

Title: "Two Peoples – One Way" (Part 6)

Passage: Galatians 2:19

Theme: Paul's Central Point: Justification by Faith

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{{Read Passage}}

I. Essential Elements of the Gospel in Galatians (vv. 15-21)

A. The Universal Nature of Sin (v. 15-16a)

B. Justification Is by Faith Alone (v. 16)

C. The Believer's Union With Christ (vv. 17-20)

1. Simple Definition

2. Describes a life that is Christ – “to live is Christ, to die gain”

Christ for sickness, Christ for health,
Christ for poverty, Christ for wealth,
Christ for joy, Christ for sorrow,
Christ today and Christ tomorrow;
Christ my Life, and Christ my Light,
Christ for morning, noon and night,
Christ when all around gives way
Christ my everlasting Stay;
Christ my Rest, and Christ my Food
Christ above my highest good,
Christ my Well-beloved Friend
Christ my Pleasure without end;
Christ my Savior, Christ my Lord
Christ my Portion, Christ my God,

Christ my Shepherd, I His sheep
Christ Himself my soul to keep;
Christ my Leader, Christ my Peace
Christ hath wrought my soul's release,
Christ my Righteousness divine
Christ for me, for He is mine;
Christ my Wisdom, Christ my Meat,
Christ restores my wandering feet,
Christ my Advocate and Priest
Christ who ne'er forgets the least;
Christ my Teacher, Christ my Guide,
Christ my Rock, in Christ I hide,
Christ the Ever-living Bread,
Christ His precious Blood hath shed;
Christ hath brought me nigh to God,
Christ the everlasting Word
Christ my Master, Christ my Head,
Christ who for my sins hath bled;
Christ my Glory, Christ my Crown,
Christ the Plant of great renown,
Christ my Comforter on high,
Christ my Hope, draws ever nigh.

Source Unknown.

2. We see the believer's union with Christ introduced in v. 17

Paul asks the ? (? reflects accusation of t/Judaizers) →

But if while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? . . .

a. “Justified IN CHRIST”

“It is not the doctrine of justification that does my heart good, it is Christ the justifier.” [C.H. Spurgeon]

I appreciate t/emphasis – however both do my heart good.

You can't have a doctrine of justification apart from X t/justifier!

Brings us back to Union w/X – As I promised a wk or 2 ago – our introd. to this passage this am is going to focus on U w/X.

John Calvin said that union with Christ has “the highest degree of importance” if we are to understand justification correctly [Institutes 1:737]

Contemporary Theologian John Frame →

“. . . union with Christ is in Scripture the most general way of characterizing Jesus' work of salvation. Jesus saves us by uniting us to himself.” [Systematic Theology, 913]

In his great work, “Redemption—Accomplished and Applied” Theologian John Murray not only said that “*union with Christ is . . . the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation. . . .*” but that UWX “*underlies every aspect of redemption*” [Eerdmans, 1955, 201, 205]

Calvinist minister / former professor of syst. theol. at Calvin Theol. Sem. - Anthony Hoekema wrote that “Once you have your eyes opened to this concept of union with Christ, you will find it almost everywhere in the New Testament” [Saved by Grace. Eerdmans, 1989, 64]

2. Biblical Basis for Union with Christ

a. New Testament Doctrine

We noted that UWX encompasses 2 themes:

(1) The Christian is described as being in Christ

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Galatians 3:28 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.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

T/Bel. is “in X” → other side

(2) Christ is in the Believer

Gal. 2:20 {cite}

Colossians 1:27 speaks of . . . the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Romans 8:10 And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

Ephesians 3:17 speaks of X dwelling in our hearts through faith . . .

(3) Some NT Passages that combine both

John 15:4–5 4 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

1 John 4:13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

(4) Union with Christ isn't limited to this specific language of being "in Christ" or Christ "in" the Believer

Saw that in Rom. 6 last time →

3 . . . all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death . . . 4 in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 . . . we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 8 . . . if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

3. The Theological Basis of the Believer's Union with Christ

Goes back B4 you were ever born. // Creation of t/world // Creation of anything // eternal mind and decree of God who purposed from eternity to save a people for Himself. How? By sending JC to die and live for them – by uniting them to Himself in his life, crucifixion, resurrection.

a. Genesis/Origin of our Union w/Christ is God's Sovereign Election

Hoekema says that we should see union with Christ “extending all the way from eternity to eternity.”

