

Galatians 2

- In the opening chapter of Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia, he began a defense against attacks leveled by false teachers
 - Paul's teaching of the Gospel differed dramatically from these false teachers
 - Paul taught a Gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone
 - The false teachers taught a false gospel of salvation by the works of the Law
 - So for the Christians in Galatia, the issue came down to a question of credibility
 - Specifically, who should they believe? Who truly spoke for God? Paul or the false teachers?
 - While Paul had been with the Galatians, he gave his testimony and demonstrated his power as an apostle
 - But now that he was gone and living in Ephesus, false teachers took advantage of his absence to disturb and confuse the Galatians
 - Specifically, the false teachers cited Paul's sudden appearance on the scene as an apostle years after Jesus' death and resurrection
 - They pointed to his prior life as a persecutor of the church
 - And by these things, they attempted to discredit Paul's authority and teaching, suggesting he was not a true apostle
 - Naturally, before Paul can defend the proper view of the Gospel, he needed to remind the church of his authority as an apostle
 - In Chapter 1 Paul recounted how he came to faith and to his office as an apostle
 - He emphasized that he was not a product of men or even of the other apostles
 - Most importantly, Paul's knowledge of scripture and his understanding of the mysteries of God came to him without the agency of men but by Christ directly

- So as we leave Chapter 1 and enter Chapter 2, Paul is still in the process of defending his authority, but his focus is shifting
 - While in Chapter 1 Paul defended the source of his apostolic office and knowledge, now Paul defends his message
 - The central disagreement with the false teachers was over the question of Jewish prominence in God's plan of salvation
 - Paul called himself the apostle to the Gentiles, the man called to bring the Gospel to the world outside Israel
 - Paul himself acknowledged the Gospel must go to Jews first before the Lord moved the message outward to the nations
 - But the Judaizers went a step too far in holding that God only saves Jews, and therefore Paul's message of salvation for the Gentiles was a lie
 - So Paul uses this chapter to defend his version of the Gospel – which was that God was at work saving Gentiles now
 - Furthermore, Paul defends that this Gospel didn't require that Gentiles live like Jews to receive God's mercy
 - On the contrary, the Jewish lifestyle saved no one in the first place – not even a Jew
 - And to demonstrate that his Gospel was the true Gospel, Paul points to his interactions with the foremost Jewish apostles in the church: James, Peter and John
 - If these men approved and agreed with Paul's version of the Gospel, then surely Paul's Gospel was the true Gospel

Gal. 2:1 Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.

Gal. 2:2 It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.

Gal. 2:3 But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

Gal. 2:4 But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.

Gal. 2:5 But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

- Fourteen years passed between Paul's first visit to Jerusalem to see the apostles and his second visit
 - This is a remarkably long time between visits, especially for a Jew like Paul
 - That interval all by itself says something about Paul's attitude of believers keeping the Jewish law
 - Every Jewish male was expected to make the trip to worship in Jerusalem on at least three occasions each year
 - But having come to faith in Christ and commissioned to preach to Gentiles, Paul evidently saw no reason for him to continue visiting the temple
 - This change in behavior by itself supports Paul's view that a life of Judaism under the Law was no longer required for the believer
 - So why did Paul come back to Jerusalem on this occasion? It was for the council of Jerusalem described in Acts 15
 - Paul was living in Antioch at this time, ministering with Barnabas
 - One of Paul's converts was a Gentile named Titus
 - And in Acts 15 we read this about Paul's visit to Jerusalem:

[Acts 15:1](#) Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

[Acts 15:2](#) And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

[Acts 15:3](#) Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.

[Acts 15:4](#) When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

[Acts 15:5](#) But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."

[Acts 15:6](#) The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.

[Acts 15:7](#) After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.

