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GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

In Your Group Read Galatians chapter two (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF GALATIANS CHAPTER 2 King James Version

GALATIANS 2: [1] Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. **[2]** And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. **[3]** But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: **[4]** And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: **[5]** To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. **[6]** But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: **[7]** But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; **[8]** (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) **[9]** And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. **[10]** Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. **[11]** ¶ But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. **[12]** For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. **[13]** And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch

that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. **[14]** But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? **[15]** We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, **[16]** Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. **[17]** But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. **[18]** For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. **[19]** For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. **[20]** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. **[21]** I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

VERSES 1-3

Galatians 2: [1] Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. [2] And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. [3] But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: (King James Version)

¹Then fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas; and Titus came along, too. ²I went there because God revealed to me that I should go. While I was there I talked privately with the leaders of the church. I wanted them to understand what I had been preaching to the Gentiles. I wanted to make sure they did not disagree, or my ministry would have been useless. ³And they did agree. They did not even demand that my companion Titus be circumcised, though he was a Gentile. **(New Living Translation)**

Fourteen years after that first visit, Barnabas and I went up to Jerusalem and took Titus with us. I went to clarify with them what had been revealed to me. At that time I placed before them exactly what I was preaching to the non-Jews. I did this in private with the leaders, those held in esteem by the church, so that our concern would not become a controversial public issue, marred by ethnic tensions, exposing my years of work to denigration and endangering my present ministry. Significantly, Titus, non-Jewish though he was, was not required to be circumcised. (verses 1-3) **(The Message)**

Fourteen years later, I went up to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas, and we took Titus with us. My visit on this occasion was by divine command, and I gave a full exposition of the gospel which I preach among the gentiles. I did this in private conference with the Church leaders, to make sure that what I had done and proposed doing was sound. But no one insisted that my companion Titus, though he was a Greek, should be circumcised. (verses 1-3) **(Phillips Translation)**

¹Then fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas; and Titus came along too. ²I went there with definite orders from God to confer with the brothers there about the message I was preaching to the Gentiles. I talked privately to the leaders of the church so that they would all understand just what I had been teaching and, I hoped, agree that it was right. ³And they did agree; they did not even demand that Titus, my companion, should be circumcised, though he was a Gentile. **(The Living Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 1) – By recounting the details of his most significant trip to Jerusalem after his conversion, Paul offered convincing proof that the message he proclaimed was identical to that of the other twelve apostles.

“**Barnabas**” was a Jewish believer who became Paul’s traveling companion on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:2-3), and “**Titus**” was a Gentile believer who became a co-worker with Paul (Titus 1:4-5). (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1660).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

VERSES 4-5

Galatians 2: [4] And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: [5] To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. (King James Version)

⁴Even that question wouldn’t have come up except for some so-called Christians there—false ones, really—who came to spy on us and see our freedom in Christ Jesus. They wanted to force us, like slaves, to follow their Jewish regulations. ⁵But we refused to listen to them for a single moment. We wanted to preserve the truth of the Good News for you. **(New Living Translation)**

⁴We talked about this problem because some false believers had come into our group secretly. They came in like spies to overturn the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to make us slaves. ⁵But we did not give in to those false believers for a minute. We wanted the truth of the Good News to continue for you. **(New Century Version)**

While we were in conference we were infiltrated by spies pretending to be Christians, who slipped in to find out just how free true Christians are. Their ulterior motive was to reduce us to their brand of servitude. We didn’t give them the time of day. We were determined to preserve the truth of the Message for you. (verses 4-5) **(The Message)**

In fact, the suggestion would never have arisen but for the presence of some pseudo-Christians, who wormed their way into our meeting to spy on the liberty we enjoy in Christ Jesus, and then attempted to tie us up with rules and regulations. We did not give in to those men for a moment, for the truth of the gospel for you and all gentiles was at stake. (verses 4-5) **(Phillips Translation)**

[4] although some men, who had pretended to be brothers and joined the group, wanted to circumcise him. These people had slipped in as spies, to find out about the freedom we have through our union with Christ Jesus. They wanted to make slaves of us. **[5]** We did not give in to them for a minute, in order to keep the truth of the gospel safe for you. **(Today's English Version)**

[4] There were traitors of false brothers, who had crept in to spy out the freedom we enjoy in Christ Jesus; they did aim at enslaving us again. **[5]** But we refused to yield for a single instant to their claims; we were determined that the truth of the gospel should hold good for you. **(Moffatt Translation)**