Turn to Ephesians 1 . . .

Eph. 1:3–4a **3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4a just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.**

In t/mind & plan of God you were “in Christ” before you ever believed // born.

(1) That which was part of God's plan had to come to pass in time

B4 we came to faith we were still dead in sin, lost, hell-bound, alienated from G., His enemies.

U still had to believe. G. still had to regenerate your spirit in order for you to believe!

(2) We weren't just "chosen" – "chosen in Christ" (4a)

That's signif. JC is t/only 1 who could guarantee our salvation. Everything flows out of t/fountainhead of JC. T/Father chose us in Him & providing all t/benefits of salvation thru Him.

We see that in this passage →

Ephesians 1:4b–6 4b In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

b. Chosen in Him ("in Him" / Union w/X) → predestined to adoption as sons ADOPTION

Romans 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" slaves now free.

(1) Adoption →

- * Formerly children of wrath, now G.
- * Transferred from realm of Satan to that of X.
- * Pray to God as "Our Father who is in heaven"
- * Family of God / bro and sis

(2) By virtue of our Union with Christ we have been adopted as sons/daughters of God

To be a son is to be an heir / to have an inheritance →

Ephesians 1:11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

(a) Sons / daughters - Gender inclusive part of adoption

Bible does specif. say “sons” - I don't think we do justice to t/text or t/concept if we translate it “children” or “sons & daughters” - that's because in OT t/family inherit. was passed down from father to son. Partic. true as it relates to t/1st born son.

Romans 8:17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ . . .

Galatians 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

1 Peter 1:3–4 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

c. Someone else that we see that flows out of our union with Christ here in Ephesians 1 → REDEMPTION

Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace,

Redemption refers to a price (“r. thru His b.”). See that also in →
1 Peter 1:18–19 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

d. Lastly – work of the Holy Spirit associated with our union with X
Ephesians 1:13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.

e. We can say that all of our salvation – salvation in the fullest sense of the word {define} – is “in Christ”

All that encompasses our justification / sanctification / glorification.

Themes of election; calling; regeneration; adoption; perseverance; redemption – every spritual blessing →

Eph. 1:3 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4. What does all of this mean?

In a very real, tho spiritual sense, t/Xn is joined w/JC in his life, death, burial, resurrection. So much so, that it can be said that what is true of X is true of t/believer. Has it's limits – I'm not saying that because X is God that means t/believer is or that t/believer experiences sonship in t/same sense that JC does. We can't intrude upon t/Trinity!

What I'm saying is that we share in His Righeousness; Crucifixion; Death; Burial; Life. Tru Xns, justified by grace alone thru faith alone are in X alone. His life cannot be separated from ours. Why God can see us as holy in His sight – because He sees X.

“God attaches us to the events of Christ's life so that they become part of our lives. His story—the story of the cross and the empty tomb—becomes our story.” [Ryken, 74]

Reality. As one theologian puts it →

“Scriptures make it clear than, though it is spiritual and mystical, this nonmaterial union with Christ is as real as though there were in fact a literal umbilical cord uniting them, reaching 'all the way' from Christ in heaven to the believer on earth.” [Robert Raymond, Systematic Theology, 738]

5. How does it impact our lives?

Just knowing these things is going to impact our lives.

Why I'm such a big advocate of preaching X thru preaching t/whole counsel of His Word – that incl. preaching doctrines like justif. & election & our union w/X.

I'm naïve enough to believe that God's Word, accurately taught, is inherently applicable to t/life of t/Xn as applied by t/H.S.

I'm also sensitive enough to realize that 1 role of effective preaching is to “connect the dots” so to speak as it relates to applic.

You can listen to preaching/teaching that centers on human needs & is filled w/anecdotes & funny stories. That often builds CH's according to size. But I don't think it's any coincidence that those sorts of things don't build CH's according to substance & fulness of living X.

If you are truly converted & you are learning these things there's no way that t/HS isn't working these truths into t/entire fabric of your life. Marriage / Child-rearing / Calming your Fears / Killing Pride / Overcoming sin / Hungering for JC.

