

Galatians 2 New Living Translation (NLT)

The Apostles Accept Paul

2 Then fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas; and Titus came along, too. ²I went there because God revealed to me that I should go. While I was there I met privately with those considered to be leaders of the church and shared with them the message I had been preaching to the Gentiles. I wanted to make sure that we were in agreement, for fear that all my efforts had been wasted and I was running the race for nothing. ³And they supported me and did not even demand that my companion Titus be circumcised, though he was a Gentile.^[a]

⁴Even that question came up only because of some so-called believers there—false ones, really^[b]—who were secretly brought in. They sneaked in to spy on us and take away the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to enslave us and force us to follow their Jewish regulations.⁵But we refused to give in to them for a single moment. We wanted to preserve the truth of the gospel message for you.

⁶And the leaders of the church had nothing to add to what I was preaching. (By the way, their reputation as great leaders made no difference to me, for God has no favorites.) ⁷Instead, they saw that God had given me the responsibility of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as he had given Peter the responsibility of preaching to the Jews.⁸For the same God who worked through Peter as the apostle to the Jews also worked through me as the apostle to the Gentiles.

⁹In fact, James, Peter,^[c] and John, who were known as pillars of the church, recognized the gift God had given me, and they accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews.¹⁰Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do.

Paul Confronts Peter

¹¹But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong. ¹²When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile believers, who were not circumcised. But afterward, when some friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these

people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision. ¹³As a result, other Jewish believers followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

¹⁴When I saw that they were not following the truth of the gospel message, I said to Peter in front of all the others, "Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you now trying to make these Gentiles follow the Jewish traditions?"

¹⁵"You and I are Jews by birth, not 'sinners' like the Gentiles. ¹⁶Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law."^[d]

¹⁷But suppose we seek to be made right with God through faith in Christ and then we are found guilty because we have abandoned the law. Would that mean Christ has led us into sin? Absolutely not! ¹⁸Rather, I am a sinner if I rebuild the old system of law I already tore down. ¹⁹For when I tried to keep the law, it condemned me. So I died to the law—I stopped trying to meet all its requirements—so that I might live for God.²⁰My old self has been crucified with Christ.^[e] It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.

Footnotes:

- a. 2:3 Greek *a Greek*.
- b. 2:4 Greek *some false brothers*.
- c. 2:9 Greek *Cephas*; also in 2:11, 14.
- d. 2:16 Some translators hold that the quotation extends through verse 14; others through verse 16; and still others through verse 21.
- e. 2:20 Some English translations put this sentence in verse 19.

Paul Defends His Gospel at Jerusalem

2 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. ²I went up according to a revelation and presented to them the gospel I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those recognized as leaders. I wanted to be sure I was not running, and had not been running, in vain. ³But not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. ⁴This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus in order to enslave us. ⁵But we did not give up and submit to these people for even a moment, so that the truth of the gospel would be preserved for you. ⁶Now from those recognized as important (what they^[a] once were makes no difference to me; God does not show favoritism^[b])—they added nothing to me. ⁷On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter was for the circumcised, ⁸since the one at work in Peter for an apostleship to the circumcised was also at work in me for the Gentiles. ⁹When James, Cephas,^[c] and John—those recognized as pillars—acknowledged the grace that had been given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to me and Barnabas, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ¹⁰They asked only that we would remember the poor, which I had made every effort to do.

Freedom from the Law

¹¹But when Cephas^[d] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.^[e] ¹²For he regularly ate with the Gentiles before certain men came from James. However, when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, because he feared those from the circumcision party. ¹³Then the rest of the Jews joined his hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that

they were deviating from the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas^u in front of everyone, “If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?” ^u

¹⁵We are Jews by birth and not “Gentile sinners,” ¹⁶and yet because we know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ,^u even we ourselves have believed in Christ Jesus. This was so that we might be justified by faith in Christ^u and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no human being will^u be justified. ¹⁷But if we ourselves are also found to be “sinners” while seeking to be justified by Christ, is Christ then a promoter^u of sin? Absolutely not! ¹⁸If I rebuild those things that I tore down, I show myself to be a lawbreaker. ¹⁹For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live for God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body,^u I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

Footnotes:

- a. 2:6 Lit *the recognized ones*
- b. 2:6 Or *God is not a respecter of persons*; lit *God does not receive the face of man*
- c. 2:9 Other mss read *Peter*
- d. 2:11 Other mss read *Peter*
- e. 2:11 Or *he was in the wrong*
- f. 2:14 Other mss read *Peter*
- g. 2:14 Some translations continue the quotation through ¹⁶ or ²¹.
- h. 2:16 Or *by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ*
- i. 2:16 Or *by the faithfulness of Christ*
- j. 2:16 Lit *law all flesh will not*
- k. 2:17 Or *servant*
- l. 2:20 Lit *flesh*

Defending the Gospel

2 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. ² 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. ³ Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴ 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), ⁵ to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

⁶ 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. ⁷ 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 ⁸ (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), ⁹ and when James, ¹⁰ 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. ¹⁰ *They desired* only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

No Return to the Law

¹¹ Now when ¹¹ Peter had come to Antioch, I ^{withstood} him to his face, because he was to be blamed; ¹² for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing ¹² those who were of the circumcision. ¹³ And

the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

¹⁴But 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, ^awhy do you compel Gentiles to live as ^bJews? ¹⁵We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, ¹⁶knowing that a man is not ^cjustified 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.

¹⁷“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! ¹⁸For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. ¹⁹For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. ²⁰I 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. ²¹I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died ^din vain.”

