

(Galatians 1:11 NKJV) But I **make** known to you, **brethren**, that the gospel which was preached by me is **not according to man**. (Galatians 1:12 NKJV) **For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Not man-made religion
Not from carnal man
Again, his authority is not from man but from Jesus

Notice the present tense of “make”; “I spoke to you before about the gospel of Jesus Christ and right now I am telling you that it is not lies of men but truth from Jesus Himself”

(Galatians 1:13 NKJV) For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God **beyond measure** and **tried to destroy it**. (Galatians 1:14 NKJV) And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being **more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers**.

In a sense, Paul is saying “here’s proof of what I am saying:

1. He was born a Jew, raised up in the Jewish religion
2. That religion was a perversion of what was founded and established by God
3. That religion had lost the spiritual truths as presented to them through Moses by adding to it human traditions and commands taught as if from God.
4. He was educated in the sect of the Pharisee’s. Known for their strict adherence to the Law as well as haters of our LORD.
5. So embedded in their lies, he persecuted the new church and tried to destroy it.

With this in mind, he wants his audience to see the veracity of his conversion and the revelations given to him by their Savior.

(Galatians 1:15 NKJV) **But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace,** (Galatians 1:16 NKJV) **to reveal His Son in me**, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with **flesh and blood**, (Galatians 1:17 NKJV) nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Pleased God not any man (how many of those people that he persecuted thought of witnessing to Paul?)

Mother’s womb: some think of this as figurative, referring to Judaism, but other’s see it as God’s will being exercised even at Paul’s birth (and the truth is, He knew Paul while still in his mother’s womb. God kept him safe and ensuring his true call upon his life: not as a destroyer of the Gospel but the preacher of it.

to reveal His Son in me – Jesus had to blind Paul physically so that He could open his eyes spiritually. With the external world in darkness, Paul was able to see the Light of the World. It is said that when one sense is taken away, another is enhanced. So perhaps without his sight,

Paul could also hear better.

Paul would have to say, “by grace alone was I called”.

flesh and blood – Peter had a similar experience:

Matthew 16:17 NKJV Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Not by birthright, not by tradition, not by religious education, but by the Grace of God. Everything that Paul was and did, everything he learned, was against God’s Plan of Salvation. Jesus turned him upside down and inside out so that Paul would live for God’s glory instead of his own.

Paul sets out: Paul needed **them** to understand that it wasn’t by those in Jerusalem that he was “educated”, but rather Jesus Himself.

Into Arabia: What he did there is not recorded by himself or Luke. A man like Paul who had been at the top of his profession, a brilliant scholar and a radical/fanatical defender of the Pharisaical teachings must have been stunned into humble silence by all that happened on the road to Damascus.

What do you think he did there? Did Jesus meet with him again? Did the light that shone down on him also illuminate the Scriptures of Truth that he knew, but knew wrongly? Was this as much Unlearning as it was learning?

In any case, he returned to Damascus and began his ministry of preaching the Gospel. Again, he avoided Jerusalem... It is rather ironic that the place where he was going to arrest the saints in Christ would be the place where his ministry started!

This was not a “faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God”...this is NOT a normal conversion but a most remarkable one for a most remarkable man. Jesus spoke to Paul audibly. Jesus identified Himself and at that moment, Paul was transformed from a persecutor of Jesus to a proclaimer of Jesus.

You can get the details of these verses in Acts 21 thru 23.

(Galatians 1:18 NKJV) Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. **(Galatians 1:19 NKJV)** But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. **(Galatians 1:20 NKJV)** (Now *concerning* the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.) **(Galatians 1:21 NKJV)** Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. **(Galatians 1:22 NKJV)** And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which *were* in Christ. **(Galatians 1:23 NKJV)** But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once *tried to* destroy." **(Galatians 1:24 NKJV)** And they glorified God in me.

Paul does meet with Peter and James the LORD’s half-brother. By this time his good reputation was being established and he had very little difficulty gaining their trust.

The idea is that Paul was *not* commanded to come to Jerusalem to give an account to Peter or the other disciples, but he came of his own accord, and visited as a “tourist.”

Paul declares in writing that he is telling the truth, especially before God. This isn't defensive but rather a solemn oath to his readers that all he is relating about his calling is true.

