

### **NULLIFYING GOD'S GRACE**

In (Gal.2:11-21), Paul has been explaining the reason for calling out Peter for his legalistic behavior towards the Gentile believers of the congregation.

(Gal.2:12) "For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision."

Paul saw Peter's behavior as threatening to the gospel of grace salvation and equality in Christ.

(Gal.2:14) "But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, 'If you being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?'"

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Apparently Paul was of the opinion that the doctrine of God's grace had been settled at the Jerusalem Church Conference (Acts 15:1-30). At this church conference, Peter outlined the New Covenant grace doctrine (Acts 15:76-11).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>This lesson will study four aspects of Paul's doctrine of the danger of Nullifying God's Grace with a works Gospel and Spirituality.</b></p>
--

**1. The Judaizers, a group of believers from the church of Jerusalem who embraced Pharisaical legalism works of the Law, were attacking Paul's gospel of grace salvation and spirituality apart from observance of the Law.**

(Acts 15:5) "But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up saying, 'It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.'"

(Rom.1:16-17) "For I **am not ashamed of the gospel**, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written. 'But the righteous man shall live by faith.'"

What Paul thought was settled at the Church conference in Acts 15 had resurfaced in Galatians 2.

It must be fought every time it surfaces in opposition to grace (1 Tim.6:12).

(Gal.2:5) "But we did not yield in subjection to them for an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you."

**2. Paul explained that whenever any human work or merit is added to faith in the gospel of grace salvation; it nullifies (atheteo/ p.a.ind.1ps) [makes void, sets aside] the grace of God (ten charis tou Theos).**

Paul taught that **if it nullifies** the grace of God **then Christ died** (apothnesko/ a.a.ind.3ps) needlessly (dorean/ adverb) [without just cause].

(Gal.2:21b) “**For if** (1cc / True) Debater’s technique - **we assume this to be true** (the protasis) [That righteousness [comes] through the Law], **then** (the apodosis) **we assume this to be true** [Christ died needlessly].”

There is no verb [come] in the protasis of this 1cc conditional clause. The absence of the verb is designed to make a big point in the Greek. “If indeed one can save himself by being righteous in his own strength, then the statement in the apodosis is true – **Christ died needlessly**.” (Renaissance of NT, pg.32)

**3. Therefore the works of the Law and God’s grace are theologically antithetical (complete opposites). “God’s grace rules out all human merit.” (Unger Bible Dictionary, pg.430)**

“Receiving God’s acceptance by grace always stands in sharp contrast to earning it on the basis of works.” (Grace Awakening by Swindoll, pg.9)

Works of the law emphasizes what a person must do to receive salvation in addition to believing the gospel (Rom.1:16).

God’s grace emphasizes what God is free to do for man on the basis of the finished work of Christ by faith (John 19:30; 2 Cor.5:21).

(2 Tim.1:9) “Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, **not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace** which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity (eternal life conference).”

**4. The doctrine of grace remained the major attack against Paul’s ministry until the end. (Act 15) [50 AD] and (Acts 21) [53-57AD].**

The Judaizers were still attacking Paul’s grace ministry on the third missionary evangelism trip (Acts 18:23-28:31). In Acts 21:17-21, the Judaizers boast of thousands of converts through a works gospel.

(Acts 21:20) “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and **they are all zealous of the Law**.”

When they couldn’t silence him, they plotted to assassinate Paul but his sister’s son told him of the plot and Roman’s protected him because he was a Roman citizen (Acts 23:12-23; 26:21). They put Paul under guard in Herod’s palace in Caesarea for two years (Acts 23:35) [57-59 AD].

(Phil.1:16) “Knowing that **I am appointed** for the defense of the gospel.”

(Phil.1:29) “**For to you** it has granted for Christ’s sake, **not only** to believe in Him, **but also** to suffer for His sake.” (Eph.3:1, 6)

(Eph.6:20) “For which I am an **ambassador in chains**; that in proclaiming it **I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak**.”