

Introduction: Galatians So Far

Many commentators have pointed out that the structure of Galatians follows that of classical rhetoric, something the Apostle Paul would certainly have been familiar with:

Exordium (_____) – 1:6-10 → Two Gospels?

Narratio (_____) – 1:11-2:14 → The Origin & Character of the Gospel of Grace

Propositio (_____) – 2:15-21 → By Faith in Christ Not By Works of the Law

Probatio (_____) – 3:1-6:10 → Varied Arguments and Scriptural Explanations

Peratio (_____) – 6:11-17 → The Decision the Galatians Must Make

Main Point: Righteous _____ before God and right _____ to Him come through faith in Christ and not by works of the Law.

Galatians 2:15-16

• Paul begins by explaining what all believing Jews acknowledged to be true. (v. 15-16a)

(1) These verses refer back to his confrontation with _____ as well as ahead to the arguments he will make within the letter.

(2) He identifies what he and the other believing Jews both are and are not:

“Jews by birth”

“not Gentile sinners”

“By virtue of their births, Peter, Paul, and all Jewish Christians had an ancestral, physical connection to Abraham; a moral, spiritual connection to Moses and the Law; and through those connections a special relationship with God who called them as a people.”
– Michael Burer

(3) In spite of this, they understood that all _____, both Jews and Gentiles, had the same standing before God.

“yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law”

“to justify”—δικαιόω (dikaioō)—to render a favorable verdict; to declare righteous; to vindicate

➤ The phrase “works of the law” here refers the entirety of the OT Law as a part of the Mosaic Covenant made with Israel as a nation.

Moral Laws

Civil Laws

Ceremonial Laws

➤ Paul implies here that there was broad agreement among the believing Jews that no one would be justified before God by measuring their conduct against the Mosaic Law (Rom. 3:20).

(4) Justification before God was only possible through _____.

“but through faith in Jesus Christ”

“faith”—πίστις (pistis)—a state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted, (*trust, confidence*)

➤ The focus here is on Jesus Christ as the _____ of faith. He is the one in whom we place our faith on the basis of His person and work.

His Person:

His Work:

Key Point: An understanding of the Gospel message begins with an acknowledgement of our true _____.

- Paul then reminds them of how they all had trusted Christ in order that they might have a _____ of righteousness before God. (v. 16b)

(1) Faith in Christ brings about a _____ with Him.

“we also have believed in Christ Jesus”

- The language here of believing in Christ carries the fullness of moving into a new sphere or _____ of existence. We believe ‘in/into Christ’ (Gk. *eis Christos*).

“This faith has a cognitive element—a ‘believing that’ certain things are true—but the language of believing ‘into Christ’ shows that it is much more, involving both trust and commitment.” – Doug Moo

(2) They had believed in Christ for a specific purpose in light of their need.

“in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law”

- The language of being justified here is in the _____ voice, indicating that it results from the actions of another.

- The Jews believed that they were rightly related to God based on their covenants with him (through Abraham and Moses) and that works of the Law were evidence of this righteous standing before Him.

The Christian Doctrine Justification Considered & Defined

- The term justification is *forensic*, referring to matters related to _____ judgment or judicial proceedings.
- It is also *relational*, referring to being _____ related to one in the position to judge.
- God declares sinners righteous based on the work of Christ _____ which is received by faith _____.
- Justification has a _____ aspect in that God has declared the believing sinner to be righteous because of his position in Christ by faith.
- Justification has a _____ aspect in that God will make the believer truly righteous in his condition before Him as His child for all eternity.

“[Justification] is a legal act wherein God pronounces that the believing sinner has been credited with all the virtues of Jesus Christ. Whereas forgiveness is the negative aspect of salvation, meaning the subtraction of human sin, justification is the positive aspect, meaning the addition of divine righteousness.” – The Moody Handbook of Theology

*“Justification is the declaration of God that a person, however sinful, who trusts in Christ’s atoning work is treated or accounted as righteous. This is no legal fiction but a merciful divine action historically offered in the cross.”
– Thomas Oden*

(3) This was a necessity because _____ humanity can never be justified by works of the Law.

“because by works of the law no one will be justified”

- Paul alludes here to Ps. 143:2 (as he does in Rom. 3:20) in order to justify his claim from Scripture that all Jews would have acknowledged.

Key Point: The acknowledgment of our condition before a holy God leads us to look away from _____ and unto Christ as our _____ of righteousness.

“We cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions. But we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ’s sake, through faith, when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven, and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness.” – Augsburg Confession (AD 1530)

Paul’s Message to the Galatians

- The Galatians must understand that a righteous standing before God comes through faith in Christ alone and is in no way related to the works of the Law.

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