Whenever I hear of someone who claims to believe and know these things & yet is persisting in some unabated sin I'm very concerned.

I've heard of men/women who are adulterers & claim to know t/deep truths of G's Wd. // Men who are abusive to their wives / children . . .

That can't be. If you are learning and affirming these things & you're not desiring to know and live X in far loftier ways than whatever is your status quo, something's wrong. If that's true of you, I would exhort you to fall on your face b4 God in repentance, pleading w/Him to give you a heart that resonates w/these things.

Relevant? Yes. We can stop here and it would be relevant. But we're going to see how much more so as we cont. thru this passage.

I. Essential Elements of the Gospel in Galatians (vv. 15-21)

A. The Universal Nature of Sin (v. 15-16a)

B. Justification Is by Faith Alone (v. 16)

C. The Believer's Union With Christ (vv. 17-20)

1. To be "In Christ" is not to be "In Sin" (17)

But if while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin?

Accusation: *You have abandoned the Law as a means to righteousness. Therefore, you are like the pagans who have no Law. If this is where X leads you, then He is a minister of sin.*

To rest in t/assured hope of our justif. solely because we are in X (that by faith) is to abandon t/Law (or any works) as a means to that end.

For t/Jews, this puts them in t/same category as the Gentiles (v. 15) "sinners" who do not live by the Mosaic Law.

This is always t/legalist accusation against grace: Grace alone will lead you to sin. Grace can't lead you to sin because X can't If . . .

This is what our union w/X is about! Freedom from sin; freedom to know, serve, and love JC!

Grace can't lead you to sin because X can't

Hence ==>

May it never be! (μη γένοιτο.) Cf. Rom. 6:2.

C. The Believer's Union With Christ (vv. 17-20)

1. To be "In Christ" is not to be "In Sin" (17)

2. To be "In Christ" is to have died to sin and the law (18-19)

To return to it as a means of justification or righteousness is sin →
For if I rebuild what I once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.

a. Words “rebuild” and “destroyed” refer to the Law

Construction terms. Would be like tearing down an old building that no longer has a valid function only to rebuild it again.

(3) Paul is turning the tables on his opponents:

J. doesn't promote or further sin (v. 18) – t/Law does. It is those who live under t/law who are proven sinners, not those who live under X. To go back to t/Law is to leave t/arms of X in order do embrace Moses To do that is to reject X – to reject t/benefits of X's death (v. 21).

2. *To be "In Christ" is to have died to sin and the law (18-19)*

For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.

**For through the Law
I died to the Law,
so that I might live to God.**

b. What does it mean: “Through the Law I died to the Law”?

(1) Couple of options:

(a) The Law lead Paul to Christ where he died with Him to the Law IOW – it was thru t/Law that Paul not only realized that he was a sinner unable to save Himself, but that X was t/only subst. for sinners.

Cf. 3:19, 24-25.

(b) “Through the Law” may be referring to the work of Christ who put an end to the Law by living under it and fulfilling it

Galatians 4:4–5 4 But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Romans 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ . . .

X took the full penalty of the law upon Himself in His death – even tho He was t/sinless Lamb of God who did not deserve to be under its curse (cf. 3:13). In His death J. ended t/era of t/Law.

c. Point is: Paul and every Christian – Jew or Gentile – 1st c. or 21st – can say “I died to the Law”

“When Paul therefore claims that he has 'died to the law,' he means that he has been released from the binding authority of the Law of Moses.” [Moo, 168]

(1) How foolish to return to that which you have died to

(a) Remember what Paul says in the beginning of Romans 7?

1 OR do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? 2 For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

IOW . . .

4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God.

To go back to t/Law is to go back to a corpse – it's dead / no life there.

1 Cor. 15:56 - *the power of sin is the law*

Rom. 6:14 - *sin will have no more dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace*

The believer's obituary. “I have died to the Law and to death and to sin” But it's a death unto life →

**For through the Law I died to the Law,
why?
so that I might live to God.**

Martin Luther →

“The doctrine of our opponents is similar to that of the false apostles in Paul’s day. Our opponents teach, “If you want to live unto God, you must live after the Law, for it is written, Do this and thou shalt live.” Paul, on the other hand, teaches, “We cannot live unto God unless we are dead unto the Law.” If we are dead unto the Law, the Law can have no power over us. Paul does not only refer to the Ceremonial Law, but to the whole Law. We are not to think that the Law is wiped out. It stays. It continues to operate in the wicked. But a Christian is dead to the Law. For example, Christ by His resurrection became free from the grave, and yet the grave remains. Peter was delivered from prison, yet the prison remains. The Law is abolished as far as I am concerned, when it has driven me into the arms of Christ.

