



After looking at the gospel through the lens of grace, today let's look at the background on a verse that is often quoted (and one of my personal favorites): ***I have been crucified with Christ; and 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 up for me.*** ([Galatians 2:20](#))

While this verse can stand alone as a statement of faith, in what context did Paul write it? As with many of Paul's epistles, they contain a great deal of correction to defective understandings and false teachings. Early in chapter 2, Paul bluntly opposed a false and deceptive teaching that Gentile believers needed to be circumcised to be saved. Even the apostle Peter was beginning to be affected by this teaching, which said that people still needed to keep at least part of the Mosaic law to be saved.

Paul combatted this teaching and boldly proclaimed that our salvation is through faith by God's grace.

"We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. ([Gal 2:15-16](#))

Notice the latter part of verse 16... no one, neither the Jews (by ancestry to Abraham), or Gentiles ("sinners") can be justified by keeping the law. The Mosaic law was never intended to be a means to salvation, but always pointed to sinful man's inability to keep it and the necessity for a perfect, sinless Savior to make us righteous before the Father.

This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ([Gal 3:2-3](#))

Paul tells the church in Galatia to stop trying to maintain their salvation through circumcision, a requirement of the Mosaic law. If our justification began by the work of the Holy Spirit, through faith in Christ, then are we to maintain it by keeping the law or works of the flesh?

Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." ([Gal 3:11](#), quoting [Hab 2:4](#))

Again, we see that Paul confidently declares we are justified by faith, not by works ([Eph 2:8-9](#)). And this is a magnificent proclamation because, even if we try, we cannot keep the entire law as it was prescribed – it is impossible. In fact, Paul makes the point that attempting to earn or maintain salvation through anything other than faith by grace robs Christ of glory: ***I do not***



nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.” [Gal 2:21](#).

Did you notice this statement immediately follows our oft-quoted verse above ([Gal 2:20](#))? So, to be crucified with Christ and have Him live in us means we must put our full trust in God’s ability to save us by grace through faith.

I hope you can see what a beautiful and priceless freedom we have obtained through Christ! By His sacrifice, we are liberated from the chains of the law, and our salvation rests solely on His mighty ability to save us. And as we know, nothing can separate us from the love He has for us (cf. [Romans 8:38](#)).