

Galatians: 2 1-10 No turning back- In defense of grace

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[0 : 00] Galatians chapter 2. Galatians chapter 2. For those of you visiting, and those of you who might have missed some here lately, we started studying the book of Galatians.

No turning back. That's the general theme of Galatians. No turning back. We've talked about, in the first five verses, Paul, an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We talked about an apostle, how he got to be an apostle. He came, verse 3, preaching a message of grace and peace from God the Father. He was talking about Jesus, who gave himself for our sins in verse 4, and how we should rejoice in what God has done, verse 5.

Then last week, or two weeks ago, we studied verses 6 through 10, where he talks about those who are coming into Galatians trying to teach another gospel. And he talks about the fact that there is no other gospel.

There is only one gospel. It's the gospel of Jesus Christ, where Jesus comes and he saves us by grace alone. And he said, no other gospel. He says, even if I come to you and preach to you something other than what I've already taught you, don't believe it.

[1 : 19] He said, there's only one gospel. And then last week, we talked about the rest of the chapter. We talked about the fact that he gives a little history about his salvation and everything.

He talks about how he got to where he is. And he got to the point where he says, again, God be glorified because I, who used to persecute the church, now preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So today, Galatians chapter 2. Look with me beginning at verse 1. Then, 14 years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me also.

And I went up by revelation and communicated unto them the gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run and not, or had run in vain.

But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in who came in privily to spy out our liberty that we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.

[2 : 33] To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you, but of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me.

God accepteth no man's person, for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me. But contrarywise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of circumcision was unto Peter, for he had wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision.

The same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles. And when James and Cephas, that's Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave unto me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they should go unto the circumcision.

Only they would that we should remember the poor, the same which I was forward to do. Let's stop there. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, I pray this morning you would help us as we look at these passages of scripture and others that go with it.

Lord, that we would understand the importance of the grace of God only by his grace. Lord, it's only because of you, only because of what you have done.

[4 : 07] I play no part in my salvation other than believing what you have done for me. Other than accepting what Jesus Christ did at the cross and when he rose again.

Lord, I pray that you would help us this morning to understand what Paul is trying to teach here. No works can be added to our salvation.

Nothing we do can get our salvation. Jesus Christ did it all. And Lord, I pray that you'd help us to understand that. And Lord, as we go out and we share the gospel, and we share that, it is only by God's grace that we have the opportunity to be saved.

We have the opportunity to know Jesus Christ. We have the opportunity to go to heaven only because of God's grace. Lord, thank you for what you've done for us.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Throughout Paul's ministry, he's been fighting against Paul's teaching.

[5 : 09] He comes up against it everywhere he goes. In Acts chapter 20, you don't have to turn there. It should be up on the screen. Acts chapter 20, he's talking to the leaders of the church at Ephesus.

And this is what he says beginning at verse 28. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own cells shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples unto themselves or after themselves.

He says, as soon as I leave here, I know what's going to happen. There are going to be people coming in, false teachers. They're going to try to tell you that yes, the grace of God is good, but you need to add things to it.

The grace of God is great, but don't forget these Jewish traditions we've had. They're part of your salvation as well. You Gentiles, you haven't gone through the things that we have. You haven't faced the things that we have.

[6 : 24] You need to know what it's like to go through what we have, and that's part of your salvation. And so he's planning, excuse me, he's planning these churches in Galatia, and these false teachers are coming in.

We talked, last week I think it was, they were called Judaizers. They came in and they approached those new Christians with a mixture of grace and works. You know, that happens in a lot of churches.

I read a statistic once that the vast majority of Mormons used to be Baptists, but they get, they get to a Baptist church, they come in and they get to, get saved and everything, but they want more.

They, you know, somebody comes in and offers them Bible studies and things and they go and they wind up being drawn over to the Mormon church. He says, if they preach anything other than the grace of God, do not listen to them is what he's trying to get to.

And so, Paul's trying to get this issue settled once and for all. People are coming into Galatia, they're trying to preach works. He says, we need to get this taken care of. So, what does he do?

[7 : 36] He says, it's time to go up to Jerusalem and talk to the guys who were with Jesus, face to face, that knew Jesus. So, his first thing he wants to do, he wants to go and arrive at Jerusalem.

The apostles were there, they had trained with Jesus for three and a half years, they had been with him, they had talked with him, they had learned from him, and Paul had had minimal contact with them up to this point.

Remember, he talked about that in chapter one, the end of chapter one there. He's had very little, he got his training in Arabia and on the road to Damascus. He travels up and his destination as he travels in this particular case is Jerusalem.

Particularly, there's probably a council going on there that's talked about in Acts chapter 15. He says, I went up to them that were of reputation. He says that in verse two.

That would have included some Judaizers. That would include some of those because we'll find out later some of them went with him when he went up to Jerusalem. They were saying Paul doesn't have any reputation.

