

## Gal. 2:15-21 – Paul's theological rationale for his rebuke of Peter

Background/Occasion: Rebuke of Peter

If you are living as a gentile and not a Jew

Even though you are a Jew

How can you force gentiles to live as Jews?

- I. Jews and Gentiles are justified in the same way (15-20)
  - A. Jews and Gentiles are all sinners (15-17b)
    1. Even though Peter and Paul are Jews and not Gentile "sinners" (15)
      - Notice the contrast is not between Jews/Gentiles
      - But rather Jews by nature/Sinners from the Gentiles
      - a We are Jews by nature (15a)
        - cf. v. 14 – not living like Jews!
        - b/c they know it is not necessary for Jews to do so to be justified
        - they why should Gentiles live like Jews to be justified?!
      - b We are not sinners from the Gentiles (15b)
        - “sinners” is not tongue in cheek – Paul says it seriously
        - Gentiles were considered sinners by Jews not only because they did not do the law but because they did not have the law to follow
        - Paul will turn that around to say that Jews who have the law and try to follow it become sinners because of the law
        - Paul does not deny that Gentiles are sinners
        - This is not offensive to Gentiles b/c Paul says Jews are just as much sinners
    2. They are still "sinners" (16-17b)
      - a We believe in Jesus to be justified (16)
        - Paul uses the word justified almost exclusively of God's judgment.
        - Affirmative verdict in Rom. 2:13
        - Mostly ‘be acquitted, be pronounced and treated as righteous and thereby righteous’
        - Receiving the divine gift of righteousness through faith in Christ Jesus and apart from law
      - 1) Since we know righteousness is by faith, not law (16a-b)
        - a) We know that a man is not justified by works of the law (16a)
        - b) But he is justified through faith in Jesus Christ (16b)
          - “if not” same construction in 1 Cor. 7:17 = “only”
          - Schreiner p. 163 says= “but”

2) We believe in Jesus Christ to be justified because law is ineffective (16c-f)

a) We believe in Jesus Christ to be justified (16c-e)

(1) We believe in Jesus Christ (16c)

(2) Purpose - to be justified (16d-e)

(a) So that we will be justified by faith in Christ (16d)

(b) Not by works of the law (16e)

b) Reason: All flesh (everyone) is NOT justified by works of the law (16f)

Quoting Psa. 143 cf. context

“In your mercy, faithfulness and righteousness...do not bring Your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before You”

Asks for God’s mercy because no one can ask because they are deserving

b Seeking to be justified in Jesus proves we are sinners (17a-b)

1) If we are seeking to be justified in Christ (17a)

2) ii. We also are found/proven to be sinners (17b)

“sinners” cf. 15b – same as Gentiles

Proved, be shown to be – often used in judicial contexts

-cf. “found guilty”

B. Those in Christ are in a new eschatological reality (17c-20)

1. Rhetorical question: Is Christ therefore a servant of sin? (17c)

2. Answer and reason (17d-20)

a Answer - Absolutely NOT! (17d)

b Reason: Christians are in the new age and cannot go back (18-20)

1) Those who go back are the real transgressors (18)

a) If we build again that which we destroyed (18a)

b) We demonstrate that we are transgressors (18b)

“demonstrate” -cf. Rom 3:5, 5:8, 2 Cor 6:4, 7:11

Paul turns the tables

The real “sinners” are not Gentiles

Everyone is “sinners” in that sense

The real sinners are those who reject Christ’s righteousness by

attempting self-righteousness by returning to the law

“that which we destroyed”

In context (v. 19-20) “that which we destroyed” is self-

righteousness, self-life, self-sufficiency, life without Christ,

life without faith

It is destroyed by our being included in Christ’s death

cf. the following

- 2) Proof/Reason - new eschatological reality (19-20)
  - a) For I died to the law through the law (19a)
  - b) so that I may live to God (19b-20)
    - (1) So that I may live to God (19b)
    - (2) Explanation of what that means (19c-20)
      - (a) Negatively - I have died (19c-20a)
        - (i) I have been crucified with Christ (19c)
        - (ii) I am no longer living (20a)
          - No need to give CPR to self-righteousness
          - Pull the plug, let it die, kill it, it is not doing any good
      - (b) Positively - I am living a new life through Christ – (20b-d)
        - (i) Christ is living in respect to/with reference to me (20b)
        - (ii) I live by faith (20c-d)
          - ((a)) The life which I live in the flesh (20c)
          - ((b)) I live by faith in the Son of God (20d)
            - ((1)) The One Who loved me
            - ((2)) The One Who gave Himself on behalf of me

II. Therefore I will not set aside the grace of God for attempted righteousness via the law (21)

- A. I will/do not set aside/declare invalid/nullify the grace of God (21a)
- B. reason (21b-c)
  - 1. If righteous could happen through the law (21b)
  - 2. Then Christ died for no reason/unnecessarily (21c)