[4] Also, there were false Christians who had come in secretly. They sneaked in to spy out the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus so that they might make us slaves. **[5]** But not for a moment did we let them dictate to us, so that you might always have the true Gospel. **(God's Word to the Nations)**

[4] The reason I went, was to confer with the church leaders, because false believers had infiltrated our churches in order to spy out the freedom from Jewish rules and regulations that we have in Christ Jesus, and to enslave us to those rules again. **[5]** But we didn't surrender to them in any way, not even for one minute, so that the truth of the Great News would be preserved for you. **(The Last Days Bible)**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

VERSES 6-8

Galatians 2: [6] But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: [7] But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; [8] (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) (King James Version)

[6] As for those who seemed to be important--whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance--those men added nothing to my message. **[7]** On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. **[8]** For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. **(New International Version)**

As for those who were considered important in the church, their reputation doesn't concern me. God isn't impressed with mere appearances, and neither am I. And of course these leaders were able to add nothing to the message I had been preaching. It was soon evident that God had entrusted me with the same message to the non-Jews as Peter had been preaching to the Jews. (verses 6-8) **(The Message)**

⁶ Those leaders who seemed to be important did not change the Good News that I preach. (It doesn't matter to me if they were "important" or not. To God everyone is the same.) ⁷ But these leaders saw that I had been given the work of telling the Good News to those who are not Jewish, just as Peter had the work of telling the Jews. ⁸ God gave Peter the power to work as an apostle for the Jewish people. But he also gave me the power to work as an apostle for those who are not Jews. **(New Century Version)**

[6] But those with reputations of being important (whatever they were makes no difference to me, for God is not impressed by status) – they taught me nothing *new*. **[7]** Quite the contrary. They realized that I had been trusted with giving the Good News to the Gentiles, just as Peter was to the Jews. **[8]** For He who worked mightily in Peter to be an apostle to the Jews, worked mightily in me to be an apostle to the Gentiles. **(The New Translation)**

[6] Those men who seemed to be important did not change the gospel I preach. (It doesn't matter to me if they were "important" or not. To God all men are the same.) **[7]** But these leaders saw that God had given me a special work, the same as Peter. God gave Peter the work of telling the Good News to the Jews. But God gave me the work of telling the Good News to the non-Jewish people. **[8]** God gave Peter the power to work as an apostle. Peter is an apostle for the Jewish people. God gave me the power to work as an apostle too. But I am an apostle for the people who are not Jews. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

VERSES 9-10

Galatians 2: [9] And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. [10] Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. (King James Version)

[9] James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. **[10]** All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. **(New International Version)**

⁹ In fact, James, Peter, and John, who were known as pillars of the church, recognized the gift God had given me, and they accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews. ¹⁰ The only thing they suggested was that we remember to help the poor, and I have certainly been eager to do that. **(New Living Translation)**

[9] James, Peter, and John seemed to be the main leaders. They knew that God had given me grace. So, they accepted Barnabas and me. They said, "We agree. You should go to non-Jewish people. We will go to the Jews." **[10]** They asked us to do

only one thing – to remember to help the *Jewish* poor people. This was something I really wanted to do anyway. **(The Simple English Bible)**

⁹ James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be the leaders, understood that God had given me this special grace, so they accepted Barnabas and me. They agreed that they would go to the Jewish people and that we should go to those who are not Jewish.

¹⁰ The only thing they asked us was to remember to help the poor—something I really wanted to do. **(New Century Version)**

[9] so, acknowledging the grace that had been given me, James and Cephas and John, who were considered as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we should serve the Gentiles and they the circumcised. **[10]** Only they wanted us to remember the needy, which I myself was eager to do. **(Berkeley Version)**

[9] And when they knew (perceived, recognized, understood, and acknowledged) the grace (God’s unmerited favor and spiritual blessing) that had been bestowed upon me, James and Cephas (Peter) and John, who were reputed to be pillars of the Jerusalem church, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, with the understanding that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised (Jews).