[8 : 43] He doesn't really know a whole lot. We know much more because we've been with you guys and so he goes up but he wants to talk to the apostles privately for part of it.

Acts chapter 15. This is where this whole council is taking place. Verse 12, it says, Then all of the multitude kept silence and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

He says he goes and he, they get a chance to speak. They get a chance to show, they're having some issues back there apparently.

Am I on? Okay. All right. So he goes and he's going to go to Jerusalem and they're going to talk and they're listening to what he has to say.

What did Paul have to say about what he had been doing? And he not only went up to talk to them, he took people with him. He took a delegation with him. That delegation included Barnabas and Titus.

[9 : 50] Barnabas was Paul's dear friend. You remember from a week or so ago, Paul was in Tarsus. That was his hometown. Barnabas went up to find him and get him and bring him back to the church at Antioch.

And they ministered together there at the church at Antioch. And then they went out on a first missionary journey together. So Barnabas knows Paul. He knows everything Paul has taught.

He knows what Paul has been teaching. He knows the things that Paul has faced from others who have given false doctrine. He also has with him Titus. Titus is a Gentile.

He is Paul's spiritual son. Paul led him to the Lord. Paul helped him to grow. He is a co-worker with Paul. And he goes to testify the fact that I'm a Gentile.

I haven't done any of these works. I am saved. I know Jesus Christ is my Savior. He goes as proof that you do not have to do all of these works and everything. And he goes up for his delivery the message that he has.

[10 : 57] He has a message to deliver. Notice in verse 2 he starts off by saying I went up by revelation. When he says by revelation it's not that God told him to go there. He went up to the word that's used there actually means to lay out.

To make naked. To what he went to do is to lay out everything that he had been teaching. He went to show them here's what I have been telling people. Here's what I have said on my missionary journeys.

You judge. Is this what God said? Is this what Jesus said or not? So he goes up by revelation he says to communicate with them. The gospel that Paul preached was the gospel of grace alone.

Nothing else. Only by his grace. So why is he going up to do this? Because there had been others coming in saying you have to have works.

So much so Acts chapter 15 verse 1 says this and certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren and said except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved.

[12 : 10] Oh. Unless you do these works you cannot be saved. Is it any difference today? Unless you speak in tongues you cannot be saved.

Unless you are baptized you cannot be saved. We hear the same things today. Paul says it's by grace alone. Only by God's grace.

Verse 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

So Paul and Barnabas teaching grace alone we're going to go up to Jerusalem. Some of these Judaizers said no you're going to have works with it. That's what we were taught. So they're going to go together to go to Jerusalem to get this thing taken care of.

And as I was pointing out Paul takes his assistant with him. He has an assistant in the ministry Titus. What's so special about Titus? Well I kind of alluded to it a little bit.

[13 : 18] Titus is actually a Latin name. It talks about him being Greek but the title of his name is actually Latin. Which probably points to the fact that he was a Roman citizen.

So here's a Roman citizen of a Greek background probably. He might have been from Troas or Corinth or one of those. Although the term Greek was also used many times as just a Gentile.

They used that term Greek meant Gentile. But anyways Titus Roman name, Greek background, goes up and he has not done any of the things that they say have to be done in order to be saved.

Matter of fact, Paul wrote Titus a book. You remember the book of Titus that's in our Bible? And in that book in chapter 1 verse 4 he says this, To Titus mine own son after the common faith, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus our Savior, from Jesus Christ our Savior.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders to every city as I have appointed thee.

[14 : 31] He trusts Titus enough with the salvation he has without all the works, that he leads them to help establish churches. He leads them to help set churches up and get them in the way that they should be going, to ordain elders and everything.

Titus, you're my guy here. Do the work. that I've taught you to do. Matter of fact, come the end of Paul's life, he still has Titus working.

He still has Titus doing things. 2 Timothy 4.10, For demons have forsaken me, having loved this present world. Some people had gone off, had gone back into the world.

But he says, and has departed unto Thessalonica, Crescent to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Titus was still doing the work of the ministry at the end of Paul's life.

He hadn't given up, he was still strong, he was still going. What was the belief of Titus? The belief of Titus. He makes special note of this.

[15 : 36] Look at verse 3, what he said in verse 3. But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

We did not make him follow the Jewish tradition. We did not make him follow the Jewish law. He's been helping, he's been doing the work, I have no doubt that he's saved, but he hasn't followed the Jewish traditions.

So here he is, a Gentile convert, he goes with them to be a testimony. This is what God can do. And a Gentile, who has not followed the law.

That's a strong message for Christians. Strong message for us. Do not worry about the law. Do not worry about this, this, and this. Do you know Jesus Christ and his grace to you?

