

**Galatians 2:19-20:** "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." *Being crucified with Christ has both a legal and relational meaning. Legally, our sin has been paid and we are no longer condemned. Relationally, we enter a personal relationship with Christ—dying to our old ways, sharing in His sufferings, and living by the power of the Holy Spirit to walk in obedience.*

**Hebrews 11:6:** "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him." *True faith actively seeks Him and His will.*

**Colossians 1:10:** "so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God." *The better we know God and His Word, the better we can please Him.*

**Romans 12:2:** "Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will." *We do for God in response to what He has done for us. His brightness shines through us.*

**Galatians 2:9b:** "If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse." *We are to reject false messengers / teachers with discernment.*

**Galatians 2:10:** "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ."

**Galatians 2:16:** "know that a person is not justified in the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law not one will be justified." *We are first called to a relationship with Jesus.*

**Galatians 6:1:** "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted."

**Ephesians 5:11:** "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness but rather expose them". *We have the responsibility to remove ourselves from darkness, AND to expose it.*

**Matthew 7:3:** "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" *God commands us not to judge others sin without first evaluating our own hearts.*

**Luke 6:37:** "Do not judge and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."

**Romans 14:3:** "The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them." *Judgement from a hypocritical or unkind spirit are condemned by God.*

**Galatians 2:20:** "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Jesus provided the only perfect example of how to live on this earth. Although we can't earn God's favor through our actions, Scripture tells us that we can (please) Him (Hebrews 11:6, Colossians 1:10, Romans 12:2). This can be confusing to think about pleasing God when we consider that it is sinful to try to *earn* God's favor. Throughout the second chapter of Galatians, Paul provides examples of how we are to accomplish this balance. Paul knew that the law was given to us by God not to save us, but to guide us to the only One who could truly save us.

- 1) Right Behavior with Wrong Belief (2:1-10).** Even doing good things can be sinful when we do them with the wrong intentions or beliefs. By believing that performing acts is a way to earn merit before God, we actually dishonor Him and silence the value of the grace He so freely grants us. We are to hear and believe God's Word as it is written or be under God's (curse) (2:9b); and focus on pleasing God and not (people) (2:10).

What is the purpose of the "law" if it is not to save us?

- Awareness – make us aware of our disobedience to God.
- Direction – guide us into right relationship with Jesus Christ that produces freedom.
- Freedom – free us from the bondage of performance and guide us into relationship with God.

You can perform religious activities without a relationship with God, but you will miss experiencing Him the way He wants you to, through a personal (relationship) (2:19-20).

Let Paul's words serve as a warning. We are all born with a sinful nature, thinking we can earn our way to God. *Where are you trying to work for God's favor or blessing over your life?*

- 2) Right Belief with Wrong Behavior (2:11-14).** Being made right with God is a matter of relationship with Him, not religious activity.

Though we may become obedient to God through the activities performed, we are not called to solely perform a task, mission, job or ministry. We are first called to a (relationship) with God (2:16). Pressures of this world can cause us to act in ways that are in opposition or even hypocritical to God's Will for our lives. Hypocrisy can present itself in many forms – not being generous with God's blessings of provision by helping others in need; living in sexual sin while claiming to follow Christ; or even judging others without first checking our own sinful hearts. If we see areas of hypocrisy in our lives or the lives of other believers, we are called to (expose) it (gently) with love and kindness (Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 5:11).

Before confronting another's (sin), remember what we are told in Matthew 7:3-5. With this command to not (judge), Jesus is not forbidding spiritual discernment. Instead, he condemns the kind of judgement that comes from a (hypocritical) or (unkind) (spirit) (Luke 6:37, Romans 14:3). Christians should never judge by appearances or in a manner by which they themselves would not want to be judged.