[10] They only [made one stipulation], that we were to remember the poor, which very thing I was also eager to do. **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[9] I should add that James, Peter and John were the ones who were recognized as the real leaders. And when they saw how God had poured our His undeserved love on me, they shook hands with me and Barnabas, and accepted us as members of their group, with the agreement that we should go to the people of the other nations, and they would go to those who are circumcised. **[10]** The only thing they asked was that we should remember the poor, and this is one thing I have really tried to do. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

Additional Information: (Verse 9) - “James, Cephas, and John.” “James” is probably the same as the one identified as the Lord’s brother in Gal. 1:19. “Peter” is “Cephas” in the Greek; and “Cephas” (meaning “Rock” is the Aramaic equivalent of “Peter.” “John” is probably the Apostle of that name, the brother of another James (Acts 12:1-2), one of the sons of Zebedee. (UBS Handbook, pgs. 24, 37).

(Verse 10) - “remember the poor.” In this context the verb “remember” does not imply necessarily that the poor had been forgotten. The meaning here is that “we should continue to think about,” or “should constantly be concerned for.” (UBS Handbook, p. 38).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2 VERSES 11-13

Galatians 2: [11] ¶ But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. [12] For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and

separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. [13] And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. (King James Version)

Later, when Peter came to Antioch, I had a face-to-face confrontation with him because he was clearly out of line. Here's the situation. Earlier, before certain persons had come from James, Peter regularly ate with the non-Jews. But when that conservative group came from Jerusalem, he cautiously pulled back and put as much distance as he could manage between himself and his non-Jewish friends. That's how fearful he was of the conservative Jewish clique that's been pushing the old system of circumcision. Unfortunately, the rest of the Jews in the Antioch church joined in that hypocrisy so that even Barnabas was swept along in the charade. (verses 11-13) **(The Message)**

¹¹But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him publicly, speaking strongly against what he was doing, for it was very wrong. ¹²When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile Christians, who don't bother with circumcision. But afterward, when some Jewish friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore because he was afraid of what these legalists would say. ¹³Then the other Jewish Christians followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was influenced to join them in their hypocrisy. **(New Living Translation)**

¹¹When Peter came to Antioch, I told him face to face that he was wrong. ¹²He used to eat with Gentile followers of the Lord, until James sent some Jewish followers. Peter was afraid of the Jews and soon stopped eating with Gentiles. ¹³He and the others hid their true feelings so well that even Barnabas was fooled. **(Contemporary English Version)**

¹¹But when Peter came to Antioch I had to oppose him publicly, speaking strongly against what he was doing, for it was very wrong. ¹²For when he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile Christians who don't bother with circumcision and the many other Jewish laws. But afterwards, when some Jewish friends of James came, he wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore because he was afraid of what these Jewish legalists, who insisted that circumcision was necessary for salvation, would say; ¹³and then all the other Jewish Christians and even Barnabas became hypocrites too, following Peter's example, though they certainly knew better. **(The Living Bible)**

Later, however, when Cephas came to Antioch I had to oppose him publicly, for he was then plainly in the wrong. It happened like this. Until the arrival of some of James' men, he, Cephas was in the habit of eating his meals with the gentiles. After they came, however, he withdrew and began to separate himself from them – out of sheer fear of the Jews. The other Jewish Christians carried out a similar piece of discrimination, and the force of their bad example was so great that even Barnabas was infected by it. (verses 11-13) **(Phillips Translation)**

[11] When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him in public, because he was clearly wrong. **[12]** Before some men who had been sent by James arrived there, Peter had been eating with the Gentile brothers. But after these men arrived, he drew back and would not eat with them, because he was afraid of those who were in favor of circumcising the Gentiles. **[13]** The other Jewish brothers started acting like cowards, along with Peter; and even Barnabas was swept along by their cowardly action. **(Today's English Version)**

[11] When Cephas came to Antioch, however, I opposed him to his face, since he was manifestly in the wrong. **[12]** His custom had been to eat with the pagans, but after certain friends of James arrived he stopped doing this and kept away from them altogether for fear of the group that insisted on circumcision. **[13]** The other Jews joined him in this pretense, and even Barnabas felt himself obliged to copy their behavior. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[11] When Peter came to Antioch, I told him to his face that I was against what he was doing. He was clearly wrong. **[12]** He used to eat with those who weren't Jews. But certain people came from the group that was led by James. When they arrived, Peter began to draw back. He separated himself from the non-Jews. He was afraid of the circumcision group. **[13]** Peter's actions were not honest. The other Jews joined him. Even Barnabas was led down the wrong path. **(New International Reader's Version)**

