

I Am Crucified with Christ

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[0 : 00] chapter 2 this morning. All right, Galatians chapter 2.

And by the end of this chapter, Paul makes a notable statement in verse 20 that he is crucified with Christ.

I am crucified with Christ, he says. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

Now, this is an incredible verse. It's a famous verse, a popular statement to call others to give their lives to Jesus Christ and to give up on living for themselves and to turn everything over to surrender.

And I want to look at this statement that Paul makes, but first look at it and really provide some context for his statement. In this chapter, the Apostle Paul has a confrontation with the Apostle Peter.

[1 : 18] And it kind of shows up in verse 11 when he says, when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face. Why? Because he was to be blamed.

Now, we don't hear too much of that kind of stuff where apostles are going after other apostles and rebuking them in the word of God or in the truth. But here's the case. Paul says he was to be blamed.

There's something that he's doing wrong. And he has this confrontation, and we'll maybe peek out a little bit later the specifics of it, but it leads him through some discourse into verse number 16, kind of contrasting being justified by the works of the law versus being justified by faith.

Notice verse 16. He says, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. Even we have believed in, or even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law.

For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Now, as Paul goes, and I'm going to continue and come back and kind of pick a few pieces up later, he gets into verse number 19, and he says, for I, through the law, am dead to the law that I might live unto God.

[2 : 34] I am crucified with Christ. I am dead. I, through the law, am dead to the law. Why are you dead to the law, Paul? He says, verse 19, that I might live unto God.

In other words, the only way that he could be alive unto God was if he first died to the law. As long as he sought life in the law, he would never find life in God.

He'd be dead to God. As he writes later in Ephesians, that you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. So in order for Paul to find that life in God, he had to first die to the law.

Now keep your place here and turn over about two short books to the right to Philippians chapter 3. Philippians chapter 3, just providing some context for what Paul is saying when he says he's crucified with Christ.

Philippians chapter 3, And then in this epistle, he gives a testimony of the life he lived for the Lord, so he thought, although it was a misguided religion that he was performing.

- [3 : 45] Verse number 7 through 9, Paul says, But what things were gained to me, which is his heritage, his religion, all of his works, all that he's done, all that he's been trained to be, what things were gained to me, those I counted loss for Christ, yea, doubtless.
- I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.
- So the law, he brings it up again, the law, what he was trained in, what he was devoted to, had to go.
- He had to drop it. He said he counts it but dung. That's a pretty low opinion of something that, for the majority of his life, was held in very high opinion.
- It had to go. And if it didn't go, he wouldn't be able, as he says, to win Christ and be found in him. Otherwise, he'd only have his own righteousness. It was one or the other.
- [5 : 03] It was the law or it was Jesus Christ. And he made the choice to take Jesus Christ, the only one that could give him life. And to get that life, he said in Galatians, verse 19, for though I am, through the law, I am dead to the law that I might live unto God.
- Now come back to Galatians chapter 2 and let's look at verse 20 again, where Paul makes this statement, this short but powerful statement, I am crucified with Christ.
- What this is, is Paul's way of declaring that he is indeed dead to the law. He has forsaken it as a means of earning righteousness, of earning favor with a holy God.
- Up to this point, that was the only thing he had that was earning him favor, so he thought. And when he saw Jesus Christ and realized, I'm on the wrong road here, I'm doing this all wrong, he dumped the law and he took Jesus Christ and when he says, I'm crucified with Christ, it's his way of saying, I'm dead to the law.
- The law, the customs, the upbringing that he had, the feasts, the sabbaths, the rituals, the wardrobe, the separation, all of it.
- [6 : 23] All the offerings, it was all destroyed. Look at verse number 18 of that chapter, Galatians 2 verse 18. He says, for if I build again the things which I destroyed, talking about that life, that law.
- And that's something Peter was guilty of, was he hasn't dumped it all. He was trying to, in a certain time there, you know, show himself like he was still a keeper, you know, in so many words.
- And Paul's like, if I build again the things which I destroyed, I counted them but dung, I make myself a transgressor. And God forbid. And so he says, I'm dead to the law.
- I'm dead to something I spent my entire life working toward. And I dropped it. In Romans chapter 10 and verse 4, the apostle Paul says, Christ is the end of the law for everyone that believeth, or for righteousness to everyone that believeth.
- And so he took Jesus Christ and said, that's the end of the law. Now, you may not have been brought up Jewish. Maybe you have. A few of you. But you may not have the same story that the apostle Paul had in the law and its customs and observances and keeping that and trusting that and believing this is how I get to God.
- [7 : 38] This is what I do. You may not have followed that. But Paul's story is to serve us as an example. And I'll just read this verse to you quickly here in 1 Timothy.
- If you're fast, you can catch it. But in 1 Timothy chapter 1, Paul says this, this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Paul said, this is why Christ picked me and saved me because he wanted to display a pattern for everybody else to see and to follow. What's the pattern? The pattern is him repenting of the law, turning from what he had, I mean he was way, way, way up in that system and dropping the entire thing and taking Jesus Christ alone.

