

## CHAPTER 2

### INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 2

In this chapter the apostle proceeds with the narrative of himself, and gives an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, where he had a conversation with the chief of the apostles; in which they approved of his ministry, allowed of his commission, and took him into fellowship with them, but gave him no new instructions, nor added to his spiritual light and knowledge; from whence it appeared that the Gospel he preached was not after men, or received from men, as he had asserted in the preceding chapter; and he also gives an account of his meeting with Peter at Antioch, and how he reproved him for some judaizing practices; which leads him to assert the doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; which is the grand point he had in view to establish in this epistle, and which he vindicates from the charge of licentiousness. He begins with an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, the circumstances of which he relates, as the time when, fourteen years ago; the persons he took with him as his companions, Barnabas and Titus, (~~Ⓜ~~Galatians 2:1) what moved him to it, a revelation from God; and the business he did when come thither, he communicated the Gospel, and that not to any but to such that were of reputation, and not publicly but privately; his end was, that it might appear how successful he had been in his ministry, and had not laboured in vain, (~~Ⓜ~~Galatians 2:2) then follows a narrative of a particular event relating to Titus, who is described as one of his companions, and by his nation, a Greek; and who though an uncircumcised person, yet the apostles and elders at Jerusalem did not oblige him to be circumcised, which showed that they were of the same mind with the apostle in this point, (~~Ⓜ~~Galatians 2:3) and the reason of it was because of the false teachers, that they might not give them any handle; who are described by their character, false brethren, by their private manner of getting in among the saints, and by their ends and views, which were to spy out their Christian liberty and bring them into bondage, (~~Ⓜ~~Galatians 2:4) to whom the apostle opposed himself, and would not give way for the least space of time; for this end, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Gentiles, (~~Ⓜ~~Galatians 2:5) and as for the apostles, though they were men

of great character and reputation, nor would the apostle detract from it; yet they added nothing to him, he received nothing from them, (<sup><R116></sup>Galatians 2:6) but, on the other hand, partly because they saw that as the Gospel to be preached to the Jews was committed to Peter, so the same Gospel to be preached to the Gentiles was committed to Paul; and partly because of the same efficacy and success in the ministry of the one as in the ministry of the other; as also because they perceived what gifts of grace were bestowed on the apostle; they gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as a token of their mutual agreement, and as being of the same society, (<sup><R117></sup>Galatians 2:7-9) nor did they give him and Barnabas anything in charge, but only to remember the poor, to which he was forward enough of himself, (<sup><R120></sup>Galatians 2:10) after which follows an account of an opposition made by the apostle to Peter, which was done at Antioch, and to his face, and not without reason, (<sup><R121></sup>Galatians 2:11) for whereas some time before he ate with the Gentiles, which was commendable in him, he afterwards declined conversation with them, moved to it by fear of the converted Jews, (<sup><R122></sup>Galatians 2:12) and such was the force of his example, that other Jews, who before did not scruple eating with the Gentiles, separated likewise, and even Barnabas himself, Paul's companion, (<sup><R123></sup>Galatians 2:13) wherefore seeing this was not walking according to the Gospel of Christ, and with that integrity and uprightness which became such persons, the apostle publicly reproved Peter, and expostulated with him; partly on account of his former conversation with the Gentiles, though he himself was a Jew, and therefore it was absurd and contradictory in him to oblige the Gentiles to live as the Jews did, (<sup><R124></sup>Galatians 2:14) and partly on account of the ledge which he and Peter and others who were Jews, and not sinners of the Gentiles, had of the doctrine of justification; that it was not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ; for to this end they had believed in Christ that they might be justified, not by the one, but by the other; which doctrine is confirmed by a passage referred to in (<sup><R125></sup>Psalm 149:2 <sup><R126></sup>Galatians 2:5,16) and whereas it might be objected that this doctrine of free justification opened a door to licentiousness, the apostle answers to it by an abhorrence of it, (<sup><R127></sup>Galatians 2:17) and by observing that this would build up what he had destroyed, (<sup><R128></sup>Galatians 2:18) besides, he argues the contrary from his being dead to the law, that he might live unto God, (<sup><R129></sup>Galatians 2:19) and from his crucifixion with Christ, and of the old man with his deeds; and from Christ's living in him, and his living by faith upon him, (<sup><R131></sup>Galatians 2:20) and for the further confirmation of the doctrine of justification being by faith, and not by

works, he suggests, were it otherwise, both the grace of God would be frustrated and made void, and the death of Christ be in vain, (~~412~~Galatians 2:21).