Footnotes:

- a. Galatians 2:2 because of
- b. Galatians 2:6 Lit. does not receive the face of a man
- c. Galatians 2:9 Peter
- d. Galatians 2:11 NU Cephas
- e. Galatians 2:11 opposed
- f. Galatians 2:12 Jewish Christians
- g. Galatians 2:14 NU how can you
- h. Galatians 2:14 Some interpreters stop the quotation here.
- i. Galatians 2:16 declared righteous
- j. Galatians 2:21 for nothing

Paul Accepted by the Apostles

2 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. ²I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. ³But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. ⁴Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery— ⁵to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. ⁶And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed influential added nothing to me. ⁷On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised ⁸(for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles),⁹ and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ¹⁰Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

Paul Opposes Peter

¹¹But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.[Ⓜ] ¹³And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that

their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

Justified by Faith

¹⁵We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet we know that a person is not justified^[b] by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

¹⁷But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness^[c] were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Footnotes:

- a. Galatians 2:12 Or *fearing those of the circumcision*
- b. Galatians 2:16 Or *counted righteous* (three times in verse 16); also verse 17
- c. Galatians 2:21 Or *justification*

The Council at Jerusalem

2 Then after a period of fourteen years I again went up to Jerusalem, [this time] with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. ²I went up [to Jerusalem] because of a [divine] revelation, and I put before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles. But *I did* so in private before those of [Ⓜ]reputation, for fear that I might be running or had run [the course of my ministry] in vain. ³But [all went well, for] not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled [as some had anticipated] to be circumcised, despite the fact that he was a Greek. ⁴My concern was because of the [Ⓜ]false brothers [those people masquerading as Christians] who had been secretly smuggled in [to the community of believers]. They had slipped in to spy on the freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us back into bondage [under the Law of Moses]. ⁵But we did not yield to them even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel would continue to remain with you [in its purity]. ⁶But from those who were of high reputation (whatever they were—in terms of individual importance—makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality—He is not impressed with the positions that people hold nor does He recognize distinctions such as fame or power)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me [that is, they had nothing to add to my gospel message nor did they impose any new requirements on me]. ⁷But on the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised (Gentiles), just as Peter *had been*[entrusted to proclaim the gospel] to the circumcised (Jews); ⁸(for He who worked effectively for Peter *and* empowered him in his ministry to the Jews also worked effectively for me *and* empowered me in my ministry to the Gentiles). ⁹And recognizing the grace [that God had] bestowed on me, James and Cephas (Peter) and John, who were reputed to be pillars [of the Jerusalem church], gave to me and Barnabas the [Ⓜ]right hand of

fellowship, so that we could go to the Gentiles [with their blessing] and they to the circumcised (Jews). ¹⁰ *They asked* only [one thing], that we remember the poor, the very thing I was also eager to do.

Peter (Cephas) Opposed by Paul

¹¹ Now when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him face to face [about his conduct there], because he stood condemned [by his own actions]. ¹² Before certain men came from James, he used to eat [his meals] with the Gentiles; but when the men [from Jerusalem] arrived, he *began* to withdraw and separate himself [from the Gentile believers], because he was afraid of those from the [Ⓜ]circumcision. ¹³ The rest of the Jews joined him in this hypocrisy [ignoring their knowledge that Jewish and Gentile Christians were united, under the new covenant, into one faith], with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that they were not being straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas (Peter) in front of everyone, “If you, being a Jew, live [as you have been living] like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how is it that you are [now virtually] forcing the Gentiles to live like Jews [if they want to eat with you]?”

¹⁵ [I went on to say] “We are Jews by birth and not sinners from among the Gentiles; ¹⁶ yet we know that a man is not [Ⓜ]justified [and placed in right standing with God] by works of the Law, but [only] through faith in [God’s beloved Son,] Christ Jesus. And even we [as Jews] have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law. By observing the Law no one will ever be justified [declared free of the guilt of sin and its penalty]. ¹⁷ But if, while we seek to be justified in Christ [by faith], we ourselves are found to be sinners, does that make Christ an advocate or promoter of our sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸ For if I [or anyone else should] rebuild [through word or by practice] what I once tore down [the belief that observing the Law is essential for salvation], I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹ For through the Law I died to the

Law *and* its demands on me [because salvation is provided through the death and resurrection of Christ], so that I might [from now on] live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ [that is, in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The *life* I now live in the body I live by faith [by adhering to, relying on, and completely trusting] in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. ²¹I do not ignore or nullify the [gracious gift of the] grace of God [His amazing, unmerited favor], for if righteousness comes through [observing] the Law, then Christ died needlessly. [His suffering and death would have had no purpose whatsoever.]”

Footnotes:

Galatians 2:2 This group would have included the apostles Peter and John, as well as James, Jesus’ half brother who was also the leader of the Jerusalem church.

Galatians 2:4 i.e. the Judaizers (see note 1:7).

Galatians 2:9 A solemn act of partnership signifying acceptance, agreement and trust.

Galatians 2:12 i.e. self-righteous Jewish converts who twisted the gospel to suit their legalistic beliefs, observed Mosaic Law, and would not eat with Gentile believers.

Galatians 2:16 Being justified is a legal or judicial declaration of righteousness. Justification has two parts: (1) Being declared free of blame, acquitted of sin—not guilty. Believers are justified because Jesus Christ personally assumed the guilt for our sin on the cross; (2) God declares the person righteous, that is, placed in a position of right-standing with Him. A person may not be made righteous by his personal behavior, no matter how good, or by the declaration of any other human being.

Amplified Bible (AMP)