet? Has it really hit you yet? It's never going to happen, friend, until we bow before Him. There is no gray area. But when we bow that switch is turned back on and everything we already have, we already had we begin to experience.

That is what he's saying. Why would I want to go back with you, Simon Peter? Buddy, you go on your own way. I'm going this way. Paul is speaking for himself now, first person. Okay, he stated the proclamation. He made the proclamation, "I am crucified with Christ." Now he has stated a paradox, "It's not me living; it's Christ living in me." Then he gives the principle. "The life I now live," how do I live it? What is different now than it was before? "I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." I don't live by faith in His Word. I live by faith in the God of the Word; that is why the Word means so much to me. You see, if you don't trust the character of the God who wrote the Word you will never trust the Word.

But fourthly, he explains the problem. Now here is where it gets down to where we all are. Here comes the problem right here. Many people don't realize that when they don't say yes to Christ they are nullifying the grace of God. I wonder if that has hit you yet. Oh, some of you maybe haven't got a clue yet, but you'd better be listening to what he's saying here. He says, "I don't, in any way, shape or form nullify the grace of God." You see, when we go back and we choose to try to perform in order to attain to something, what happens is we nullify the grace of God, that whole attitude.

How many committees have you sat on in your life and watched the committee struggle to come up with something that perhaps God would be pleased with? Yeah, we have been there. You ever served on a nominating committee? Remember when we had the nominating committees? The committee of the unwilling that had been forced to do the unnecessary. Really, the impossible. I mean, how many times have we tried to sit in a long range planning committee? Where do you want the church to be in six years? I haven't got a clue. I just want to know where I'm supposed to be today. But we project ourselves out as if we have got some kind.

Now there are times when God does give us that understanding, but what I'm talking about is when we try to come up with a plan and we ask God to bless it. Now when that happens we have just nullified the grace of God. And you say, "What is that grace of God?" Well, real quickly, two things, one is the undeserved favor. None of us ever could deserve it in a million years. That is how we got saved. That is how we live. But not only that, it is the enabling power of God, the transforming power of God. When I choose to do it myself God says, "Oh, you can do it fine. You don't need Me. Help yourself. Wayne, that is good Wayne. Go on. You want to do it yourself, help yourself." I will tell you what, what God initiates God sustains. What we come up with we have to sustain.

Have you been there? Buddy, I have been there. We must understand His living grace, which is Christ living in and through us. We have got to see this is very, very conditional. It's conditional, which means it's to the degree and measure of my willingness to say yes to Him, that He even begins to move in my life. I only experience Him to the degree I'm willing to bow before Him. What Peter had done when he sided with the Judaizers, when he cowered down, drew the line and said "I'm not going to associate with you Gentiles anymore," when he did that he nullified, at that moment, the grace of God.

Now the word "nullify" is the word *atheteo*. *Ath* means without; *thetomos* means to set aside. He said, "I did not set aside the grace of God. I chose not to go back and live as I wanted to live. I chose instead not to set aside the grace of God." The King James Version translates this "I do not frustrate the grace of God." That's not bad. That is not really the rendering literally, but that is not bad because that is the idea. Here is the grace of God. It's the switch. You don't need a switch for it. It's hooked in. And God is trying to empower you, empower you, empower you, but you say, "No, God. I can do it myself. Look at my business, I did it myself. I'm going to do my Christian life the same way." And God says fine, flips the switch off and you have just nullified the grace of God. You have just shut down the power of God that wants to work in and through you. I have done it a million times. "I don't frustrate, I don't nullify the grace of God."

Now, he says "I do not"; that is present tense. Present tense means Paul says I live to appropriate the divine ability of God. I live that way. Peter, you can go back if you want. But, buddy, I don't want any part of that. I want to live to appropriate God's living in me. You see, religious works which the Galatians had fallen into—don't forget your context—had nullified the grace of God. And Paul stood against that and said, buddy, you can do what you want to do. I'm not going to nullify the grace of God in my life.

Now let's get real practical. How many of you grew up in a church understanding that you had to do, do, do, do, do. Anybody

understand what I'm talking about? And they measured your spirituality by what you did at church: How many times you come to church last year? I didn't miss a time. You had those little envelopes. Every week you had to check off and say did you do your daily Bible reading? Yes. Did you contact anybody this week? Yes. I lied on those things every week of my life because I thought what you did at church determined your spirituality. Religion always says that. Did you go to mass? Did you come to church? Did you do this? Did you do that? And that always somehow is the measure of what you are spiritually.