[11] Peter came to Antioch *in Syria*. Because he was wrong, I opposed him. **[12]** *This is what happened:* When Peter first came to Antioch, he always ate with non-Jewish people. But then, some Jewish men were sent from James. When they came, Peter stopped eating with those who were not Jewish and separated himself from them. He was afraid of the Jews who believed that all non-Jewish people must be circumcised. **[13]** Peter was two-faced. The other Jewish believers joined Peter. They were two-faced, too. Even Barnabas was influenced by the things which those Jewish believers did. **(The Simple English Bible)**

[11] But when Peter came to Antioch, I publicly told him face-to-face that he was wrong, because he needed to be reprimanded for what he was doing. **[12]** Here's what happened: When Peter first came to Antioch, he ate openly with the Gentile believers. But when some friends of James showed up, he stopped having anything to do with the Gentiles and separated himself from them, because of his fear of these men who believed that all Gentile believers must be circumcised. **[13]** And the rest of the Jewish Christians joined him in his cowardly hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their double-dealing. **(The Last Days Bible)**

[11] Later, when Peter came to Antioch, he did something wrong, and I had to tell him so right to his face. **[12]** You see, when he first got there, he was eating with people who weren't Jews. But then some men arrived who had been sent by James. and when they got there, Peter began to act differently and wouldn't have anything to do with the people who weren't Jews, because he was afraid of those who believed that all believers have to be circumcised. **[13]** Then the rest of the Jews in Antioch also followed Peter and began to act like hypocrites, pretending that they wouldn't have anything to do with people who weren't Jews either. And finally even Barnabas was led astray by their two-faced behavior. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

Additional Information: (Verse 11) – Antioch is the major city in Syria, and the book of Acts informs us that it was from there that Paul started his first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3). The membership of the church in Antioch consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. **(Verse 12)** – “**He did eat**” is in the imperfect tense in the Greek, indicating that Peter did this not only once, but regularly. “**Certain came from James.**” What is clear is that these men were connected in some way with James, but it is not clear whether they were sent by James or were simply members of the Jerusalem church but whose visit to Antioch was not ordered by James (UBS Handbook. pgs. 39-41).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2

VERSES 14

Galatians 2: [14] But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? (King James Version)

¹⁴When I saw that they were not following the truth of the Good News, 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 trying to make these Gentiles obey the Jewish laws you abandoned? **(New Living Translation)**

¹⁴When I saw they were not following the truth of the Good News, I spoke to Peter in front of them all. I said, “Peter, you are a Jew, but you are not living like a Jew. You are living like those who are not Jewish. So why do you now try to force those who are not Jewish to live like Jews?” **(New Century Version)**

¹⁴But when I saw that they were not really obeying the truth that is in the good news, I corrected Peter in front of everyone and said: Peter, you are a Jew, but you live like a Gentile. So how can you force Gentiles to live like Jews? **(Contemporary English Version)**

[14] But when I saw that they were not maintaining a steady, straight course according to the Message, I spoke up to Peter in front of them all: “If you, a Jew, live like a non-Jew when you’re not being observed by the watchdogs from Jerusalem, what right do you have to require non-Jews to conform to Jewish customs just to make a favorable impression on your old Jerusalem cronies?” **(The Message)**

[14] But when I saw that this behavior was a contradiction of the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas so that everyone could hear, “If you, who are a Jew, do not live like a Jew but like a gentile, why do you try to make gentiles live like Jews?” **(Phillips Translation)**

[14] When I saw they were not respecting the true meaning of the Good News, I said to Cephas in front of everyone, “In spite of being a Jew, you live like the pagans and not like the Jews, so you have no right to make the pagans copy Jewish ways.” **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[14] But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” **(English Standard Version)**

[14] I saw what they did. They were not following the truth of the gospel. So, I spoke to Peter in such a way that all the other Jews could hear what I said: “Since you are a Jew, but do not live as a Jew, why do you now force non-Jewish people to live as Jews? You live like non-Jewish people do.” **(The Simple English Bible)**

[14] But when I saw that they were not in line with the truth of the Good News, I said to Peter in front of them all, “Since you, a Jew, have been living like the Gentiles, and not living like the Jews, how can you, *of all people* compel the Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?” **(The New Translation)**