Blessed is the person who knows how to use this truth in times of distress. He can talk. He can say: "Mr. Law, go ahead and accuse me as much as you like. I know I have committed many sins, and I continue to sin daily. But that does not bother me. You have got to shout louder, Mr. Law. I am deaf, you know. Talk as much as you like, I am dead to you. If you want to talk to me about my sins, go and talk to my flesh. Belabor that, but don't talk to my conscience. My conscience is a lady and a queen, and has nothing to do with the likes of you, because my conscience lives to Christ under another law, a new and better law, the law of grace."

By faith in Christ a person may gain such sure and sound comfort, that he need not fear the devil, sin, death, or any evil. "Sir Devil," he may say, "I am not afraid of you. I have a Friend whose name is Jesus Christ, in whom I believe. He has abolished the Law, condemned sin, vanquished death, and destroyed hell for me. He is bigger than you, Satan. He has licked you, and holds you down. You cannot hurt me." This is the faith that overcomes the devil."

John Bunyan, Puritan author of Pilgrim's Progress wrote this little poem as a reminder to himself →

"Run, John, run
The law commands
But gives me neither feet nor hands
Tis better news the Gospel brings
It bids me fly
It gives me wings"

For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.

A man is convicted of 1st deg. murder. He is sentenced to death. Once he is executed, t/law of the land has no more claim on him. He has paid his debt to society. If he were to rise from t/dead, he would be innocent before the law. It would have no claim upon him – he already died. So it is with the believer who has died with Christ and has risen to new life. The law – sin – has no more claim upon him.

C. The Believer's Union With Christ (vv. 17-20)

1. To be "In Christ" is not to be "In Sin" (17)

2. To be "In Christ" is to have died to sin and the law (18-19)

Brings us to our 3d point under the heading →

3. To be "In Christ" is to have been crucified with Christ (20)

V. 20 in our English Bibles actually begins in v. 19 in t/Gk. text.

– **I have been crucified with Christ,**

is actually t/last part of v. 19 in t/modern Grk. text (UBS / Nestle-Aland)

I don't want to confuse you so we will deal w/it as part of v. 20 as you would read it in English. →

– **I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ 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 up for me.**

That's where we will pick it up next time . . .

Martin Luther ==>

“By [faith] you are so cemented to Christ that He and you are as one person, which cannot be separated but remains attached to Him forever.” [Galatians]

Purpose in life becomes eternal. John Murray →

“Why does the believer entertain the thoughts of God’s determinate counsel with such joy? Why can he have patience in the perplexities and adversities of the present? Why can he have confident assurance with reference to the future and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God? It is because he cannot think of past, present or future apart from union with Christ.” [Cited in Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology, 840]

Jesus isn’t in the business of improving our old selves. He doesn’t come along side of us to redirect our old self into a new way // He doesn’t jump into t/boat & change t/course. No, he comes to kill us in order to raise us again to new life in Him. Why Xnty isn’t t/addition of Jesus to your old life; Xnty is the death of your old life which is then transformed into a new life in X.

Like the story of a Cuban spy whose name was Salvador. He was sent into Miami as a “mole” to learn military secrets from the United States. However, as he began to assoc. w/Cubans living in FL his allegiances began to change. Soon, he renounced his loyalty to Castro and turned himself in to the U.S. govt. In turn, the U.S. offered asylum and protection which included a staged murder of Salvador, which tricked t/Cubans into believing that their spy had been caught and executed. After the plan was carried out, Salvador was issued new documents, a new name, and a new life.

Reality is - you have been executed – crucified! (v. 20). As a result, you have been issued a new name // new ID // received new life. Our loyalties have changed accordingly.

New ID isn’t something we earn. Was given to us by God according to his grace/kindness/purpose. Rec'd by faith (brings us back to v. 16).