[Acts 15:8](#) “And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;

[Acts 15:9](#) and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

[Acts 15:10](#) “Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

[Acts 15:11](#) “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

[Acts 15:12](#) All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

- Notice Paul’s visit was prompted by men teaching that Gentiles must become Jewish to participate in the Church
 - This teaching may have been coming from false teachers or by misinformed believers who didn’t understand grace
 - In any case Paul is sent with Barnabas to Jerusalem to confer with the leaders of the Jewish church
 - The hope was that a common understanding would emerge to guide both the Jewish and the Gentile churches
 - As we see, Peter agreed with Paul and Barnabas that the Jewish requirements of the Law were not a requirement for believers, especially for Gentile believers
 - In fact Peter says that Israel’s own fathers could not bear the yoke of the Law
 - So it was folly for a Jew to think that they were ever “keeping” the Law
 - The best they accomplished was to try and fail to keep the Law
 - So all the people kept silent in agreement, having listened to Paul and Barnabas telling of God moving among the Gentiles
 - The point of this report was to show the Jewish church that God was in fact bringing Gentiles to faith
 - And if the Lord is working in this way, then it fell to the Jewish leaders and members of the church in Jerusalem to acknowledge God’s work and accept it despite their natural prejudices

- So moving back to Galatians, Paul says in v.2 that he received a vision that confirmed for him the need to go down to Jerusalem
 - We don't know the vision Paul received, but it motivated him to go, in combination with the church's request
 - Why does Paul mention the vision here?
 - I think Paul is saying to the churches in Galatia that he only agreed to make the trip to Jerusalem because the Lord made it clear he should go
 - Otherwise, Paul would have stayed in Antioch and continued to teach as he was called
 - The point being that Paul was never dependent on the Jewish apostles for his direction or for his message
 - Paul knew the message he had been given and he was certain of it
 - The ones preaching the wrong message were those telling the church they must be Jewish to be saved
 - But because of the vision, Paul goes up to Jerusalem to meet with the council
 - Barnabas goes with Paul because he was a fellow apostle and the church sent both together
 - But why did Paul take Titus?
 - He took Titus as a test of sorts
- Notice Paul says he approached the leaders in private, that is away from the church body as a whole, to learn what they were teaching
 - Paul wanted to know if the Jewish leaders of the Jewish church were preaching the same Gospel of grace that Paul was teaching
 - Paul hadn't been in Jerusalem for fourteen years, yet he knew that Judaizers had been coming down from Jerusalem to deceive the churches in Asia Minor
 - So he must have wondered what the apostles in Jerusalem were teaching their flock

- Had the Jewish church in Jerusalem moved in the direction of the Judaizers?
- Were Gentiles rejected unless they agreed to take on a Jewish lifestyle?
- Was circumcision being made a requirement?
- So Paul takes with him a young, Gentile convert named Titus
 - Titus was not circumcised, as would be natural for a Greek man
 - Paul knew that traditionally, Jews would not associate with uncircumcised Gentiles
 - They would not eat with them
 - They would not welcome them into their homes
 - Knowing this, Paul invites Titus along as a test to see how the Jewish leaders react to Titus' presence in the meeting
- The test is whether the Jewish leaders will receive Titus as they might any Jewish believer
 - It's important to remember that the Gospel had only seen its first mass Gentile conversion a few years earlier
 - So the church is still largely Jewish, and the thought that God was inviting Gentiles into the family of God was not only a new concept...
 - It was an offensive concept for many Jewish believers
 - With Titus at his side, Paul would immediately know whether the Jewish apostles had understood and embraced the true Gospel of grace or not
 - Notice Paul says he wondered if he had been running in vain
 - He means he wondered if he had been preaching a different Gospel than the rest of the Apostles
- Notice Paul says in v.5 that he used Titus as a test because of the false brethren, unbelievers masquerading as believers, who had joined the gathering in Antioch