[14] But as soon as I saw that they were not straightforward and were not living up to the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas (Peter) before everybody present, If you,

though born a Jew, can live [as you have been living] like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how do you dare now to urge and practically force the Gentiles to [comply with the ritual of Judaism and] live like Jews? **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[14] But I saw that they weren't acting like people who know and accept the truth which the Good News brings us. So I said to Peter right in front of them all, "You happen to be a Jew, but you aren't living now the way Jews live. You're living like the people of the other nations live. So how can you try to force these people who aren't Jews to live the way the Jews live? **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

Additional Information: (Verse 14) – Living like a Gentile and (living) like a Jew translate Greek words which suggest adhering to Gentile and Jewish customs respectively, particularly in the matter of food. Paul is saying that in eating with the Gentiles Peter disregarded Jewish laws, and therefore was living like a Gentile. (UBS Handbook, p.42).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2 VERSES 15-16

Galatians 2: [15] We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, [16] Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (King James Version)

¹⁵ We were not born as non-Jewish "sinners," but as Jews. ¹⁶ Yet we know that a person is made right with God not by following the law, but by trusting in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus, that we might be made right with God because we trusted in Christ. It is not because we followed the law, because no one can be made right with God by following the law. **(New Century Version)**

We Jews know that we have no advantage of birth over "non-Jewish sinners." We know very well that we are not set right with God by rule keeping but only through personal faith in Jesus Christ. How do we know? We tried it – and we had the best system of rules the world has ever seen! Convinced that no human being can please God by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right before God by trusting in the Messiah, not by trying to be good. (verses 15-16) **(The Message)**

And then I went on to explain that we, who are Jews by birth and not gentile sinners, know that a man is justified not by performing what the Law commands but only by faith in Jesus Christ. We ourselves have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be made right with God by faith in Christ and not by obeying the Law's commands. For we have recognized that no one can achieve justification by doing the "works of Law." (verses 15-16) **(Phillips Translation)**

[15] Though we were born Jews and not pagan sinners, **[16]** we acknowledge that what makes a man righteous is not obedience to the Law, but faith in Jesus Christ. We had to become believers in Christ Jesus no less than you had, and now we hold

that faith in Christ rather than fidelity to the Law is what justifies us, and that no one can be justified by keeping the Law. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[15] We ourselves are Jews by birth, not gentile sinners; **[16]** yet we know that no one is ever justified by doing what the law requires, but only through faith in Christ Jesus. So we too have put our faith in Jesus Christ, in order that we might be justified through this faith, and not through actions dictated by law; for no human being can be justified by keeping the law. **(The Revised English Bible)**

[15] We *who are* Jews by birth and not “Gentile sinners,” **[16]** know that no one is put right with God by doing what the *Jewish* laws require, but *only* through faith in Jesus Christ. Yes, we have come to believe in Jesus Christ so that we may be put right with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and not by doing what the laws *of Moses* require. For no one is ever put right with God by obeying those laws. **(The New Translation)**

[15] We Jews were not born non-Jewish or sinners; we were born as Jews. **[16]** We know that a person is not made right with God by following the law. Committing oneself to Jesus Christ is what makes a person right with God. So, we made a commitment to Christ Jesus, because we wanted to be made right with God. We are right with God because we made that commitment, not because of following the law. Nobody will ever be made right by following the law. **(The Simple English Bible)**

[15] [I went on to say] Although we ourselves [you and I] are Jews by birth and not Gentile (heathen) sinners, **[16]** Yet we know that a man is justified or reckoned righteous and in right standing with God not by works of the Law, but [only] through faith and [absolute] reliance on and adherence to and trust in Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One). [Therefore] even we [ourselves] have believed on Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law [for we cannot be justified by any observance of the ritual of the Law given by Moses], because by keeping legal rituals and by works no human being can ever be justified (declared righteous and put in right standing with God). [Ps. 143:2.] **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[15] From birth we had the Jewish teachings instilled into us, and were not allowed to live in the sinful ways of the Gentiles. **[16]** But we now know that no one can become right with God by obeying Jewish laws and ceremonies. Only faith in Jesus Christ can do that. So that’s what we’ve done: we’ve put our faith in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God thru Him, and not by the Law, because there’s no way that anyone can become right with God by obeying Jewish laws. **(The Last Days Bible)**