The word spreads throughout the Judean churches with such a great testimony that they all praised God for His wonderful work in Paul;

Like **us**, if this was not of Christ, Paul would have been powerless and incapable of declaring the Gospel. In other words, if Paul was one of those Judaizing believers, trying to infiltrate the church, he would have not been able to speak

(Galatians 2:1 NKJV) Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. (Galatians 2:2 NKJV) And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means **I might run, or had run, in vain**.

Some believe that this refers to the time when he and Barnabas went from the church at Antioch to the apostles and elders about the question, whether circumcision was necessary to salvation, [Act 15:1](#) which entirely agrees with the account the apostle here gives of this journey.

However, you'd think that Paul would have talked about the decisions made there since they affected the gentiles so much.

Others believe this is recorded in Acts 11 when Barnabas and Paul took up an offering for the believers in Jerusalem who were struggling in their needs.

(Galatians 2:3 NKJV) Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. (Galatians 2:4 NKJV) And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out **our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus**, that they might bring us into bondage), (Galatians 2:5 NKJV) to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. (Galatians 2:6 NKJV) But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; **God shows personal favoritism to no man**—for those who seemed *to be something* added nothing to me.

During the time that Paul, Barnabas and Titus went to Jerusalem to give the offering, Peter started getting push back from some of the Jewish Christians who insisted that Gentiles had to be circumcised before they could be saved. They couldn't even believe that Peter would go into a gentile's home and eat with them! But after his impassioned testimony, especially about the giving of the Holy Spirit, they understood that God saves the Jews and Gentiles alike!

The issue of circumcision was about Jewish conversion. The Christian Jews never considered that all peoples were equal in the eyes of God and that the Jewish Messiah was for the world and not just for Israel.

But Paul understood and resisted all attempts at converting gentiles in order to be saved. He was never totally against circumcision as it is but insisted that it was useless in terms of salvation. Paul talked about our liberty in Christ: we are free to observe holidays, free to observe rituals just as we are to ignore them. We are never to impose our attitudes regarding such things on another – one way or the other!

(Galatians 2:7 NKJV) But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had

been committed to me, as *the gospel* for the circumcised *was* to Peter ([Galatians 2:8 NKJV](#)) (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), ([Galatians 2:9 NKJV](#)) and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we *should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ([Galatians 2:10 NKJV](#)) They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

Jesus had Peter open the door to the gentiles but it was Paul whom Jesus gave His marching orders. If any one was going to insist on Jewish conversion signified by circumcision, you'd think it would have been Paul, the Pharisee of Pharisees. It is a testament to God and His power of not only revealing the truth to Paul but the amount of knowledge he had that had to be unlearned!

([Galatians 2:11 NKJV](#)) Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; ([Galatians 2:12 NKJV](#)) for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. ([Galatians 2:13 NKJV](#)) And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. ([Galatians 2:14 NKJV](#)) But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?"

God understood that what He created as the Body of Christ would cause problems. Jews were so ingrained in the Law that it wasn't just the issue of obedience, but it was also how they were defined – their national and individual identity could NOT be separated from the Law; What they DID defined who they WERE. This is totally the opposite with Jesus. It's our identity in Christ that defines who we are. Doing is religion, being is relationship.

With that being said, Paul relates the incident when Peter was in Antioch; Peter would eat and associate with the Gentiles as brothers. However, when some Jerusalem Christians came, he separated himself from the gentiles. This hypocrisy affects others, including Barnabas who travels extensively with Paul.

- What message was he sending to the gentile Christians in Antioch?
- By the way, who started all of this "fraternization"?
- What effect would this have had at communion?!?

Paul's response says it all; and he said it to his face in the hearing of everyone! Paul calls the Jewish Christians "false brethren"! That's heavy! He also makes a jab at "important people" saying, their reputation makes no matter, for all men are equal before the eyes of God.

([Galatians 2:15-19](#) 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 faith in Jesus Christ, even **we** have believed in Christ Jesus, that **we** might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. ([Galatians 2:17 NKJV](#)) "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! ([Galatians 2:18 NKJV](#)) For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

(Galatians 2:19 NKJV) For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.

The first line bears examination: Paul is referring to the Jews in Antioch who were born as Jews not proselytes. They were raised under the Law of Moses and the insistence that it be observed to the letter (including the Traditions of the Elders with the Oral Law).

“And not sinners of the Gentiles” – not that the Jews were righteous and pure by nature, but that if they, under the law, came to know of justification by faith in Christ alone, it was totally unreasonable to the Jews to insist on putting the gentiles under the law to be saved!!!