And when Paul says I'm crucified with Christ, that's what he's doing. In 1 Timothy 1, he's a pattern. So maybe your story doesn't match Paul in the Jewish faith, but Paul can still be the pattern for you to follow.

[8 : 53] Maybe you've been raised Catholic or Mormon or Seventh-day Adventist or any faith that adds to the gospel of Jesus Christ and actually in a sense perverts what the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly alone.

You may have been raised in one of those. or maybe you may have been raised Muslim or atheist or agnostic or any belief that completely undermines the gospel of Jesus Christ and says we don't need anything to do with Jesus Christ.

Either way, you need to die so that you can live. You need to be dead to that religion so that you can live in Jesus Christ.

And this morning I want to analyze this phrase I am crucified with Christ and try to draw some thoughts out of it. I'm not pointing that this is salvation. I'm saying maybe this is the next important step after receiving Christ by faith as your Savior.

The next important step is to be crucified with Christ. Let's pray. Father, this is your book. These are your words. Please help me now to say only that which is true.

[10 : 02] I pray that the Spirit of God would come into this place and move among our midst and our hearts and minds and just enlighten us to what's real and to what you want from us.

Lord, I pray that each person in here would be captivated by the Word of God and by the message and that your Spirit would do the work. Please help me to preach. Help us not to be distracted and may Jesus Christ be glorified through this we ask in his name.

Amen. Amen. The first word is I. I am crucified with Christ. I is an individual. In this chapter, earlier, Paul speaks to Peter and he uses the word we.

And notice this in verse number 15. We, who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, he's talking to Peter because Peter was to be blamed as he said earlier.

What's happening here is when he shows up, Peter withdrew himself. Look at verse 12. For before that, certain came in from James. These are Hebrews coming up there to Antioch.

[11 : 06] And Peter, it says he did eat with the Gentiles. But when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself because that's the tip, that's the way he was trained and raised.

And when the Jews showed up, oh boy, I can't let them see me mingling and teaching and talking to Gentiles, eating with Gentiles. That's a no-no. We don't do that as Jews. And why did he do that?

It says in verse 12, fearing them, which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him. So there was a mingling going on, which was fine because you know your Bible?

In that book of Acts, there's a transition going on. And Peter even got a taste of that with Cornelius. And that's a whole other study there from Acts 10. But the Lord is changing some things.

And so not just is Peter in the wrong, but he's causing others to be led astray and to go back to their roots of separating from Gentiles as if they're still unclean, which they weren't.

[12 : 03] God hath cleansed them, he said. And in verse 13, the other Jews dissembled likewise with him in so much that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. And so Paul shows up and says, hey, what are you doing?

This isn't the way, this isn't God's intention anymore. You can't live one way around them and then, oh, they showed up. Now I've got to separate and live a different lifestyle for them. He said, you're wrong, Peter. And so as he explains it in verse 15, we who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ.

Even we, Paul, Peter, two of us together, we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ. And then he says in verse number 17, but if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ a minister of sin?

God forbid. Now he's telling them, if I build again the things I destroyed, if I go back to the law and to the observances of the Hebrews and start to live that lifestyle after taking Christ as my Savior, I make myself a transgressor.

I'm not living according to truth in verse number 14. It says, when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel. So what did Paul do?

[13 : 20] Then he says, I, after speaking Peter, me and you, we, if we do this, we do that, but he says, I am crucified with Christ. I is an individual.

So he speaks of we when he's discussing things with Peter, but when it comes to his decision to be dead to the law, which Peter apparently hadn't 100% been, not saying he's lost, but you understand there's a next step and Peter hadn't quite taken it completely.

Paul says, I, because it's an individual choice. It cannot be made by a family or by a group or a committee or a union and there's no spouse and there's no parent and there's no pastor and there's no person on the face of the earth that can make the choice for you to be crucified with Christ.