It's interesting. Later on in Acts chapter 15, verse 10, now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

[16 : 52] Who's speaking there? If you go back and read through Acts chapter 15, that verse, that comment was made by Peter. Peter says, why would you put these laws and things on these people?

We couldn't keep them. Our fathers couldn't keep them. Remember later on in Paul's going to talk about the law being a schoolmaster to lead us to the fact that we need a Savior?

And Peter's greeting, Peter's saying, we couldn't do it, why would you put these laws on them? We couldn't keep it, that's why we need Jesus. And then, in verse 19 of Acts chapter 15, it says, wherefore my sentence is, stop right there for a second, who's talking here?

Well, again, you go back and read Acts chapter 15, you find out the speaker of this verse is James, the brother of Jesus, who is the head of the church at Jerusalem.

And this is what he says, wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble them not, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.

[18 : 00] We don't put any extra burdens on them, we don't try to get them to do anything else, they believe in Jesus Christ, they believe he died, he was buried, he rose again, he ascended back into heaven, that's it, that's all they need in order to be saved.

The grace of God that came and took away our sin by his death on the cross, that rose again and has victory over death and hell, he ascended back into heaven, making a home for us there in heaven, preparing a place for us.

You don't need to teach them anything else. Titus was a true Christian who did not need to prove anything by following the law.

Paul, if he had said, yeah, Titus, you probably do need to follow this, Paul would have been undermining his own message. Paul's message was a message of grace.

It's all about Jesus. It's God's redemption, God's riches, at Christ's expense. He says, you've done that, you've done everything you need.

[19 : 08] You don't need to do anything else. He says, that grace of God will bring the peace of God on your life.

Then Paul had answers for the Judaizers. He had answers, and the first one was the fact that their profession was false. Look at verse 4.

And that because of false brethren unawares brought in who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus that they might bring us under bondage.

He says, the Judaizers came and they claimed the grace of God was, yeah, we believe in that, but they're going to taint it by adding things. That's the same thing we do now.

Turn over to chapter 5 of Galatians. Right there. Chapter 5 of Galatians, look at verse 2. Chapter 5, verse 2 says, Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

[20 : 11] He says, it does not add a thing to the salvation that you have. Verse 3, For I testify again to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to the whole law.

If you're going to follow the law in this point, you have to follow the law in every point. And I finally looked it up. 613. 613 different laws.

If you're going to follow in here, you better be ready to follow all of them. And they know they couldn't do that. They couldn't keep up. Verse 4 of chapter 5, Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace.

He says if you're going to rely on the law, you have completely negated the grace of God. God's grace says there is no law required.

It is because of God and Jesus what they did, he says, took care of everything. You know, some believe that there were people coming in.

[21 : 21] You notice he said there in verse 4, that because of false brethren, this is back in chapter 2, sorry, back in chapter 2, he says that because of false brethren unawares brought in, some believe that the Pharisees had been planting people, trying to disrupt their churches, trying to get them off.

Don't know if that was true or not, but some believe that. The second thing he says is their perception was false. He says you're looking at things all wrong.

When you try to add work, you just don't get what grace is all about. He says their perception of grace plus law, he says it's going to bring bondage, not liberty.

By grace of God, we have liberty. We have freedom. He says the law only brings bondage. He says when you have liberty, you have liberty from the law, you have liberty from the penalty of sin.

Romans chapter 8 verse 2, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. He says it's made me free.

[22 : 36] I don't have to worry about any of these things anymore. And he says their presence should be forsaken. Their presence should be forsaken.

Look at verse 5. to whom we gave place by subjection. No, not for an hour that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

He said these people came in and they started teaching this works thing. He said and we started to consider whether they were right or not and he says nope, not for an hour. No time whatsoever that I ever think these guys might be right.

Not even for an hour. Paul had worked with weak Christians and does work with weak Christians and stuff. But people who were coming in and teaching things that were absolutely false he had no time for.

I can work with a weak Christian. He said I can help you. I can teach you. I can help you to learn. But if you're coming in and you're teaching things that are false he says you know what? No.

[23 : 37] I'm not going to do it. And that's hard because these were people who were coming in saying yes we're Christians just like you. Yes we're Christians we believe the same things you do. But they didn't.

And they were adding to the gospel. And he says no. Paul had the same situation in Thessalonica. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 3 verse 6 he says this.

Now we command you brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us.

He says they start teaching things other than the gospel that we told you. He says they're teaching the gospel just like he said back in chapter 1 here. Do not follow them.

So what happens? Paul accepts the responsibility of making sure that they do it right. They do it the way it should be done.

[24 : 38] Look at verses 6 and 7 but of these who seemed to be somewhat whatsoever they were and make it no matter to me God accepted no man's person for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me.

He's talking about the meetings he had with the Judaizers but contrary wise when they saw that the gospel of the circumcision was committed unto me as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.