- These men were the cause for Paul's concern, because they claimed to have come from the church in Jerusalem
 - These false brethren came in secretly, sneaking in to spy on the church, Paul says
 - We remember from our studies in Jude and John that false teachers join the body in this way, secretly and without announcing themselves
- Paul says they entered to spy on the church's liberty
 - They were investigating or searching to find Jewish Christians trying to live outside the constraints of Jewish law
 - If they found such a person, then they intended to bring that person back under bondage
 - They probably used intimidation, threats or other forms of peer pressure to require compliance with the Law
- But notice Paul says what they observed was Christian liberty
 - These spies were observing what liberty looks like
 - They were observing a lifestyle apart from living under the Law
 - Of course, they were false brethren, so they didn't understand liberty
 - They only knew legalism
- But Paul did understand Christian liberty, perhaps better than any other Apostle, perhaps better than any other man on earth in his day
 - So Paul says he did not yield to these men, not even for an hour
 - Today, we would say not even for a minute
 - Perhaps this reflects the way our culture operates at a quicker pace?
- Backing up to verse 3, Paul reports on the outcome of his test
 - Titus was not required to be circumcised
 - Paul says "not even" Titus to emphasize the seriousness of this test

- If ever there was a moment when we might expect the Jewish leaders to require a Gentile to be circumcised, it would be this group in this kind of moment
 - Nevertheless, the Jewish leaders made no attempt to enforce Jewish rules on this Gentile believer
 - They accepted the man as he was, saved by grace
- This event all by itself contradicts the teaching of the Judaizers
 - If the Jewish leaders of the Jerusalem church were willing to accept an uncircumcised Gentile believer, then certainly circumcision wasn't required for salvation
 - Paul is demonstrating to his audience that his message was consistent with the one preached by the apostles in Jerusalem
- This conference in Jerusalem produced a very positive outcome for Paul and the church
 - His message was validated, and his view of grace was supported by the apostles
 - So Paul then explains what happened as he departed Jerusalem

[Gal. 2:6](#) But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality) – well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.

[Gal. 2:7](#) But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised

[Gal. 2:8](#) (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles),

[Gal. 2:9](#) and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

[Gal. 2:10](#) They only asked us to remember the poor – the very thing I also was eager to do.

- Paul says that the men of high reputation, the apostles in Jerusalem, contributed nothing to Paul's message of the Gospel
 - On the contrary, Paul confirmed that he had been entrusted by Christ with the very same Gospel that Christ delivered to Peter and the rest of the church

- Paul's mission was to take that truth to the Gentile, the uncircumcised
- While Peter was entrusted with the mission of taking the Gospel to the Jewish people
- Notice that James was the leader of the Jewish church
 - But Paul compares himself to Peter, not James
 - Peter was the great evangelist of the Jewish people in his day
 - So Paul compares himself to Peter because they shared a similar mission to different audiences
 - And Paul adds that the same Lord who made Peter's ministry successful among stubborn and unbelieving Jews was making Paul successful among an ignorant Gentile people
- More importantly, the meeting convinced James, Peter and John that Paul was, in fact, moving in the Spirit and delivering the gospel
 - Paul calls them pillars, which literally means the tallest poles
 - These men were the three tallest standing men in the early church
 - Here we see that even among the twelve, some stood taller
 - And we see that reflected in the Gospel, as these men are mentioned so much more
 - And both wrote Gospels (Peter was the author of Mark's Gospel)
- Remember, Paul has spent virtually no time with these men except to meet with Peter and James for a few days
 - They knew very little of Paul and what he preached
 - Suspicions probably ran deep
 - But now Paul and the other apostles were of one mind
 - So they shake hands and agree to support each other as they all worked for Christ
- The only thing these men ask of Paul was that he remember the poor Jewish believers suffering in Jerusalem