To take your upbringing, to take your culture, to take your family's traditions and to lay them down at the cross of Jesus Christ, never to pick them up again, but to be crucified with Christ and only one person can decide that for you.

You. I as an individual. Paul knew what it was like to sense opposition. You better understand he had fear and he had doubt and plenty of reasons to ignore the call to be crucified with Christ.

[14 : 41] Consider his choice. In the book of Acts, Paul identifies himself as a Pharisee. His upbringing says, I was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. You think his dad was too pleased with him when he heard that he was preaching Christ?

That he's abandoning and he's meeting with Gentiles and he's going to the Gentile cities to preach Christ? How do you think his dad felt about that? The Pharisee that his dad was.

But Paul had a choice and you know what? He made it. And it displeased his father and mother and he made it anyway because he wanted Jesus Christ. He had a teacher named Gamaliel.

He was called in the book of Acts a doctor of the law. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. He was personally trained and tutored in the laws and customs of the Jews more so than just some good Hebrew boy.

But no, he was hand-picked and he was going somewhere fast as a young man. Don't you think Gamaliel was disappointed that his student saw that his student would just abandon all of his training, all of his years of study and walk away from all of that?

[15 : 55] Don't you think he was disappointed all those years of discipleship? And in the moment, realize and remember this from the book of Acts, the Christians didn't, they weren't witnessing to him. They weren't glad to see him coming over.

They were afraid of him. Nobody was jumping on his bandwagon initially. He was all alone. And when he did, his own countrymen sought to kill him. I am an individual.

And Paul knew what it was to have this opposition from family, from friends, and even from, at that time, foes. But he made the choice anyway.

Paul met Jesus Christ and he understood he was on the wrong road. And when he met Jesus Christ, he realized he was actually against God, that he himself was deceived all of these years and on a religious road that was going to end him in the flames of hell.

And so the apostle Paul took Jesus Christ. I wonder if you've ever found yourself there on that road. Have you ever found yourself to where you had to make a decision, be faced with the damnation of hell, or keep living the way that you're living, and make a decision?

[17 : 06] Do I take the gospel of Jesus Christ that he loved me and gave himself for me, that he paid for my sins? Or I'll just keep on this road that my family's on and keep on this road that I've been trained and brought up in, that we've always done all of our lives.

And if I leave this, that road, then that means I'm telling my grandmother that she's not okay. And I'm telling my family that my grandfather that passed away, that he's in hell, if I believe it.

You ever found yourself in that fork in the road where you're going to drop religion and take Christ? And when dropping religion might mean upsetting your family and having your friends go against you now?

Paul was there. For some, the decision absolutely involves abandoning your upbringing. Not everybody was raised in a church that preaches the gospel.

And for those that haven't been raised around it, they had to make a choice. I'll take Jesus Christ and I'll abandon everything I was taught. That's something Paul did.

[18 : 14] He took Christ. Now to be crucified with Christ, Paul's not just taking Christ as a savior. Understand he is being dead to what he was trained in and raised in.

He didn't go back to it. He didn't say, I'll take eternal life and then keep everybody happy. And that's what being crucified with Christ is. Now first of all, it's an individual and you are that individual.

And I wonder if you've made that choice yet to be crucified with Christ. Number two, in the verse 20, it says, I am crucified with Christ. Am is a state of being. You say, I am hungry.

I am happy. I am dead to the law. I am crucified with Christ. It's a present tense. It's right here, today, right now, right where I'm standing, right where you're sitting.

I am crucified with Christ in this very moment and in this very place. Paul doesn't say, I was, but rather, I am.

[19 : 17] And I am just as much today as the day that I counted my religion as dung, that I may take Christ. Understand that Paul didn't take Christ and his gift of eternal life and then go back to what he knew.

He rebuked Peter for doing that. But rather, Paul took Jesus Christ and said, I am dead to the law and I am crucified with Christ.

He told Peter that he destroyed that way of life and suffered the loss of all that life. And as I mentioned earlier, it truly was a loss with family and friends and everything.

He lost his position, his job, so to speak. He gave it up. He didn't get to hang on to too much of that life, did he? It's hard to understand when somebody claims to be saved and I'm not here to make anybody doubt their salvation.

I don't ever want to make you doubt something if you've trusted Christ. But it is hard to understand why somebody would claim Christ, take Christ, name the name of Christ for salvation and yet observe what Hebrews 6 calls dead works and go back to a dead system and live in it and be part of it and partake in it.

