



2016: Week 17

Sunday, April 24th 2016

"Justification By Faith"

Galatians 2:16

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" (NASB).

Did you catch that? Paul states *three times* in one verse that we are not justified by the works of the Law but rather by faith in Christ. In reference to the concept of justification by faith, Martin Luther identified it is "the article of faith that marks whether a church is standing or falling." In his sermon on Sunday John paraphrased Luther by stating, "If you have no justification by faith, you have no church."

1. READ Galatians 2:11–13

- Why did Paul feel it necessary to rebuke Peter (Cephas) (v.11–12)?
- What were the results in Peter's "hypocrisy" (v.13)?
- What happens when individuals who possess great influence begin to compromise their integrity? What is a lesson here that you might apply?

2. READ Galatians 2:14–19

- How did Paul equate Peter's actions of "eating versus not eating with Gentiles" to Peter not being "straightforward about the truth of the gospel" (v.14)?
- In verse 16, this is probably the first time that Paul ever pens the term *justify* (from the Greek term *dikaioo*). To justify means "to regard as just" or "to declare as righteous."
According to Paul here, what is the one condition by which a person is justified?

What are ways that people seek to cultivate a righteousness before God on their own merit? Why do people think they need to earn God's righteousness rather than receive His righteousness?

Read Philippians 3:9 to see again how Paul views a person's righteousness before God.

3. READ Galatians 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."

- How can Paul say that he died with Christ? How can he say that Christ lives in Him?
- Can you say that you have died with Christ and that Christ lives within you?

4. READ Galatians 2:21

"I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly" (NASB). Or, put another way: "I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die" (NLT).

FAMILY PRAYER: Praise the Lord for His plan of salvation– to save you by His grace through faith in what His Son, Jesus, accomplished through His death and validated in His resurrection!