- Jewish believers in the city of Jerusalem were ill-treated and had little to show for their labors
 - Their Jewish families rejected them and other Jews wouldn't do business with them
 - That left the Jewish believers in the city dependent on support from other churches in the Diaspora
 - The apostles apparently feared that Paul's focus on the Gentiles might lead him to turn his back on Jewish believers
- But Paul says that was the furthest thing from his mind
 - He was zealous for the Jewish people and hoped to see them converted
 - And he certainly wanted to see them supported in Jerusalem
 - We often see Paul in his letters asking churches in Macedonia and Greece to support the Jewish believers in Jerusalem
- Paul has illustrated that his authority is from Christ alone
 - His salvation and commission was from Christ
 - His instruction was from Christ
 - The message He delivered was equal to the gospel Christ gave the Jewish church
 - But now Paul goes a step further
 - He illustrates his leadership role was equal to the most prominent apostle in the church

[Gal. 2:11](#) But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

[Gal. 2:12](#) For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.

[Gal. 2:13](#) The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

- After persecution broke out in Jerusalem, Peter could no longer stay in the city
 - Eventually he made his way up to Antioch to be with Paul

- The church in Antioch, like most churches of the day, were a mixture of Jew and Gentile believers
- So when Peter arrived, he was immediately confronted with how to live in a mixed culture
- Paul relates this story of Peter's hypocrisy in that moment
 - Initially, Peter had no concern living with and eating with Gentile believers
 - The reference to eating likely also included eating the communion meal together
 - Peter knew grace as Paul taught, and he agreed that the barriers between Jew and Greek had been torn down by Jesus' sacrifice
- But there came a day when a delegation of leaders sent by James from the church in Jerusalem came to Antioch to visit Peter
 - When these prominent men arrived, Peter withdrew from fellowship with the Gentiles
 - He did this fearing the judgment of the "party of the circumcised"
 - Apparently, this group included some of those who were still intent on making Gentiles become Jewish first
 - These men refused to fellowship with Gentile believers, including in the communion meal
- Peter feared this group, Paul says
 - Peter stopped eating with Gentiles and joined this Jewish crowd to seek their approval
 - We can wonder what Peter would fear from these men
 - But this pattern is sadly consistent with Peter's entire testimony
 - He is well known as a man who succumbed to pressure
 - Paul says this was hypocrisy
 - Hypocrisy is acting in ways contrary to one's stated belief or conviction
 - Peter held a conviction that grace permitted the breaking down of the barrier between the Jew and Gentile

- That barrier is the Law itself, and it was now gone
- Because of Peter's hypocrisy, he drew others away with him into sin
 - Barnabas followed Peter's lead as did the rest of the Jewish believers in the church
 - What a powerful reminder of the responsibility to model behavior in keeping with doctrine
 - When we lead lives different than our teaching or beliefs, we are potentially guilty of leading others into sin
 - Of setting stumbling blocks for others
 - Peter was doing that here
- So why does Paul choose to relate this embarrassing detail about Peter?
 - Might this even be considered gossip?
 - The answer is no, because Paul's relating an account without intent to shame Peter or hurt Peter
 - Paul's point is much more important and entirely appropriate
 - Paul wants to use this example to discredit the Judaizers
 - Paul is relating this story about Peter because Peter was the most popular apostle among the Judaizers
 - They saw Peter's willingness to conform to their rules as evidence he endorsed their views and they were on the right track
 - So Paul wanted to demonstrate that the Judaizers' favorite patron apostle (so to speak) was wrong in his behavior
 - His support was not evidence that the Judaizers had the right view of the Gospel
 - Peter's behavior was merely hypocrisy on his part
 - More importantly, Paul had the authority to stand up to Peter on this matter
 - He relates how he responded to Peter's hypocrisy:

