

Text: Gal. 2:16 “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”

Intro: Gal 2:16 is the thesis verse of the book of Galatians. This verse contains the first use of the word “**justified**”. Translated from the Greek word δικαιώω dikaiōō it means to declare righteous. To be justified is the moment God credits a sinner who has faith in the redemptive work of Jesus as right with Him.

—**Gal. 2:1** “Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me.”

—The intensity of the attacks against Paul results in another visit to Jerusalem.

—The “**fourteen years**” are reckoned from **Gal. 1:18** and the meeting Paul had in Jerusalem with the Apostle James.

—This meeting is the Jerusalem Council of **Acts 15**—“Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.” (**Acts 15:1–2** NIV)

—Paul writes of this time “And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” (**Galatians 2:4–5** NIV)

—In **Gal. 2:2** Paul says “**I went up by revelation**”; he was not sent by the Church to Jerusalem, the Lord sent him to address these attacks and spread of the message of the Law to “...**James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars**” (**Gal. 2:9**).

—Paul then tells us that there was a clear distinction made between the mission of Peter and himself—**Gal. 2:8** “(for He who worked effectively in **Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised** also worked effectively **in me toward the Gentiles**).”

—Paul's Gospel of Grace

—Those who opposed Paul's message of "grace alone", believed that if people did not live under the Law, they would take freedom from the Law as license to sin—**Gal. 2:17** "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!"

— If people can be accounted righteous simply by believing that Christ died for them, why then should they bother to keep the law or live by any standard of morality?

—Paul answers this accusation with an emphatic, "Certainly not!" Grace leads to freedom from sin's slavery to obey God, not license to disobey Him.

—The real sin would come if grace is thrown aside and a return to the works of the Law occurred—**Gal. 2:18** "For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor."

—This is the exact thing that Peter and even Barnabas fell into—**Gal. 2:11–13** "Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy."

—In Christ Jesus alone there is a powerful moment of transformation—**Gal. 2:19** "For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God."

—The Law does a wonderful good; it destroys all hope of obtaining salvation by human effort to keep the Law—**Gal. 3:24** "So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith." (ESV)

—"Guardian" is from the Greek παιδαγωγός paidagōgos meaning a child tender; usually a slave, to whom the care of the boys of a family was committed, whose duty it was to attend them at their play, lead them to and from the public school, and exercise a constant superintendence over their conduct and safety.

—The Law actually points to new life in God through Jesus—**Rom. 5:20**
“Moreover **the law entered that the offense might abound.** But where sin
abounded, grace abounded much more.”

—The way this truth operates is—**Gal. 2:20** “I have been crucified with Christ; it
is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the
flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

—Notice how this is powerfully pictured in water baptism, and how important the
death and resurrection of Jesus becomes to our lives.

—When Jesus died on the Cross, by faith I believe I died with Him—**Rom. 6:3**
“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were
baptized into His death?”

—**Gal. 3:27** “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on
Christ.”

—“...**it is no longer I who live...**”—**Rom. 6:4** “Therefore we were buried with
Him through baptism into death...”

—“...**but Christ lives in me...**”—**Rom. 6:4** “that just as Christ was raised from
the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of
life.”

—The Holy Spirit immerses every believer into the body of Jesus—**1Cor.
12:13** “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether
Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink
into one Spirit.”

—Going forward in the Christian life—“**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.**”

—In the Greek the word “**crucified**” is a perfect tense means a continued
way of living; we live the “**crucified**” life.

—It is not striving, effort, or difficult, it is “**faith in the Son of God**”.

—When a person believes in Jesus for salvation, they are “**positionally**”
declared righteous with God.

—Then, living by faith in Jesus, that same person is growing into righteousness (*the process of sanctification*)—*Phil. 1:6* “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

—Some will automatically think, without Law we are open to anything and everything—*Gal. 5:13–14* “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

—The good work is God’s; He began it and He will perfect it—*Gal. 3:3* “Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”

—The word “*foolish*” means to be unwilling to think.

—*1Pet. 3:18* “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, *being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.*”

5
The Gospel of Grace
Gal. 2:16
Pastor C.E. Bowden

6
The Gospel of Grace
Gal. 2:16
Pastor C.E. Bowden

7
The Gospel of Grace
Gal. 2:16
Pastor C.E. Bowden