Justification by faith in **His Work on the cross** is the only way to God because it is the only work God would ever accept! Again, Christ turned the religious world upside-down: from works unto salvation to salvation then good works. This was directed at the Jewish Believers but has application to every man and woman even up to today.

Verse 17: Yes, in a real way, our sin is revealed in our seeking of Christ. But that does not make Jesus responsible for it! If Paul were to build up salvation by works, then!!! he would be a sinner!!! The law, as **interpreted** by the Rabbi's, Priests and Scribes, was an instrument of bondage. To be honest, Jews have not seen the righteousness of believers, so they question whether if Christianity, that is, Jesus alone, works? I too had this question when I was seeking.

Romans 8:2-4 NKJV For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do in that it was **weak through the flesh**, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, (4) that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

from the law of sin and death – this bears comment; the law is holy and good; it's through man's sin nature that the law seems to cause sin; but the Law condemns sin; The law reveals sin and shows its consequences, often, death of the sinner;

Note that in His sacrifice in condemned sin in the flesh such that all of the Law's requirements might be fulfilled IN US who walk in submission to the Spirit not according to the letter of the Law. This is an amazing Truth: Christ imputed His righteousness to us so that the curse and death penalties in the Law could not condemn us!

Back to the question of Christ and our sin: He does not cause us to sin but rather to see our sin. To think that Christianity and therefore Jesus is ineffective with regards to our sin is to be ignorant of Jesus's atoning death. Yes, we sin; but that's always on us; But, all because of Jesus, God does not put red marks next to our names in the Book of Life; His faith and therefore our faith in Him can be summed up in:

Romans 8:1 NKJV *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

(Galatians 2:20 NKJV) I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me.

Galatians 2:20 ASV I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me: and that *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, **the faith which is in the Son of God**, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.

This one verse could take hours to explain so that it might have an impact on our walks. I highly recommend the Letter to the Romans which deals with the same themes of justification, sanctification and righteousness but in a more thorough way. For example, this one verse was expounded by Paul in Romans 1 thru 8.

For now, let me try to give a synopsis with the help of some key verses in Romans.

Identification: this is being used today by the LGBTQ community to say that even though they were born male and female, they so strongly identify with the opposite sex that they consider themselves that way. For example, a 14 year old goes into a bar and orders a drink; he shows his id to the bartender who denies him service; the 14 year old says "I identify as a 21 year old" therefore you must serve me.

With Christ, we too must identify with Him. His ways are to be our ways; His thoughts are to be our thoughts; His life is to be our life. Here's what Paul said in Romans 6:

Romans 6:3-10 NKJV Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were baptized into His death? (4) Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also **should walk in newness of life**. (5) For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, (6) knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. (7) For he who has died has been freed from sin. (8) Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, (9) knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. (10) For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

How did Paul die to the law? Obviously, not physically. He "died" when Jesus was crucified on the cross. His death was truly my death. He identified with me as a sinner (as He has done for all), therefore when He died for me, I died as well. If He died and fulfilled all the righteous requirements of the Law, then I too died to the Law.

This has been called the "great exchange", His life became my life. We died by crucifying our "dead works" trying to reach God.

If we died with Christ on the cross, it follows that we now have a different life. If our old life under the Law is dead, then we are alive to Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is *alive in us*.

If Jesus is alive in us, then, according to Paul (and the Holy Spirit), then our life belongs to Jesus because our "old" life died. While the life of Christ is in us, it doesn't mean that we are robots doing exactly as He did, no, but we are to conduct our lives in a manner that glorifies

Him and the Father. His Spirit is in us to remind us of our true identity and to empower us to live accordingly.

How can we really understand this and accept it? Paul has the answer:

that *life* which I now live **in the flesh** I live in faith, ***the faith which is in the Son of God***, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.

Paul certainly recognizes the problem:

Romans 7:18 NKJV For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find.

But, he now must live in the flesh. He must do this in faith but as this translation reads it, it is the Faith of the Son of God that enables him to do so. His faith is immutable! Our faith changes at times when we see with physical eyes instead of spiritual eyes. It is at these times when we confess our lack of faith and humbly ask Him to impart His faith to us!

He will do this because He loves us and the proof of that is the Cross of Christ.

(Galatians 2:21 NKJV) I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain."

Paul refuses to lay aside the grace of God. If grace wasn't the cause of our salvation, then the law is all that's there and therefore, Christ died for nothing! But it was by the grace of God for Paul has already proven that the Law was powerless to save because of our sinful nature.