**Psalm: 143:1-2:** "Lord, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief. Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you." *Christ made a way for sinners to stand before a righteous God through grace rather than judgment. David trusted in God's salvation through His compassion, forgiveness, and covenant faithfulness.*

**Galatians 2:21:** "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" *Salvation is a gift of grace, not a reward for performance. If we could save ourselves, Jesus wouldn't have needed to sacrifice Himself.*

**2 Corinthians 5:7:** "For we live by faith, not by sight". *Living by faith is to trust in God. It is not blind optimism; it is confident reliance and hope in what God has revealed to be true.*

**Ephesians 2:8-10:** "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." *God's kindness is so good that we cannot possibly comprehend it. We, as Christians, are saved for good works as the result of Christ's work in us and NOT by our own works. These works are a natural outgrowth of a relationship with Jesus, and they are empowered through the Holy Spirit. We are God's workmanship, His masterpieces.*

**Proverbs 3:5:** "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." *In order for God to make our paths straight, we must do whatever we know to be right. It is in obedience that God's promises are fulfilled. When we depend on our own understanding of truth and life, we disregard God's Will.*

**Colossians 2:13-14:** "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross." *If God could have overlooked sin, the cross would not have been necessary. Thankfully, he loved sinners so much that he created a plan to wipe away their unrighteousness. God cancelled the charge against us with the work of Jesus on the cross.*

**Matthew 11:28:** "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." *One of the most precious invitations in the bible is Jesus' invitation to "COME". This invitation speaks to all who are oppressed by routine, monotony, overwork, responsibility, and tension. Those who are burdened ensure something that is laid on them from an outside source, causing us "burnout". Jesus' form of rest is not absent of work but includes rejuvenation and refreshment.*

- 3) **Right Belief with Right Behavior (2:15-21).** It is through our FAITH in Christ that we are accepted or *justified* before God. Justification by faith alone is the cornerstone of the gospel.

**Justification** is the gracious act of God as He declares a sinner to be (righteous), solely through faith in Jesus Christ (Ps. 143:1-2). Justification is all about grace, which means that faith itself is evidence of God's grace. Therefore, we must be careful not to make faith about doing good works. It is our love for God that drives us to serve Him by serving His people. This precious gift is extended to us exclusively through faith in Jesus Christ (2:16). Placing your faith in Christ means that we received the blessed gift of God's forgiveness and righteousness. Praise God for His grace!

How we demonstrate our Faith:

- a. Believe that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross to pay for your sin debt; that He died and was buried in a tomb for three days; and that on the third day He was raised from the dead with power over death (AMEN!)
- b. Act on your belief by making the decision to ask Jesus Christ to become your personal Lord and Savior and then live based on that decision.
- c. Trust in Him by totally surrendering your life and your plans to Christ.

Why would Christ need to die for our unrighteousness if we could earn our way back to God by our own efforts? That would make His coming unnecessary. To add human works to faith would be as Paul said, that "Christ died for (nothing) (2:21). There is no need for grace if our good deeds could be sufficient for righteousness. Paul concludes that being justified comes only through the work of Christ and not through any human effort: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (2:20).

Paul also warns us about trusting in Christ and then returning to our old ways. In verse 19 Paul tells us why he died to the law: "so that I might live for God." Not only are we justified by faith, we LIVE by (faith) (2 Cor. 5:7). As we die to the law, we also die to sin – its penalty, power, and dominion. Jesus paid the price for all our sin on the cross. This means that our justification is sealed by God, forever.

So, how do we please God? God's pleasure in us is not based on our performance for Him. God's pleasure in us is based on Christ's performance FOR us. Once we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, our (good works) are the result of Christ's work IN us (Eph. 2:8-10). We must trust Him daily to produce in us that which pleases God (Proverbs 3:5). Jesus loves us so much that he paid the ultimate price when He gave Himself on the (cross) (Col. 2:13-14). So trust Him, dear sister!

Jesus is waiting for you to drop the unbearable weight that you are carrying, the weariness in your bones that you are feeling, the unattainable standard of the law. In its place He offers you rest, direction, a perfect plan for your life, and a lightness that comes from accepting His *invitation* to live a life of true purpose and peace (Matthew 11:28).

How will you pray today to be guided into a deeper relationship and to live for Christ?