

Understanding Galatians 2: Protected by the Law

Ready:

“When I saw that they were not following the truth of the gospel message, I said to Peter in front of all the others, ‘Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you now trying to make these Gentiles follow the Jewish traditions? ‘You and I are Jews by birth, not ‘sinners’ like the Gentiles. Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law” Galatians 2:14-16

Set

The Gospel is a simple truth that Paul is pleading with the people of Galatia to return to. It almost seems as if some of these church-goers are so caught up in correcting each other on how to follow Christ that it begs the question if their focus is even on Him. When we come across a passage like this, it's always a good idea to work from what is straightforward: rules are important to accomplishing the goal of sharing Jesus with others. What made Paul and Peter such effective leaders were their ability to be engaged to the point of knowing the Galatian's hearts and understanding what tempted them to give in to idolatry. When we know what someone is watching, focusing their time on, and learning, we can have a good feel for what worldviews and temptations they are being faced with.

The rules of the law truly are esteemed in the lives of Christians and non-Christians alike. “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin”, Paul says in Romans 3:20. For the non-believer, he realizes that he cannot live up to God's standards and in turn, recognizes his need for a Savior. On the contrary, the believer benefits in the following three ways from the gift of the law: 1) like the non-believer, the Holy Spirit opens his eyes to his need for a Savior that satisfies God's standards, 2) he receives protection and guidance on how to live a life glorifying to God, and 3) he is provided with an understanding of God's character and nature. Like a piece of black velvet behind a glistening diamond, the law exposes the awe-inspiring holiness of God. There are so many uplifting and life-changing reasons to abide by the laws that bring glory to God!

Coaches and athletes, after a match, your outcome is marked as a loss or a win. When you lose, you don't ever “*really* lose.” An “L” is recorded no matter the score. Even so, we are all depraved. There isn't a population of people we can ever point to as *utterly* depraved or *really*, *really* depraved. May we never look at someone else and say in our hearts, “God, thank you that I'm not as bad as she” or, “I'm so glad I would never commit that sin.” We have all sinned and fallen short of our Creator's glory and through the law, we ALL come to recognize our need for a Savior. Whether we are on or off the court, around believers or nonbelievers, our

witness will greatly impact someone's understanding of the Gospel message.

Go

1. What do I try to add to Christ's sacrifice?
2. How can I prepare myself to be biblically grounded when I face faulty worldviews?
3. Who are the people around me that my testimony has the greatest potential to impact?

Workout

Acts 13:39, Galatians 3:10-14, Romans 4:25, Philippians 3:9, Romans 12:1

Overtime

"Lord, thank You for giving us the law so we can have a way to make sense of our need for a Savior and what it means to live our lives glorifying and pleasing to You. Through your mercies, help me to present my body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to You. 'Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free. For God the just is satisfied, to look on Him and pardon me.' In the Name of Jesus, I pray, amen."

Bible Reference:

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