[15] “You and I are Jews by birth. We’re not ‘sinners from the other nations’.
[16] But we know that God doesn’t accept a person as perfectly holy because of the things he has done in an effort to keep the Law, but only through his faith in Jesus Christ. And so we also have put our faith in Christ Jesus, so that God will accept us as perfectly holy through faith in Christ, and not because of the things we have done in an effort to keep the Law. Because ‘God will never accept any person as perfectly holy’ because of the things he does in an effort to keep the Law.” **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

Additional Information: (Verse 16) – The whole point of this verse is that being put right with God, even for Jews, is not by doing what the Law requires, but by faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ includes not only believing the message about Jesus Christ, but also trust in and commitment of oneself to him. (UBS Handbook, p.45).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2
VERSES 17-19

Galatians 2: [17] But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. [18] For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. [19] For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. (King James Version)

¹⁷But what if we trust Christ to save us and then find that we are wrong and that we cannot be saved without being circumcised and obeying all the other Jewish laws? Wouldn't we need to say that faith in Christ had ruined us? God forbid that anyone should dare to think such things about our Lord. ¹⁸Rather, we are sinners if we start rebuilding the old systems I have been destroying of trying to be saved by keeping Jewish laws, ¹⁹for it was through reading the Scripture that I came to realize that I could never find God's favor by trying—and failing—to obey the laws. I came to realize that acceptance with God comes by believing in Christ. **(The Living Bible)**

¹⁷When we Jews started looking for a way to please God, we discovered that we are sinners too. Does this mean that Christ is the one who makes us sinners? No, it doesn't! ¹⁸But if I tear down something and then build it again, I prove that I was wrong at first. ¹⁹It was the Law itself that killed me and freed me from its power, so that I could live for God. I have been nailed to the cross with Christ. **(Contemporary English Version)**

Have some of you noticed that we are not yet perfect? (No great surprise, right?) And are you ready to make the accusation that since people like me, who go through Christ in order to get things right with God, aren't perfectly virtuous, Christ must therefore be an accessory to sin? The accusation is frivolous. If I was "trying to be good," I would be rebuilding the same old barn that I tore down. I would be acting as a charlatan. What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man. Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. (verses 17-19) **(The Message)**

[17] But is, in our desire and endeavor to be justified in Christ [to be declared righteous and put in right standing with God wholly and solely through Christ], we have shown ourselves sinners also and convicted of sin, does that make Christ a minister (a party and contributor) to our sin? Banish the thought! [Of course not!] **[18]** For if I [or any others who have taught that the observance of the Law of Moses is not essential to being justified by God should now by word or practice teach or intimate that it is essential to] build up again what I tore down, I prove myself a transgressor. **[19]** For I through the Law [under the operation of the curse of the Law] have [in Christ's death for me] myself died to the Law and all the Law's demands upon me, so that I may [henceforth] live to and for God. **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[17] Now if I claim right standing with God thru faith in Christ, but then go back to my sinning, does that mean that Christ is now responsible for my sinning? Absolutely

not! **[18]** If I rebuild the old life I tore down, I am the guilty reprobate, not Christ. **[19]** But when I considered all the endless requirements of the Law, I died to all hope that I could ever become alive to God by obeying the Law. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: Verses 17-19 are very difficult scriptures to interpret. Good translations should say the same thing in different styles. When differences in translations are not just a matter of style, realize that the meaning of the verse or verses is difficult and two or more meanings of words or phrases may be possible in Greek.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2 VERSES 20-21

Galatians 2: [20] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. [21] I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. (King James Version)

²⁰ I was put to death on the cross with Christ, and I do not live anymore—it is Christ who lives in me. I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself to save me. ²¹ By saying these things I am not going against God's grace. Just the opposite, if the law could make us right with God, then Christ's death would be useless. **(New Century Version)**

²⁰ I have died, but Christ lives in me. And I now live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me. ²¹ I don't turn my back on God's undeserved kindness. If we can be acceptable to God by obeying the Law, it was useless for Christ to die. **(Contemporary English Version)**

[20] So the life that I live now is not really me – it is Christ living in me. I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God (*Jesus*). Jesus is the One who loved me. He gave himself to save me. **[21]** This gift is from God, and it is very important to me. Why? Because if the law could make us right with God, then Christ did not have to die. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that. (verses 20-21) **(The Message)**

