

Title: No Law, No Transgression

Text: Rom 4: 14-15

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In Romans 4: 13-16 the Holy Spirit gives reasons why justification must be by the faithful obedience of Christ, imputed to his people through faith in Christ, apart from works of the law. Each reason builds on the one before it. We saw the first reason out of verse 13.

Romans 4: 13: For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

God saves by covenant promise. So God-given faith believes on Christ. We believe God's covenant promise fulfilled in and by the faithful obedience of Christ alone. God promised to give Abraham eternal inheritance by Christ's righteousness through faith in Christ, as well as the elect seed of Abraham.

Divisions: The next reason justification is through faith in Christ alone is in verses 14-15:

Romans 4: 14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

Subject: No Law, No Transgression

Proposition: If righteousness comes by the law faith is made void and the promise made of none effect and sinner are yet under the wrath of God. But being made righteous in Christ, there is no law against God's people. Therefore, no transgression shall be charged to us by God.

FAITH IS MADE VOID

Romans 4: 14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void,...

Justification cannot be by the works of the law for then faith is made void.

“*If they which are of the law be heirs*”—if natural Jews be heirs, simply because they are natural children of Abraham, then faith is made void. God never gave the law to Gentiles. We were not under that covenant given at Sinai.

Also, if the natural Jews or any Gentile is justified by the works of the law, faith is made void. If the motive of a man's heart is to do works of the law (or any works for that matter) to indebt God to give him the inheritance then “*faith is made void.*”

It is only through faith in Christ that we fulfill the law: God-given faith believes Christ alone fulfilled the law; God-given faith believes Christ alone is our righteousness. Note the words I added in the brackets.

Romans 3: 30 Seeing *it is* one God [Christ our one God], which shall justify [which shall establish us in the righteousness of the law] the circumcision [elect Jew] by faith [in Christ], and uncircumcision [elect Gentile] through faith [in Christ] 31: Do we then make void the law through faith [in Christ]? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. [through faith in Christ, the same as God justified Abraham through faith in Christ]...4: 2: For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. 3: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Self-sanctifiers will say, “But that is only for justification!” That is what the Judaizer's were saying in Paul's day, too.

Galatians 3: 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?...5 [Christ] therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith [by the hearing of the gospel of Christ]? 6: Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness...

The gospel of Christ, the hearing of faith, was preached before to Abraham. That is how the Lord gave Abraham a holy heart in the new birth. When Christ gave the Gentiles the Spirit of God and faith to rest in Christ for righteousness. Christ purified, sanctified, their hearts through faith.

Hebrews 9: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

God enjoined the old covenant to the children of Israel by Moses sprinkling the people, the book, the altar, almost all things with the blood of a lamb. That was a picture of purification, of sanctification.

Hebrews 9: 23: *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Christ told his apostles, “Now ye are clean [purified, sanctified] through the word which I have spoken unto you” (Jn 15: 3).

But when Christ purified Gentiles by faith, Judaizers said they must be circumcised and live under the law in order to sanctify themselves by works of the law. The Spirit of God says through Peter

Acts 15: 8: And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; 9: And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10: Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11: But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

1 Peter 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Those sanctified by the Spirit love godliness. But it is Christ who purified, sanctified our hearts. He did it through the gospel, by his blood, through faith in him.

But *the law makes faith void*. Be sure to get this: if the motive of a man’s heart is to indebt God—to count him justified or sanctified by works of the law or to give anything to him by merit or if he is trying to make himself holy by works of the law or simply trying to appear holy before men by works of the law then faith is made void—faith and law do not mix.

Galatians 3: 11: But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith. 12: And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

If law enters, faith is made void. A man is living to himself—living to Moses—not to Christ.

THE PROMISE MADE OF NONE EFFECT

Romans 4: 14: Romans 4: 14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect

If justification or sanctification were by the works of the law then the promise of God is made of none effect.

God promised to give the inheritance to Abraham freely in Christ. That is what the Holy Spirit bears witness to in our hearts through the preaching of the gospel of Christ.

Romans 8: 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Therefore the inheritance cannot be by the works of the law. It is by God’s promise.

