

2:21 Paul's conclusion related to importance of Grace

"I do not nullify the grace of God οὐκ ἄθετῶ to set aside, declare invalid, to reject

"grace" here focuses on His saving - justifying provision, the cross.

Grace is (B.L.) all that God is free to do for us based on the work of Christ on the Cross.

Def. Grace speaks of all that God has done to bring fallen and sinful man into a just and eternal relationship with Himself and do so without compromising His character and totally apart from human merit or works.

"for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

Christ died needlessly δωρεάν adverb speaks of an unaccepted gift therefore without purpose, needlessly

Summary 2:21

1. This verse is the coup-de-grace, the death blow to legalism since it makes it clear that Grace and works in salvation are mutually exclusive.
2. The point Paul has been making is that the death of Christ on the Cross is totally sufficient for one to be justified before God.
3. The very thought of Christ, the Messiah dying needlessly, without a purpose is unimaginable to Paul and should be to each of us!

Galatians Chapter 3

II. Justification by Faith as the Basis of Christian Liberty, 3:1- 4:31

1. 3:1-5 Paul questions the Galatians about their experience.

The first question 3:1 Read vs:1

You foolish Galatians, ἀνόητος foolish in the sense of without thinking;

who has bewitched you, βασκαίνω literally used to refer to casting a magic spell on someone; or to bring damage to a person through an evil eye or spoken word.

before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

With this statement Paul is telling them your without excuse, your accountable.

If you Galatians had truly appreciated the significance of the crucifixion of Christ you would not have found the message of the Judaizers/legalists so attractive.

Observations: 3:1

1. Paul had not been deficient in his communication of the gospel of grace, that one is justified by faith in the work of Christ on the cross and they had believed.
2. The problem now is that the doctrine, the truth that they know is not being used to evaluate what the Judaizers are teaching them.
3. These Galatian believers appear as if charmed, bewitched by the evil of this heteros gospel.
4. Point that Paul makes here in the last part of the verse is that if you reflected on and appreciated the Work of Christ on the Cross it would destroy your legalism.
5. Part of the P/T's ministry is to teach the wise, those who realize they don't know it all and need to be taught and to encourage the foolish to think and become wise.
6. Application: The danger of being a non-thinking ἀνόητος believer.
 - a. Non-thinking believers are characterized by superficial attitudes relative to doctrine.
 - b. Non-thinking believers do not discriminate within the world of ideas.
 - c. Non-thinking believers without a foundation of doctrine are easy prey for the false doctrine that is the fad of the day.
 - d. One's capacity to discriminate in the world of ideas is an indication of one's maturity.

3:2 The Second Question

The set up for the second question!

This is the only thing I want to find out from you: lit. *this only I desire to learn from you!*

did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

Did the Holy Spirit come to indwell you as the result of law motivated works or by a message that stimulated faith?

Summary 3:2

1. Paul is challenging them here to think back to what transpired when they believed in Christ.
2. The issue that Paul is raising is did your salvation begin on the basis of law produced works or on the basis of faith in the Gospel that I communicated?
3. Since these churches were predominately Gentile and did not have a background in the M/L therefore law oriented works why are you being sidetracked now by idea that law produced works have some merit.
4. When they had evaluated the circumstances related to their salvation, the only conclusion they could arrive at is that they received the Holy Spirit [indwelling] in response to faith in Christ, the message of grace that Paul had communicated.

3:3 Question #3 Shifts the issue of sanctification

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Think folks can a work which begun on the basis of the higher sphere of God's Spirit be perfected or brought to its intended goal on the basis of the works of the flesh, the sin nature dominating which is a lower sphere. Is that God's way?

Begun by the Holy Spirit: [brings into view the specific things accomplished at salvation]

Regeneration - gives new life, eternal life, cancels spiritual death

Baptism of the H/S - enters us into union with Christ; identification with Christ

Indwells - permanent

Seals us - guarantee of our future inheritance in Christ.

Gives each one a spiritual gift [for the function of the body of Christ the Church]

being perfected ἐπιτελέω to accomplish, to complete to bring something to an intended goal

Paul is saying here that the greatest thing that ever happened to you came about because you believed in Christ, why have you abandoned the faith principle now for a system of law produced works. You've gone from grace to legalism.

UNDER GRACE

God is the source of blessing
Man is the recipient
Works are the result
Result is an attitude of humility

UNDER LEGALISM

God is indebted to bless.
Man is the producer
Works are the means
Result is an attitude of pride