No, sir! That's what Paul is trying to say. That's not the measure of our spirituality. If we were appropriating the grace of God in this congregation, we would never have to ask anybody to volunteer for anything. Did you know that? Because the gifts would begin to function and you would have people. We would need 150 people right now as ushers. We would need people in the youth department to be adults to go down and help supervise those kids. We need help in every area, but what do we do? Send somebody from the secret service to your door to find out what is going on and what your social security number is. No, if you have people walking in the grace of God the body functions. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty in the body of Christ.

Where does that start? It starts with me. It also starts with you. When we start getting serious about our Christian walk and we start willing to say yes, Lord, yes, Lord, you don't have to worry about the church. The church will flower, it will bloom, it will blossom. It will be what God wants it to be. But until we get people out of their comfort zone and to understand what it means to set aside the grace of God, we're not going to get anywhere, folks. It's just going to be the same old-same old when Jesus comes back. My prayer is it will never happen here. I don't believe God sent me here for it to happen here. I believe this, God has got the best days ahead of us. But the key is our own hearts and our own intimacy with Christ and whether or not we're willing to walk with Him.

Well, let's just look and see what we nullify. What do we set aside when we choose to do church our way, when we bring the world's ways of doing things into the church and we decide to do it the world's way? What have we just set aside? Alright, let's just look. First of all, when you set aside the grace of God you set aside your usability, your functionality in the body of Christ. There is no function. You have no purpose in the body of Christ. Well, I have been an usher for 50 years. Big deal! You never were useful in the body of Christ. That is a tough one, isn't it? Let me show you what I'm talking about. It says in 1 Corinthians 12: 4, "Now there are varieties of gifts [and all of us are gifted differently], but the same Spirit." You know what the word for "gift" is. It's the word, you know it well, *charisma*. We get the word "charismatic" out it. It bothers me that some people build a denomination off of something we all experience. It's the grace of God. *Ma* means the result of that grace; *charis* means grace. In other words, the result of God's grace working in our life is the gift or the function we have in the body of Christ.

If I'm going to go back to playing church again, if I'm going to go back to doing it the way the world does it, I have just shut down my function in the body of Christ. God's hand is not upon it and God's anointing is not with it. You see, that is what happened. There is no function to anybody in the body of Christ until he's living under the grace God offers to him. When we set aside the grace of God we also forfeit God's sufficiency to accomplish what He has told us to accomplish, monetary sufficiency, financial sufficiency.

I'm talking about when God puts something in front of you and it costs you, He will provide for that if He raised it up. He says to the church in 2 Corinthians 9:8, "And God," and it's in the context of giving. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything you may have an abundance for every good deed." The narrow context is the grace he speaks of is the financial sufficiency to be about the things that God has told you to do. It's not something, it's not health and wealthy. It's to accomplish what God has said.

You can trust God to always provide for you where He guides. And that is the grace. But when you start doing it your own way, oh, buddy, we're in it for ourselves. You use a gimmick to start something and come up with it yourself, you are going to have use a gimmick to make it happen. You put people under guilt, do something. But, you see, you don't have to do that. You don't have to do that when God is being honored and glorified in your life, when you are living submissive to Him you can participate in the sufficiency God wants for your life.

When we set aside the grace of God by choosing to put ourselves back up under the Law we forfeit the ability to bear up under the trials of life. Have you ever seen a Christian who cannot bear up under the trials in his life? Look carefully whether or not he's living under grace or he's has gone back to trying to do it himself. If you set aside the grace of God here, 2 Corinthians 12:9, "And he said to me," this is when Paul was crying out to God, "take the thorn out of my flesh." God had put it there to humble him and he would not. And God said no three times. I like the way God is real simple in His answers. Paul said, "Lord, take it away." "No." Paul, I mean "God, take it away." "No," three times. Three strikes you're out. I mean, He's not going to do it. But he led Paul to say this, "And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you.'" If you are not going to live under the grace of God then you cannot participate in the grace that will help you bear up under what is going on. He says, "For power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I would rather boast of my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

Do you realize the people that walk through the valleys of life trusting God all the way through it are people who are experiencing the enabling power, the grace of God? But you can put two Christians in the same hospital room with the same disease, one of

them will have victory, the other lives in total defeat, miserable, scared to death. Why? Because they are not participating in the grace of God. They have set it aside. They have chosen to go in a different direction. When we set aside the grace of God we forfeit the power that God gives us to complete the assignments He has given to us.

