

I. Introduction.

II. We are done with the law as a way of pursuing justification. v. 17-18

A. Christ does not promote sin. v. 17

1. Because we (Peter and Paul) have abandoned seeking to be justified by law keeping, we acknowledge that we are no better than Gentile “sinners”. v. 15
2. From the perspective of the Judiazers, this would make Christ a minister who promotes sin.
3. May it never be! 3:21 Rom. 3:4,6,31 6:2,15 7:3 11:1
4. The Judaizers fail to realize that Christ has ushered in a new redemptive era which has made the old way of the law obsolete. Hebrews 8:13 Eph. 2:11
5. These Jews also misunderstand the purpose of the law. Ps. 143:2 Rom. 10:1-4
 - a. No-one has ever been (or ever will be) justified by keeping the law. 2:16 3:11
 - b. The fault is not with the law, but with us! Rom. 3:10ff 7:12-14
 - c. The law was never intended to justify anyone, but rather it reveals that we cannot justify ourselves. 3:19
 - d. The law shows us our need for God’s grace which justifies us through faith in Christ Who takes away the curse of the law. 3:23-24,6-7,13
6. Do people today accuse Jesus of promoting sin? Rom. 6:1ff

B. The real transgression would be to rebuild that (the law) which has been destroyed (abolished) and replaced. v. 18

1. This is what, in effect, Peter was guilty of when he went back to separating himself from the Gentiles because of Jewish food regulations. 2:12 Acts 10:28
2. To return to the law now that the new age of salvation in Christ has arrived would truly be sinful. 1:14 Luke 5:36-39 Heb. 6:4-6 Phil. 3:2-11
3. How can this be reconciled to Jesus’ statement that He did not come to abolish the law? Mt. 5:17
 - a. Jesus fulfilled the law by perfectly keeping it and by paying the penalty (curse) the law demands for our law breaking. 3:10,13 Rom. 3:31
 - b. The ceremonies of the law which were fulfilled in Jesus’ High Priestly sacrifice have been abolished forever. Hebrews 7-10 Luke 21:4-6
 - c. The (always) false belief that one can justify himself by law keeping has also been destroyed. Phil. 3:2-11 Rom. 10:1-4 Luke 10:25-29
4. How do people today try to rebuild that which has been destroyed? Eph. 2:14-17 Mt. 24:2 Heb. 7:26-27 9:28 1 Pet. 2:5-9 Eph. 2:19-22 1 Co. 5:7

C. We are dead to the law and alive to God. v. 19

1. What does it mean to have died to the law? Rom. 7:1-4
2. You died to the law (as a means of justifying yourself) so that you might live unto God (being justified through union with Christ).

III. Having finished with the law, we are now united by faith to Christ. v. 20

A. Do you understand what it means to be united with Christ?

1. This is probably the most famous verse in Galatians, but it is often not well understood in its context. It is not primarily about our efforts to live for God.
2. God attaches us to the events of Christ’s life. His story becomes our story.
3. The death and life described in v. 19 takes place through our union with Christ.

- B. Your death to the law occurs through your union with the Son of God in His death. v. 20a Rom. 6:6**
1. In spite of our unworthiness as those justly under condemnation of the law, Jesus loved us. 3:10 Rom. 5:8 1 Jo. 4:10 John 15:13 Eph. 5:2,25
 2. The law's demand that our sin be punished was fully satisfied when Christ gave Himself up for us, dying as our substitute. 4:4-5 3:13 2 Co. 5:21 1 Pe. 3:18
 3. Because we are united to Christ in His death, the law no longer has any claim on us. Rom. 6:10-11 7:1-4
 4. Jesus has set us free! Rom. 6:6,18
 5. Because we have died in relation to the law, it would be preposterous to put ourselves under the law again.
- C. You are now alive in union with the risen life of Christ. v. 20b v. 20b Rom 6:4-7 7:4**
1. In what sense do I no longer live? 6:14 Rom. 6:6
 2. Christ now lives in me (in my present bodily existence). 4:6 5:16ff Ro. 6:5,11 Phil. 1:21 2 Cor. 5:17
 3. We have been set free from slavery to sin so that we can be servants of righteousness bearing fruit to the glory of God. Rom. 6:4-7,16-18 7:4
 4. Grace does what the law alone could never do. It transforms us! John 14:23 Rom. 6:2ff 8:3
 5. Paul is not an antinomian – against all laws. 5:13-14,24 Ro. 6:12-14 7:7
 - a. What he is against is seeking to justify oneself by law keeping.
 - b. Those who are united with Christ have been given spiritual life which enables them to obey God.
- D. You enter into (and continue in) union with Christ by faith (alone). v. 20b**

IV. Conclusion – If we could be made righteous by the law, then Christ died in vain. v. 21

- A. This verse summarizes Paul's argument (against Peter and the Judaizers). v. 14-21**
1. The Judaizers seek to supplement the work of Christ by their own merit (obedience to the law) in order to be justified.
 2. If justification is even in the slightest measure through human merit, then Christ died in vain.
 3. You cannot combine human merit and God's grace because works nullify grace -- Christ will do everything or He does nothing. Rom. 11:6
 4. Christ did not die in vain! His death alone accomplishes salvation for all who trust in Him.
- B. People today still seek to add their law-works to the work of Christ.**

Discussion questions

1. Who would say that Christ promotes sin and why would they say this? v. 17
2. Why would it be a transgression to try to rebuild the law? v. 18
3. In what sense have you died to the law? v. 19
4. What does it mean to live to God? v. 19
5. How does your union with Christ transform you? v. 20
6. Why would Christ's death be needless if we could be justified by law? v. 21
7. In what personal circumstances do you find that the gospel is under attack?
8. How can you compassionately express the gospel of grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone to those who are still trusting in their works?
9. What temptations might prevent you from presenting and defending the gospel?
10. How does the gospel help you in your daily struggle against sin?