[20 : 37] A religion of dead works. We're told to repent of those dead works, to leave them like the Apostle Paul is our example or pattern. People that were Catholic and raised in a Catholic church get saved and then they go back to taking Mass and they go back to confessing their sins to the priest and when they're dying they're calling for the priest to come and give them last rites.

Some would say well they weren't really saved while others would say well they never grew and have an understanding and maybe I don't know which one's true but I can say this they're not crucified with Christ.

They might be saved. They might have taken salvation but they went right back to that dead system and I don't understand that. For Paul and for you and I it's the present tense I am.

Right here right now today I'm crucified with Christ. I'm dead to the law. I'm dead to any religion. My mom and dad were saved out of a Catholic family.

Both of them separately saved out of Catholic staunch. They were real deal. Very regular not just professing. They were very regular attenders at Mass and the whole thing.

[21 : 47] That's all they knew. And my mom got saved. I don't know the timing of it all but in some time I think she got saved first and broke up with her boyfriend and then he got saved and they ended up getting back together.

And when they did they started witnessing to their mom and dad. Their families their brothers and sisters started telling them that Christ saves not the church. And started showing them from the Bible trying to and it just just like Paul.

It just started dividing. started putting a wedge in between them. And for years they just didn't have a good relationship with their family not because they were rebels but because they were passionately desirous to see them understand and turn and receive Jesus Christ.

And they didn't want nothing to do with it. And so it took a long time until they even were able to have real fellowship as a family again in those ways. And in time certain of those family members trusted Jesus Christ and they're not all lost to the glory of God.

Because they had to be crucified with Christ. They would have looked like just some confused fools. Just some dumb deceived children to talk Jesus Christ but then to go back to that old religion.

[23 : 03] And so they left it. And they're glad they did. I am crucified with Christ. The third thing I want you to see is the word crucified. Crucified is a death.

It's a state of being dead. I am crucified. It's the present tense. Crucified or being dead to what? Well we read it in verse 19 for I through the law am dead to the law.

So for Paul it was the law or the Jews religion. For you it's probably something else. It's probably not the law. And there's a real irony in this because it takes death to bring life.

As he says I'm crucified with Christ nevertheless I live. But I can't live unto God unless I'm dead to the law. And there's a Christian irony to be realized there.

Death isn't the end but rather the beginning of something new and something better and of eternal life. For Paul I wanted to point out two things quickly.

[24 : 04] Being crucified brings life. He said it in verse 20 I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live. Yet not I but Christ liveth in me.

Before his salvation there's no Christ living in him. It's just him doing the dead works trying to obtain favor with God. Being crucified though brings life.

It might sound odd at first but if we spent the time this morning to study the word of God it'll inform us it'll teach us something that we really wouldn't perceive or understand or even consider ourselves that when you trust Jesus Christ that he by his spirit comes to indwell your body in a new creature and he forms in you a new creature called the new man and in the Bible he's called the spirit.

Something that was never there never existed but now Christ liveth in me Paul says and in that relationship now you can experience and walk and grow and have a relationship with an eternal God that before you were just dead in your sins and it takes crucifixion to bring life.

Being crucified brings liberty. Look at chapter 5 and let this tie into the theme here this morning Galatians really it's a good portion of the end of chapter 4 where he's using some analogy here but in chapter 5 he says this in verse 1 stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage and that bondage is the Jews religion for Paul and there's people coming in attempting to pull them back into what Peter was guilty of into the Jews religion and more so than just separating themselves like Peter but in he deals with that in this book a good bit but it brings liberty stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free being crucified it's a death that brings life it's a death that brings liberty being freed from religion what he calls bondage and being freed from sin now consider this consider this what a blessing to be freed from a religious bondage if you've never grown up in it you don't know what I'm talking about you don't it doesn't relate you can say yeah I get it you know head knowledge but you don't have the heart knowledge of this the experience of this what it is like to be liberated from a religious system that Paul calls bondage for Paul it was being released from the deeds of the law for an African in the wherever in all those countries in Africa it can be released from the fear of the witch doctor and the curses and the spells and the spirits of the ancestors that they live in fear of and in bondage of all their lives for the Asian that can be freed from the the the life of meditation and discipline in order to gain favor with God and be able to commune and touch him for those that were idolaters it's being free to worship God in spirit and in truth the true God it's real real freedom it's a release from bondage and from confusion and from fear that's all religion can really do it can't promise you anything and being freed from or being crucified is brings liberty it also brings liberty from religion as well as sin in Romans 6 it says they that are dead are freed from sin you're freed to walk in newness of life free to abide in Christ and to yield the fruit of the spirit that never existed before so being crucified it's a death then fourth and finally in the verse it says