I died on the cross with Christ. and my present life is not that of the old "I", but the living Christ within me. The bodily life I now live, I live believing in the Son of God who loved me and sacrificed himself for me. I refuse to make nonsense of the grace of God! For if righteousness were possible under the Law then Christ died for nothing. **(Phillips Translation)**

[20] I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved

me and gave himself for me. **[21]** I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose. **(Revised Standard Version)**

I have been crucified with Christ, **[20]** and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in this body I live in faith: faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake. **[21]** I cannot bring myself to give up God's gift: if the Law can justify us, there is no point in the death of Christ. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

For I have been crucified with Christ, **[20]** and it is no longer I who live, but Christ is living in me. And the *life* I now live in this body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me. **[21]** I do not reject the wonderful, undeserved favor of God. For if the laws of *Moses* could make me good in the eyes of God, then Christ died uselessly. **(The New Translation)**

[20] I have been crucified with Christ. I don't live any longer. Christ lives in me. My faith in the Son of God helps me to live my life in my body. He loved me. He gave himself for me. **[21]** I do not get rid of the grace of God. What if a person could become right with God by obeying the law? Then Christ died for nothing! **(New International Reader's Version)**

[20] So now, in effect, I too have been put to death on the cross with Christ. But still, I'm alive! But it's no longer I who am alive and in control. The fact that I'm now spiritually alive is due to the fact that Christ now lives in this body of mine. So now as I live among all the problems, temptations, and cares of this life, I look for deliverance and strength from the Son of God, who so loved me that He gave His very life for me. **[21]** I will do nothing to weaken or cancel God's gracious offer of forgiveness and eternal life thru Jesus Christ our Lord. Because if peace with God can be obtained by obeying Jewish laws and ceremonies, then Christ's death was useless and He died for nothing. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 21) – "frustrate" means to prevent from accomplishing a purpose or fulfilling a desire; thwart. "**Frustrate**" suggests defeating in the sense of nullifying another's accomplishment or making it ineffective. (American heritage Dictionary).

"**Grace**" (Charis) indicates favor on the part of the giver. (Vine's Lexicon).

"**Vain**" means not yielding the desired outcome; unsuccessful. (American heritage Dictionary).

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Galatians Chapter 2)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions

and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Galatians Chapter 2.**

1. **Read Galatians 2:1-2.** Fourteen years after Paul's first visit to Jerusalem he went again, this time he went: a. because he needed a vacation (holiday). b. because he wanted to see how large the church had grown. c. God revealed to him that he should go.
2. **Read Galatians 2:1-2.** Paul wanted to clarify to the church leaders in Jerusalem exactly what he was preaching to the Gentiles. True or False.
3. **Read Galatians 2:3.** The church leaders: a. agreed b. disagreed with what Paul was preaching.
4. **Read Galatians 2:3.** The church leaders did not even demand that Titus (Paul's companion in travel) and a Gentile: a. eat pork chops. b. be circumcised. c. give money in the offering plate.
5. **Read Galatians 2:1-3.** Paul's message was identical to the other twelve apostles. True or False.
6. **Read Galatians 2:4-5.** Some false Christians had infiltrated the churches so that they could enslave Christians with Jewish regulations and defile the truth of the gospel. True or False.
7. **Read Galatians 2:6-8.** The Jerusalem church leaders added nothing to Paul's message and recognized his apostleship to the Gentiles. True or False.
8. **Read Galatians 2:9-10.** James, Peter and John ask Paul to continue to remember to help the poor. True or False.
9. **Read Galatians 2:11.** When Peter came to Antioch, Paul and Peter had a face-to-face confrontation. True or False.
10. **Read Galatians 2:11-13.** The confrontation between Peter and Paul centered around Peter's bad example and hypocrisy that was leading the Jewish Christians astray. True or False.
11. **Read Galatians 2:14.** Peter and the other Jewish Christians were not acting like people who knew and accepted the truth of the gospel. True or False.
12. **Read Galatians 2:15-16.** Paul made it clear that we are justified only by: a. works of the law. b. faith in Jesus Christ. c. attending church on Sundays.

13. **Read Galatians 2:20.** The life that I live in this body is lived by: a. the strength of my health food. b. getting plenty of rest and exercise. C. faith in the Son of God.

14. **Read Galatians 2:20-21.** Can God's grace be frustrated and nullified? Yes or No. How? By going to the law for salvation.

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