

Yet Not I, But Christ

(Gal. 2:20)

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Note: The text below was prepared for oral delivery rather than for publication in print. As such, be aware that sentence fragments are intentionally used and that this document has not been edited to correct the errors in grammar, sentence structure, etc.

I. Introduction / Background

A. Mention previous sermon, verses 16-21, titled "Through the Law, Dead to the Law."

B. Verse 20 is quoted often, a verse of intrigue given seeming paradoxes upon a first or casual reading

II. For Context, Consider Verse 19:

A. Begin 1 verse earlier to see context. Read vs. 19

B. Dead to the law (2 aspects to consider; however in either case, it is true that one is dead to the law solely through the law being satisfied):

1. Slain by the law (Rom 5) is In his experience he has been brought to see extent of law & it killed his natural notions of going about to establish a righteousness of His own. Yet this revelation to Him as we will see in vs. 20 is still "through the law"

2. He was dead to the law because there was nothing remaining to be fulfilled is it had been perfectly satisfied at Calvary by His Substitute and Representative.

III. Verse 20: (read)

A. Note the seeming paradoxes in the very 1st section of this verse. Crucified is "Nevertheless, I live is Yet not I, but Christ" (Basis of the title today).

B. I believe in this simple phrase, "Yet not I, but Christ..." when rightly understood in its context here, we get a beautiful picture of the essence of God's Gospel of grace in contrast to any and all other false ways (Grace vs. works)

C. What does it mean to be "Crucified with Christ"?

1. Well the immediate context tells us much. Look at verse 19 is to be crucified with Christ is to be "dead to the law" is "through the law" is through Christ's death on the cross and the satisfaction that death made to the very justice of God.

2. When He died, I died; when He was buried, I was buried; when He arose, I arose.

D. "Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ" is

1. He is speaking of the spiritual life that he now lives is the "living unto God" mentioned in vs. 19.

2. See Rom 6:3-9 and comment.

3. "Yet not I, but Christ" is He is saying that he now lives spiritually, and it is not the same "I" as before, ("yet not I") the one who was in the flesh, walking after the flesh, who went about trying to establish a righteousness of his own, seeking to be saved, more saved and more fit for heaven by deeds of the law.

4. Christ lives in and indwells him by His Spirit and by His Word. “Yet not I” reflects the truth that even our walk of faith (spiritual life being applied to us personally in the new birth by the Holy Spirit) is the result of our oneness with Christ and what He alone merits for His people as their Representative and Substitute.
5. Paul also realized that on the cross, a “great exchange” occurred. His old life under the law, including the sin of trying to be saved by his works, was crucified on the cross.
6. Paul does not own his own life. That life died so that life wherein he naturally assumed himself to be in control of his own destiny by doing his part, (if he would just believe, etc.) so it died.

E. And the life which I live in the flesh

1. The literal translation of that phrase is “...in faith I live, that of the Son of God, who loved me ...” So we see that true faith is God-given, from God and not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph 2:8-9).
2. The motivation for the walk by faith is seen in the description of our Savior as the one “...who loved me and gave Himself for me.”
3. See Romans 6:7-15 to see this motivation. “...as those that are <already> alive from the dead.”

IV. Verse 21: And so, as we saw in the previous message, in verse 21 Paul concludes, (read vs. 21) “I frustrate” means to set aside, displace, or make void (the grace of God).

V. Summary:

I hope you’ve seen even more clearly today that every aspect of a sinner’s salvation is by grace, Christ having completely and exclusively finished all that was necessary to save God’s people. And we see that is so from start to finish if we understand aright, (and within its context), this simple phrase found in verse 20, “...Yet Not I, but Christ.”

In closing, listen again to how God puts it in verse 20 as I read it with the literal Greek translation inserted for the last part of the verse. It reads: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh ... <in faith I live, so that I > of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Yet not I, but Christ!

Footnote from the author: While this sermon was prepared and delivered by me, I often utilize the commentaries, study helps, and teachings of others to supplement my own prayerful study of the scriptures. Since this document was not originally prepared for publication in print, please excuse and recognize that it was unfeasible to properly identify and credit all of the various original sources used to develop the content herein. Ultimately, it is my sincere and foremost objective to accurately present the gospel of God’s grace found in the only infallible source, God’s word itself so the Bible.