[Gal. 2:14](#) But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

- Paul chooses to issue a public rebuke of Peter
 - We might wonder why Paul didn't choose to rebuke Peter in private
 - The answer is probably two-fold
 - First, Peter and Paul had already conferred privately in Jerusalem on this very issue and come to an agreement
 - So the time for private counsel had passed
 - Secondly, the nature of Peter's offense and the nature of Peter's role as leader made the entire affair very public and damaging
 - So Paul likely felt that the best way to correct the situation was to make Peter's rebuke public
 - Paul calls Peter out in front of the entire assembly, perhaps during communion where the Jews had segregated themselves for the meal
 - And Paul gives this passionate defense of grace
 - Different Bibles see Paul's speech running different lengths
 - Some see only v.14 as Paul's words to Peter
 - Others see the speech running all the way to the end of the chapter
 - I think the natural reading has Paul's quote ending in v.14
 - Paul delivers a stinging question
 - He asks Peter why he likes to live as Gentiles but then expects Gentiles to live like Jews?
 - Paul is exposing Peter's hypocrisy, of course
 - Everyone in that church remembers Peter's behavior before these leaders of Jerusalem showed up
 - They remember he ate freely with them

- And now they see him by his action pressuring his Jewish brethren to withdraw from Gentiles
- So Paul asks Peter how can you have your matzah and eat it too?
- Paul doesn't explain what happens next, but we must assume his challenge was effective or else why would he mention it in his letter?
 - We wonder how Peter felt when he heard those words from Paul?
 - He probably felt like he did after he heard that cock crow the morning of Passover
 - He probably felt the way he did after Jesus rebuked him in the garden for cutting off the slave's ear
 - He probably felt the same way he did when Jesus called him Satan
 - He felt convicted
 - We don't know how he responded in the moment, but I'm sure the end result was a sigh of relief from among the Jewish believers
 - It's important to note that Paul is defending Jewish believers in Antioch
 - They were the ones suffering by Peter's hypocrisy
 - Had it been allowed to continue unchecked, they would have been pressured to return to living under the Law, which is a tremendous burden
 - Seeing Paul working to defend them and to end Peter's hypocrisy, we must conclude that Paul didn't want Peter to rob Jews of their newly found liberty
- We need to make that connection because there are some in the church working to reimpose a burden of Law on the believer
 - Ironically, that new movement is directed towards the Gentiles, since there simply aren't many Jewish believers in the church
 - This new messianic movement in the church (usually) understands that salvation is by faith alone and not by works of Law

- But they have their own subtle distortion believing that believers are obligated to keep the Law as a matter of sanctification
 - That it pleases God when Gentile believers place themselves under the Law given to Israel
- If this were a correct view, then how would we explain Paul's defense of the Jewish believer here?
 - Paul criticizes Peter for moving back under Jewish Law
 - And his critique is very specific: Peter is leading other Jews into hypocrisy by returning to restrictions under Law and custom
 - If living under those restrictions was a requirement for believers – both Jew and Gentile – then Paul would have had no basis for his critique of Peter at this moment
 - The critique would have come at the earlier moment when Peter was living like a Gentile
 - Not now when Peter returns to living like a Jew
 - Clearly, it was Peter's return to Jewish living that triggered Paul's rebuke
- Paul then proceeds to explain to the Galatian church the error of Peter's thinking

[Gal. 2:15](#) "We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; [Gal. 2:16](#) 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. 2:17](#) "But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!

[Gal. 2:18](#) "For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.

[Gal. 2:19](#) "For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.

[Gal. 2:20](#) "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.

[Gal. 2:21](#) "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

- Speaking of himself and the other Jewish apostles, Paul says "we" are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles

- Paul is speaking from the perspective of a believer born a Jew
 - To a Jew, the term Gentile and sinner were synonymous
 - Paul is not saying that all Gentiles sin and Jews never sin
 - He means that Jews were God's people by a covenant of Law
 - While Gentiles were excluded from this relationship because they were not submitted to God's Law
- But even though Jews had this position of privilege, nevertheless it did not produce righteousness nor salvation
 - In v.16 Paul gives a succinct presentation of the Gospel itself
 - A man – even a natural born Jew – is not justified by works of Law
 - To be justified is the word acquitted in Greek
 - It means to be declared not guilty of an offense
 - So we are acquitted by God for our sin, not by works of Law
- Said another way, we cannot do anything to earn our acquittal on our judgment day
 - We cannot keep rules, perform penance, make restitution or sweep mistakes under the rug and hope for a good outcome
 - Sin leaves us convicted and no work on our part can erase that guilt
 - And certainly Jewish attempts to keep the law does nothing to achieve righteousness
- But what works cannot achieve, Jesus did through His perfect life and sacrificial death
 - And by faith in that sacrifice, we are justified alone
 - For no flesh, meaning no sinful man, can ever be justified by works of the Law
- Paul says that even though he and the other apostles were Jews, they did not rest on their works of Law to save them

- They knew they needed Christ, so they rested in their faith and not in their works for salvation
- So if a Jew recognized this, how much more so should a Gentile realize this truth being without Law in the first place?
- Next Paul points out a contradiction between the Judaizers and the Gospel itself
 - In v.17 Paul asks if setting aside the Law is a sin as the Judaizers teach, what does this say about Christ when His Gospel teaches us to sin?
 - The Gospel says we cannot be justified by Law so we must seek justification another way
 - But the Judaizers said that setting aside the Law of Moses promotes sinful behavior in Christians
 - So we would be saying that Christ is a minister of sin!
 - We are saying that Christ was preaching a Gospel that promoted sinful behavior
 - Paul says may it never be said
 - Paul turns the table on the Judaizers and says that to turn back to living under the Law after receiving justification from Christ is sin
 - That behavior confuses the testimony of the Gospel
 - It suggests that certain works are still required, and this does tremendous damage to the doctrine of Christology
 - That is the truth of Christ
 - What He did for us
 - The Bible teaches that Christ freed us from the Law by accomplishing it on our behalf
 - To return to a life lived under that covenant denies an element of Christology
- Paul could live apart from the Law because he knew he had died to the Law
 - He says that through the Law he died to the Law
 - He means that the Law itself provided Paul's escape from the Law

- The Law required a death for sin, which Jesus paid for Paul and all believers
- Once the payment for death has been made, we are no longer under that Law
- It no longer has jurisdiction over us
- Its penalty has been paid, the Law's requirements have been fulfilled
- And then we move under a new Law
- Paul says that he was crucified in Christ
 - Spiritually speaking, Paul's old self was put to death with Christ on the cross
 - Christ was Paul's representative in that moment
 - The Father is willing to consider Jesus' death in Paul's place because of Paul's faith in that sacrifice
 - Likewise, Paul says that the life he leads now is one guided by Christ living in him by His Spirit
- So Paul says he is now free to live for God
 - The liberty we enjoy in Christ is, first and foremost, a freedom to serve God unconstrained by tradition, custom and legal restrictions
 - Nothing stands in our way
 - Not food, not calendar, not festivals, not associations
 - We are free to serve Him
 - Not in sin, but in joy
- Paul sums up saying those preaching a return to the Law are advocating that the grace of God is void and ineffective
 - If after we receive the grace of God in Christ we still must keep the Law, then of what worth was God's grace?
 - Works were always a possibility, so of what benefit was God's grace added on top?

- If there were even one other way to become righteous, then it stands to reason that the Father would have pointed us in that direction
- He certainly wouldn't have put His only Son to death needlessly, as Paul says
- So as the chapter ends, Paul has defended his apostolic authority to preach a Gospel that matches the Gospel of Jewish apostles
 - And his authority is equal to any other apostle, including Peter
 - And his teaching is consistent with logic and doctrine
- Meanwhile, those who oppose Him teach without apostolic authority
 - They are teaching a Gospel that contradicts the one Paul received from Christ personally
 - And it contradicts with Peter, their favorite apostle
 - And it contradicts logic and doctrine
 - With that, Paul is ready to address the Galatians' willingness to be sucked into such false teaching