

Parson to Person

(Galatians 2 – Part 2)

“Resurrection Sunday—Because He Lives”

“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the

circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain” (Galatians 2).

Salvation by Faith Alone

When looking at the big picture found in the doctrines of the New and Old Testaments, we see a case for salvation by grace alone, through faith alone—not through the Law nor by the works of any man.

In Galatians chapter 3, Paul used Abraham as a case in point, citing, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness*” (3:6)—for “*the just shall live by faith*” (3:11b).

Salvation and Inheritance

Paul made a case for the fulfillment/abolition of the Law and therefore the removal of the segregation of Jew and Gentile—by faith in Jesus. Moreover, he taught that through faith, the Gentiles may be grafted into the promised blessings of the Jewish New Covenant (Romans 11:17, Jeremiah 31:31, Ezekiel 36:24–27)—and thus become “fellow heirs” with all believing Jews (Ephesians 3:6).

To the Ephesians Paul wrote, *“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity”* (Ephesians 2:11–16).

Salvation and the Means

God provided/provides salvation and inheritance—for the Jews and Gentiles. He did this through the propitiatory sacrificial death of Jesus—in our place, for our sin(s). Jesus, the Lamb of God, fulfilled the Law and its foreshadowing substitutionary sacrificial system—thereby “crucifying the Law and ordinances”—in Himself. He put to death the “enmity” between Jew and Gentile, removes the sins that separates all of us from God, and gives us a new life in the (now inaugurated) New Covenant.

To the Colossians Paul wrote, *“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross”* (Colossians 2:11–14).

Dead and Alive

By faith, we die with Christ—from the power of the law—and the consequences of sin. However, we are raised up with Him by the power of His resurrection. We live together with Him, will live together with all the redeemed, and will receive a full inheritance—as ingrafted into the *“root and fatness”* (Romans 11:17) God has promised Israel. Death has no more power over Jesus and, therefore, no lasting power over us! The Law has no power over Jesus. Therefore, the Law has no power over us. The consequence for sin has no more power over Jesus. Therefore, the consequence of sin has no more power over us.

To the Romans Paul wrote, *“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to*

God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:5–11).

Therefore, to the Galatians Paul wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain” (Galatians 2:20–21).

Praise to the Lord our Savior. We, as dead in trespasses and sins, died with Him only to be raised up together with Him. Death has no power. In Him we live and move and have our being...

Happy “Resurrection Sunday,” my friends!

I love you all,
Pastor Paul