Stop right there. He says I take full responsibility. I am teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles just like Peter's teaching to the Jews.

Peter's not going and saying you have to be Jews and do all these things. Most of them had done them because they were Jews but he's not saying you have to have those things and you have to add anything to it. He's taught the grace of God alone.

Nothing else. He says they added nothing to them. I don't need their approval. I have been called by God to be an apostle.

[25 : 47] I have been taught by God throughout the end of chapter one. He talks about everywhere he went and the things he was learning. I have been taught. He said they add nothing to me.

As a matter of fact in 2 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 11 he says and I became become a fool in glorying. You have compelled me for I ought to have been commended of you for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles though I be nothing.

He said I'm not anything special. But he says you know what I don't even come behind the very chiefest apostles. And that's what he's saying here in Galatians. I am as much of an apostle and I'm teaching what God wants me to teach and I'm teaching the exact truth of God's word as much as Peter is.

That's a pretty bold statement. Peter's an apostle. Peter's preaching the exact same gospel I am.

We are on the same level that we agree on what's taking place here. Paul took this very seriously. It was serious to him.

[27 : 05] Of the twelve apostles had not confirmed the importance of the gospel to Paul. He knew it.

He had learned it from Jesus himself. He says God taught me. God called me. I don't need anything else.

When you go out to do what God has for you to do, you don't have to be a pastor, you don't have to be a missionary, but God's called you to where you are.

Take the gospel with you. And wherever you are, do not doubt the calling God has on your life. Say, well, I'm a mechanic.

I work in a jail. I work on a lobster boat. I work, if that's where God has placed you, that's God's calling on your life. And he says, and you stand for me.

[28 : 07] And you stand for the grace of God where you are. Do not back down. Do not let go. He said, you stand for me. You be a witness.

You be a testimony where you are. And the interesting thing is, when Paul did go to this council in Jerusalem, he was supported by the brethren. Look at verse 9 again.

And when James, Cephas, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

He says, look, the three who had the closest walk, or at least two of them, had the closest walk with God, he said, they have said, you're doing it right.

You're teaching it right. You've got the right words, the right attitude, the right doctrine. And he says, so much so that those three gave us the right hands.

[29 : 20] Right hand of fellowship. Like I said, next week, we're going to have people we just voted in, we're going to give them the right hand of fellowship. What does that mean? Welcome.

We agree with you. Thank you for joining with us. We believe in what you believe. That's what is happening here. They're giving them the right hand of fellowship.

You know, in Colossians chapter 1, verse 29, whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Paul says, what's working in me? Jesus Christ is working in me. Jesus Christ is teaching me. The Holy Spirit is leading me. I am going to stand mightily for him because that he called me.

It's not this person called me or that person called me. God called me to this and I'm going to stand for him. So, what happens? Back to Acts chapter 15, verse 22.

[30 : 20] It says, Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely Judas surnamed Barthas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.

So, these important people, supposedly, are going to go with them back to Antioch, verse 23. And they wrote letters by them after this manner. The apostles and elders, brethren, send greetings unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.

For as much as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised and keep the law, to whom we gave no such commandment.

We never told them that. They came up with that on their own. How much stuff do we come up with on our own?

Instead of always going back to the word of God, what does the word of God say? What does the word of God say? What does the word of God say? We make things up on our own. You know, I was checking this week.

[31 : 49] You know, they say that there are about 10,000 different religions on earth today. A lot of them are regional things, you know, tribal things and things like that.

10,000. How much do we get involved and try to change God's word and what he has for us?

Come up with our own ideas. The only thing Paul says that they added, they told us to help the poor.

He said, I would do that anyway. That's what I want to do with this offering next week. Try to help the poor. Help those who are in dire straits. Help those who are going through things. You know, so what am I saying today?

The gospel is simple. We try to make it so hard sometimes. It's a simple thing. Jesus died for our sins.

[32 : 54] He was buried. Three days later he rose again. Then he went back to heaven where he makes intercession for us. And he's preparing a place for us and he will come back for us.

There's not really a lot difficult there to understand. Do you believe it though? Do you believe that Jesus Christ did this? He says, I went to those who had a reputation.

God said, I went to them and they said, stay the course. I went to them and they said, stay the course.

I went to them and they said, keep on preaching just what you're preaching. Jesus Christ by grace alone. If you're here this morning and you've never accepted Jesus Christ your Savior, come to him.

Let him change your life. And it's as simple as saying, I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins, that he rose again, and he's preparing a place for me.

[34 : 09] I'm giving myself over to him and trusting him. Paul, Titus, Barnabas, they remained faithful messengers of the grace of God throughout the rest of their lives.

Whenever they went, wherever they went, they took the gospel, the grace of God. As Christians here in this day and age, we need to do the same.

Take the gospel wherever we go. and let people see it. Let's pray. Father, thank you.