Galatians 3:18: For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

Hebrews 6:13: For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 14: Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

2 Corinthians 1: 20 For all the promises of God in [Christ] *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

NO LAW NO TRANSGRESSION

Romans 4: 14: For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect; 15: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

“*Because the law worketh wrath*”—if the motive of the heart is acceptance with God or with men by the works of the law then that man is under the law and the wrath of God abides on him. He is under the curse of God.

Religious folks are always arguing that they want to be under the law. But the law only speaks to those who are under the law. And it only speaks wrath.

Galatians 3: 10: For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

And the law stirs up wrath in the will-worker against others. It is the affection and lusts of the flesh to use law to accuse others and justify self. It is nothing but curse.

But this next part applies to one made righteous in Christ sanctified by the Spirit to believe Christ, “*for where no law is, there is no transgression.*” The believer made righteous by Christ is not under the law but under grace. There is no law against a righteous man. Therefore God shall not impute transgression to us, not ever! Scripture repeats to the believer, “You are not under the law but under grace.”

Romans 6:14: For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Christ made his people the righteousness of God in him—“*the law came by Moses but grace and truth [grace and righteousness] came by Jesus Christ.*”

2 Corinthians 5: 21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Galatians 3: 13: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Through Christ’s faithfulness (Christ being formed in the heart), he gave us faith to trust him. Therefore, being justified, by faith, we have peace with God. Then Christ leads us all the way.

Be sure to get this: God only imputes what a man has been made by a prior act. Christ made his people the righteousness of God in him. There is no law against a righteous man! You are not under law but under grace. Therefore God shall never charge one Christ justified with transgression. “*For where no law is, there is no transgression!*”

Romans 7: 4: Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 5: For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6: But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

Romans 8: 1: *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The righteousness of the law fulfilled in us means in the human nature of his elect, Christ fulfilled the law on behalf of his elect, so that God imputes to the believer that we have established the law in righteousness. He goes on to say that walking after the flesh is minding the flesh, minding the law. But try as they may the carnal man is not subject to the law neither indeed can be. So they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

But walking after the Spirit is walking by faith, led of the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit of Christ mortifies our flesh by renewing our new man so we keep walking by faith trusting Christ to save us and our brethren. We are constrained by Christ's love for us. He constrains us by his grace and mercy and forgiveness. We show mercy and longsuffering and forgiveness to one another for Christ's sake.

Romans 8: 10: And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11: But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12: Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13: For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Here is how the Spirit mortifies our fleshly lust to turn us from using the law to justify and condemn:

Romans 8: 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

When the lust of our flesh would use the law to condemn, like the Galatians were being bewitched to do, then the Spirit mortifies our flesh by renewing us inwardly to remember *we are not under the law but under grace—no law means no transgression*—so he makes us walk in the fruit of the Spirit toward one another.

Galatians 5: 22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23: Meekness, temperance: AGAINST SUCH THERE IS NO LAW. 24: And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Our flesh was crucified in Christ on the cross before the law. As far as sanctification, the Spirit mortifies our sinful lust to return to law and condemn others and justify self with law by turning us to Christ who made all God's elect righteous in himself. Christ speaks into the heart saying,

Galatians 5: 25: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26: Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. 6: 1: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

When we lose patience and condemn a man for intemperance, we prove we are intemperate in our flesh and cannot mortify it without the Spirit of Christ renewing us inwardly. But in due time, he shall work in the heart of his child, giving him quietness of heart and temperance to trust Christ. He does this for us over and

over again. He makes us know he is both our righteousness before the law and the sanctification in our hearts—it is all by the faith of Christ.

Galatians 2: 19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Let me give you three things.

One, if any have never believed on Christ—believe on Christ today!

Romans 4: 23: Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24: But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25: Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Two, any who believe on Christ who are being bewitched by will-workers or by your own sinful flesh, to condemn one for whom Christ died or to justify self or sanctify self by law, hear God. He told the Galatians,

Galatians 5: 2: If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

Three, for you who believe on Christ, continue in him.

Galatians 5: 5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Amen!