



Justification by Faith Galatians 2:15-21

Ben did a great job walking us through the final verses of the second chapter of Galatians. He picked up on the theme of grace and the challenges it faced in the lives of the Galatians, and then Ben proceeded to help us make specific application in our lives today. The gospel of grace is the heart of our relationship with God, faces opposition at all turns, and gives us hope for living lives pleasing to God.

Getting Started

Ben referred to John Stott's quote when discussing the incredible reality of our relationship with God being based on God's own initiative in calling us to faith, enabled by the death of His own son, and not dependent on anything we could ever do. Read the quote and answer the following questions.

If anybody insists that justification is by works, and that he can earn his salvation by his own efforts, he is undermining the foundations of the Christian religion. He is nullifying the grace of God (because if salvation is by works, it is not by grace) and he is making Christ's death superfluous (because if salvation is our own work, then Christ's work was unnecessary)...

Do you agree or disagree with Stott's quote? Why?
How do our works interact with our faith?

Why is this hard for some people to accept?
Why is their confusion re works and faith?

Setting the stage... (recap of 1:1-2:14)

What have we seen so far in the first two chapters?
How does Paul talk about the Law in light of Christianity?

What challenges are the Galatians facing?
What insights into community can we discern?

How can we be saved? (2:15-16)

v.15: NOT by our heritage

v.16: ONLY by faith in Christ

Why does Paul refer to the Gentiles as "sinners"?

What are the works Paul mentions here?

v.16: NOT by observing the law

This is the doctrine of justification

What does Paul say is the basis for our justification?

What kind of "works" do we put our faith in today?

Does grace encourage sinfulness? (vv. 17-19)

v.17: the claim – if you disregard the law, you sin

v.17: the truth – Christ *fre*es us from obedience to the law!

v.19: the point – we abandon the law, instead we live for god

How would abandoning the Law make us sinners?

How is this objection missing the Paul's point?

Compare the Law with contemporary Christian culture?

v.17: the implication – Christ promotes sin

vv. 18-19: the reality – the law cannot save, but only condemns

What is Paul's response to this argument?

What is the point Paul' has been developing?

How are we guided by and misled by both?

How then shall we live? (v.20)

- Die to your previous self-focused desires

- Live with passionate faith in Christ

How do you feel when you read this verse?

What does it mean for Christ to live in us?

- Be the presence of Christ to the world today

- Show the love of Christ, displayed in his death

Do you personally identify with this statement?

What areas do you need to allow Christ to live in?

What is the center of our faith? (v.21)

The grace of god, displayed in the death of Christ, by which we may be declared righteous

How are we tempted to set aside grace?

What is the relationship between grace and works?

Why is it so "natural" to try to earn righteousness?

How do we balance these two?

Application

Each group member should come up with a specific application from the study.

Which study point challenged your thinking the most?

What areas of your life need work?

How is God speaking to you through this passage?

How would you like to see God at work in your life?

Prayer

Group members should have an application-specific item as their first prayer request.

Pray for everyone at TCBC. Ask God to bring us together in real relationships marked by sincere love for one another.