Paul says in Ephesians 3:7, "Of which I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power upon our lives." I would hate to think of having to be assigned someplace and not be under the grace of God. I had said to God, "God, I want to finish well. I want to finish well." The interesting thing about that is, God heard me and God knows you don't finish well unless the pressure is on you. And He put me here and I'm thinking every day of my life what am I doing? I'm going to a mega-church conference this afternoon. What does that mean? I don't have a clue. I have never been to one. I'm going to walk in that place and sit down and think, well, what am I doing here. And they are going to say, what are you doing here? I don't know what I'm doing.

But every day of my life we have dealt with so much stuff that we come to the end of the day and it's just like you have to fall prostrate before God and say, "God, You are exactly right. We can't do this God. Why did You put us here?" And God says, "Because I want you to live the message that you have been preaching to everybody else." Are you going to live it? Or are you going to bail out like others do? I want to tell you something. You don't experience the power of God unless you are walking under the grace of God. There is no enablement; you can do it yourself. Help yourself. You have got a choice. But you will not walk in the fullness of God. You will not have a clue what we're talking about. Worship will mean nothing to you until you start bowing and crying out to God and get transparent with Him and say, "Oh, God, I'm a failure. That is all I can ever be. God, take my failure and would You replace it with who You are?"

If you set aside the grace of God, people don't see Jesus in you or me. Second Thessalonians 1:12 says, "In order that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, seen in you, recognized, and you in Him." How? "According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." When I nullify the grace of God I'm not a witness to anybody. I'm not a witness to anybody. But also when we set aside the grace of God we have no strength to face opposition. Oh, 2 Timothy 2:1. In the face of opposition Paul tells Timothy from prison where he's about to be martyred, "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." You have got to start there. That is the only way you can face opposition.

There is no humility in our lives when grace is not being lived. It says in 1 Peter 5:5, "You younger men likewise be subject to your elders. And all of you clothe yourself with humility toward one another for God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble." Does He give it to the proud? No, He does not. And so when I choose to be proud, living my own way, and I don't want to get right with Him, I set aside the grace of God. To say it in a more succinct way I guess, when grace is set aside, when Wayne gets up in the morning and chooses to live his life his own way he sets aside the grace of God, then the Christian life at that point is shut down. It cannot be lived. Only under grace can it be lived because only Christ ever lived it and He lives it in and through us.

So the problem for the Christian way of living is we haven't thought about it perhaps that we're nullifying the grace of God when we say I'm going to do it my way. God, don't You call me. I have got a great plan here. I will call You. At that very moment you have just nullified the grace of God. We cease to be functional in the body. As a matter of fact, one of the verses I did not read says that we don't even have the grace to speak to one another. Would it not be great if we were all walking under grace and everything we said was seasoned with God's grace and it built us up instead of tearing us down? Boy, that would change our emails, would it not?

See, when you don't walk under grace it's easy to understand where this stuff comes from. This comes from people who don't have a clue about the normal Christian life. I want to walk in the power of God, Paul says. And coming in this morning, frustrated again, I just said to the Lord in the car, "Lord, I want to experience, I want to preach, I want to live it. I'm tired of being frustrated and bitter and critical." And the very moment I choose not to bow before Him that is what I'm. That is what I'm folks. That is who you called as your pastor apart from Jesus, a total utter failure. But thank God He did not come to renew our flesh. He came to replace it. Have you seen that about yourself this morning? Has that come clear? I wonder how many of us here today are setting aside the grace of God. "Oh, I'm successful. I have got money in the bank. I have got a retirement program." Whoopie deal! Have you done it at the expense of experiencing the grace of God? He's not impressed. He's not impressed at all when you get to heaven; I have never seen a hearse yet, pulling a U-haul. Have you?

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