[28 : 07] I'm crucified with Christ with Christ is an identity it's an association remember Peter was distancing himself from Gentiles he was associating only with Jews at that time and Paul says hey Peter those days are over you know who I'm associating with now one person the Lord Jesus Christ and if you're in with him I'm in with you and the body of Christ is being formed and growing look at chapter 3 of Galatians and look at verse that's the wrong verse how about verse 28 speaking of the body of Christ he says there is neither Jew nor Greek there's neither bond nor free there's neither male nor female for ye are all one in Christ Jesus being with Christ being crucified with Christ is an identity it's an identity

Paul's death to the law wasn't him just saying oh I give up I can't do it anymore or nobody else cares why should I care but no he's identifying with the very one person that kept the law that fulfilled the law that sacrificed himself to abolish the law and that ultimately freed Paul from the law being crucified with Christ is an identity and it's one that some people sadly they're ashamed to make public they're ashamed for people to know that they've been crucified with Christ some people's families would not accept them their friends might mock them and they may suffer the loss of some things Paul said I suffer the loss of all things not worried about it at all because I want to be associated and identified with the son of God being crucified with Christ is an identity Paul now identifies himself with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ consider Christ gave his life on a cross so Paul says I too will die to self and to ambition and to pride

Christ Christ was stripped of his robe and of his dignity so Paul says I too will be humbled and will publicly be embarrassed if necessary for Jesus Christ Christ was mocked Christ was ridiculed and Paul says I'll take whatever reproach comes my way for the gospel of Jesus Christ Christ was alone Christ was forsaken and Paul said I'll ask for nothing more for to me to live is Christ I am crucified with Christ this morning are you crucified with Christ no not were you are you crucified with Christ right now right here in this building could you stand and testify to the crowd and to the world I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live not I but Christ Christ Christ liveth in me are you crucified with Christ you know what that looks like or are you going to be honest and say no probably not then why not what are you holding on to what are you trying to keep that's better than being 100% wide open for Jesus Christ what are you holding on to that you're going to regret when you stand in front of him why aren't you crucified with Christ what's keeping you from that

I bet you I know what it is if it's true it's probably fear in one form or another whether it's it could be a different object of your fear but it's fear that's why you're not you're afraid of somebody you're afraid of something you're it's fear why you would be crucified with Christ what happened with Peter in verse 12 fearing them which were of the circumcision and Paul says hey we this this and that but I am crucified with Christ you're not Peter so what's keeping you probably the same thing it was keeping Peter was his fear well Christian you have nothing to fear there's only life there's only liberty to gain it's liberating to get out from that cloud and to walk away from that religion and to walk away from that fear and it might hurt and there might be the loss of some things but it's worth it to do it for Jesus

Christ if you're struggling with surrendering your life to Christ or you're you're walking with him openly and unashamed either way I want to encourage you to get in this church here and to stay in this church here and to get in here every time the doors are open and to get as much as you possibly can every time you possibly can and you know for some of you that might be afraid of your family thinking something about you you don't have to confront them you just start showing up to church all the time and they'll notice it they'll get it they'll say something's important there's a priority now in their life and the time will reveal it's Jesus Christ the fear that you'll have to make some big blow up not necessarily the case but just start doing what's right and do it openly I think your attendance even just a church attendance will speak when your mouth is afraid to and those you may fear will notice now finally to close what Paul says I am crucified with

[33 : 59] Christ to close it's a it's an individual and it's you I can't do it for you there's nobody in this room that can do it for you it's you it's a state of being I am not was but I am right now crucified is a death and finally it's Christ that association that identity I hope you're not ashamed of him I hope you're not ashamed of what he did for you and ashamed to be identified with him in the eyes of certain people in your life because if you are you're not crucified with him I didn't say you're not saved but you're not crucified you're not crucified with him now finally when we close here in a moment here I want to just put this forth to the world if anybody struggles with stuff like this or they struggle with relationships or with their upbringing with the way they were trained and don't want to they want to win their lost relatives

I'd love to just sit down and talk it out with you if you have a burden on your heart about these things I may not have the answer but I'd like to try to go to the Bible with you and talk it out and help you to get over that hurdle to where you can say it today with both hands up I am crucified with Christ and mean it and know it and sense that liberty instead of that fear and if you ever need to talk or just need somebody to pray with you I'd love to meet with you and help you to take this important step let's bow our heads together and look at him to go next door to