

GOSPEL of *Grace*
FELLOWSHIP

Galatians 2:15-16
**Not Justified by Works of Law
but Faith in Christ**
by Bob DeWaay
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Paul and Peter’s Shared Heritage
Galatians 2:15 (ESV)
We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners;

- They shared Old Covenant status which the Gentiles did not (Eph. 2:11-12)
- Peter’s behavior implied that nothing more was necessary
- What is at stake is the truth of the gospel (Galatians 2:5 & 2:14)

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Not by Law Works!
Galatians 2:16a (ESV)
yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law

- At issue is not just a local rift, but the only basis of salvation for all peoples
- All who are of “law works” are cursed (Gal. 3:10)
- “Something more” is what destroys the gospel

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Faith Alone
Galatians 2:16b (ESV)
but through faith in Jesus Christ

- This implies “faith alone”(Romans 3:28)
- The contrast is with works, a contrast Paul often emphasized
- The Greek genitive here is objective: Jesus is the object of faith, not “the faith of Jesus Christ” (KJV) or “faithfulness of Jesus Christ” (NET)

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Chiasm
Galatians 2:16
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**

A Not Works
B Faith in Christ
C Believed in Christ
B’ Faith in Christ
A’ Not Works

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Justification by Faith
Galatians 2:16c-e (ESV)
so we also have **believed in Christ** Jesus, in **order to be justified by faith in Christ** and not by works of the law,

- Clearly Jesus is the object of our faith
- “Justified” implies the judicial action of God apart from human merit or effort
- This includes the eschatological verdict before God’s final judgment seat

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Not by Law Works

Galatians 2:16f (NASB)

since by the works of the Law **no flesh** will be justified.

Psalms 143:2 (NASB)

And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For **in Your sight no man living is righteous.**

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Implications and Applications

- Right standing before God is found in Christ alone by faith alone
- No human has anything to contribute so we must cling to the cross
- We must repent not only of our sins, but of our self-perceived goodness

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Christ Alone by Faith Alone

Ephesians 2:8, 9 (NASB)

For by grace **you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; **not as a result of works**, so that no one may boast.

Romans 3:22a (NASB)

even the righteousness of God **through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe...**

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The Future Judicial Verdict

Romans 5:8-9 (NASB)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, **we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.**

- **The three tenses of salvation: we were yet sinners, now justified, shall be saved from God's wrath: by Christ alone!**

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A Sober Evaluation of Our Need

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NASB)

For **the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing**, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Revelation 3:17 (NASB)

Because you say, **"I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,"** and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

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