



The Great Divide: Justification by Faith

Galatians 2:14-21



¹⁴ But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” ¹⁵ We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶ yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. ¹⁷ But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸ For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.




This pericope is so rich
in truth we need to
cover it in two weeks.
This week I just want to
focus on one of Paul's
big ideas.



Galatians 2:14

- But when I saw that their conduct was **not in step with the truth of the gospel**, I said to Cephas before them all, **“If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”**

What does Paul mean by 
“not in step with the truth of
the gospel?”

What does Paul mean by
force Gentile to live like
Jews?



Galatians 2:14

- But when I saw that their conduct was not in step **with the truth of the gospel,** I said to Cephas before them all,

**The one and only gospel of the
Lord Jesus Christ is
limited to one particular narrative
with parameters that can't be
altered.**



- The God of the gospel has one and only one Son.



- The gospel includes the death, burial and the resurrection of that Son on the 3rd day.
- The Son is Jesus the God-man who was and is completely without sin.
- His death is efficacious for the sins of who will believe.
- The parameters include 2000 years ago, in Jerusalem, on a cross, crucified by the Romans.
- All this was done so that God could be both just and the justifier.



Now the question is:
How is Christ's atoning
work personally
appropriated?



Galatians 2:16

- yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but **through faith in Jesus Christ,**



**If it is secured or
appropriated by faith why
then are Gentile converts
to Christ being forced to
live like Jews?**



Galatians 2:14

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Judaizers, a name given to this particular group of Jewish Christians, were insisting that Gentile converts to Christ still had to keep the law of Moses beginning with circumcision and all the ceremonial laws like the Jews who rejected Jesus.

This is the conduct that was not in step with gospel because it clearly taught or implied that Christ had done nothing to change man's relationship to the law of God.



Turn to the Famous

Romans 10



Romans 10:4

- For Christ is the end of [keeping] the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.



Romans 10:5

- For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law,



Romans 10:6

- But the righteousness based on faith...



Perhaps one of Paul's
greatest contributions
to the church is the
doctrine of
Justification by Faith



Galatians 2:15

- We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners;
- Yet we



Galatians 2:16

- yet we [Paul & Peter] know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ,

Justified



- to render righteous or such he ought to be
- to show, exhibit, evince, one to be righteous, such as he is and wishes himself to be considered
- to declare, pronounce, one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be

Strong's Concordance



How can a sinner be declared righteous or just?



2 Corinthians 5:21

- For our sake he [God] made him [Christ] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him [Christ] we [believers] might **become the righteousness of God.**

Justified: Declared Righteous



**Who is the “our” in our
sake?**

**Who is the “we” in we
might become ?**



Galatians 2:16

- yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but **through faith in Jesus Christ,** **so we also have believed in Christ Jesus,**

**Paul is very upfront about the reason
he believed in Christ.**



**His desire was to be found
righteous before God.**

**Paul knew the law and his personal inability
to obey the law is called sin.**



2 Corinthians 5:10

- For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Paul obviously believed



1. There is a Sovereign God who created him.
2. This same God communicated his expectations for behavior and conduct first in the Mosaic law and then through His Son Jesus.
3. At this death, he would stand before God and be judged where he would be found guilty of breaking God's law.



Romans 14:12

- So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.



Galatians 2:16

- yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, **so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ**

unpack
this

**The gospel (the D, B, & R of C!)
is the great news! that any
human being can be declared
completely and permanently
righteous before God through
personal faith in Christ alone.**





**This issue divides
Protestants and
Catholics;
this issue divides
Protestants.**

But what does the Scripture say?



**Is mere faith sufficient for a person to
be declared completely and
permanently righteous for life
eternally guaranteed to live with God
forever and ever?**



Turn to Romans 3

v. 9-26



⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” ¹³ “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps is under their lips.” ¹⁴ “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.” ¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known.” ¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, **and the whole world may be held accountable to God.** ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.



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For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation [atoning sacrifice] by his blood, **to be received by faith.**

This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.



It was to show his
righteousness at the present time,
so that he [God] might be just and
the justifier of the one who has
faith in Jesus.

Of Who?

How does the gospel permit God to remain just?



My sins were not passed over or ignored by God; instead, God punished Christ for my sins.

Christ IS the atoning sacrifice for all who would believe the gospel.



Galatians 2:16

- yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, **so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ**

**At this point, we need to discuss
“believed” and “by faith.”**



**The idea of being judicially rendered
righteous by mere faith in Christ
seems so ridiculously easy that much
has been added to what Paul
communicates.**



Traditional Catholic confession booth.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

Initiation



Baptism



Confirmation



Eucharist

Healing



Penance and
Reconciliation



Anointing
of the Sick

Service of Communion



Matrimony



Holy Orders



This sacrament [confession] originated early in the church's life, when it became clear that those who had been baptized were not immune to sin. Lesser sins were considered to be forgiven through prayer, fasting, works of mercy, and participation in the Eucharist. Greater sins needed more.

<https://www.uscatholic.org/church/2012/04/glad-you-asked-why-do-we-go-confession>



Some Baptists add:

1. Repent
2. Accept, invite, ask
3. Confess



Some Pentecostals add:

- 1. Repent**
- 2. Accept, invite, ask**
- 3. Confess**
- 4. Speak in Tongues**



Church of Christ add:

- 1. Repent**
- 2. Accept, invite, ask**
- 3. Confess**
- 4. Believer's Baptism**



**Why do you think
there are all these
additional
requirements or
steps being added?**



The answer is two-fold:

- 1.The Bible contains scriptures about repentance, confession, baptism, etc.**
- 2.Believing seems too easy.**



instead of adding to

greater emphasis
must placed on
teaching what it
means to have faith
or believe in Christ

To have “faith in” means



- 1. Trusting, depending upon, relying for**
- 2. Firm convictions about the efficacy or ability of something**





sometimes people

think we teach a
momentary or
temporary faith or
belief is sufficient to
be saved



While it is true the thief on the cross only believed for a short time before his impending death and he entered paradise with Christ.

Nowhere in the Bible is assurance of salvation provided for those who believe for a moment and then return to a state of unbelief.



Hebrews 11:6

- And **without faith it is impossible to please him**, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.



Turn to

Colossians 1:21-23



And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² **he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death,** in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.



And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, **in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,** ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.



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Galatians 2:16

- yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ **and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.**



**At this point, Paul
returns to the issue at
hand**

**Can a Jew eat with
Gentile and it not
be sin?**



Galatians 2:17

- But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not!



Paul seems to be addressing something being said by others:

Namely that if Jewish Christians do not keep a separation from Gentiles and thus sin then in fact Christ is complicit and guilty of sin as well.



Thus v. 17 might contain an echo of the kind of argument Peter had cast in his teeth by the “men from James” or other law-observant spectators: “Peter, don’t you realize that your open table fellowship with Gentiles is a repudiation of the law of God? You are actually engaging in sin, my brother! And, furthermore, when you try to justify this kind of behavior by appealing to our common faith in Christ, you are really making our Lord an agent of sin!”

Timothy George, vol. 30, The New American Commentary



Galatians 2:18

- For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor.



Look @ Paul's Final Point in v. 21



Galatians 2:21

- I do not nullify the grace of God,
for if righteousness were
through the law,
- then Christ died for no purpose.