**Ver. 1.** *Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem*, etc.] That is, either after it pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him; or rather after he had been at Jerusalem to see Peter, with whom he stayed fifteen days, and then went into Syria and Cilicia; so that it was seventeen years after his conversion that he took this journey to Jerusalem he here speaks of; and he seems to refer to the time when he and Barnabas went from the church at Antioch to the apostles and elders about the question, whether circumcision was necessary to salvation, (~~415~~Acts 15:1,2) which entirely agrees with the account the apostle here gives of this journey, and which he went not alone, but

*with Barnabas: and took Titus with me also*; Barnabas is mentioned in Luke's account as going with him at this time, but Titus is not; who, though he was not sent by the church, yet the apostle might judge it proper and prudent to take him with him, who was converted by him, was a minister of the Gospel, and continued uncircumcised; and the rather he might choose to have him along with him, partly that he might be confirmed in the faith the apostle had taught him; and partly that he might be a living testimony of the agreement between the apostle's principles and practice; and that having him and Barnabas, he might have a competent number of witnesses to testify to the doctrines he preached, the miracles he wrought, and the success that attended him among the Gentiles; and to relate, upon their return, what passed between him and the elders at Jerusalem; for by the mouth of two or three witnesses everything is established.

**Ver. 2.** *And I went up by revelation*, etc..] He was not sent for by the apostles at Jerusalem, nor did he go of himself, nor only by the vote of the church at Antioch, but by a divine revelation; not a revelation made to the church, or by the prophets there, but by God himself to him; he had a secret impulse from the Spirit of God, and a private intimation given him, that it was the will of God he should go up at this time; which is no ways inconsistent with his being sent by the church, but served as a confirmation to him, that what they determined was right, and according to the mind of God:

*and communicated unto them that Gospel, which I preach among the Gentiles*; that self-same Gospel, which he had preached, and still continued to preach to the Gentiles; relating to free and full remission of sin by the blood of Christ, justification by his righteousness without the works of the law, and freedom from all the rituals and bondage of the Mosaic dispensation: for as the Gospel he preached was all of a piece, uniform and consistent, so he did not preach one sort of doctrine to the Gentiles, and another to the Jews; but the very self-same truths which were the subject of his ministry in the Gentile world, which were a crucified Christ, and salvation alone by him, these he communicated, laid before, and exposed unto the consideration of the elders and apostles at Jerusalem; not with a view either to give or receive instructions, but to compare their sentiments and principles together; that so it might appear that there, was an entire harmony and agreement between them; and this he did not publicly, to the whole church, at least at first, and especially the article of Christian liberty, which respects the freedom of the believing Jews, from the yoke of the law; for as yet they were not able to bear this doctrine; they could pretty readily agree that the Gentiles were not obliged to it, but could not think themselves free from it; wherefore the apostle, in great prudence, did not avouch this in the public audience:

*but privately to them which were of reputation*; or “who seemed to be”, i.e. somewhat, very considerable persons; not in their own opinion, or appearance only, but in reality, they seemed to be, and were pillars in the house of God; particularly he means James, Cephas, and John, then in great esteem with the saints, and deservedly honoured and respected by them, they being faithful labourers in the word and doctrine; so the Jewish doctors <sup>f26</sup> call men of great esteem, **μυβωϋ**, who “seem to be”, or “are accounted of”, a word to which the phrase here used answers: these were spiritual men, capable of judging of all spiritual things; men of full age, whose senses were exercised to discern between truth and error; and were very proper persons for the apostle to lay the scheme of his ministry before, and the various truths he insisted on in it: these he met “privately”, or “separately”, and “singly”, as it may be rendered; he either conversed with the apostles alone, and all together, in some private house; or separately, one by one, in their own houses, and there freely and familiarly discoursed with them about the several doctrines of the Gospel; and particularly this, of freedom from the law: his end in it was, as he says,

*lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain*: which is said, not with regard to himself, as if he had entertained any doubt of the doctrines he had preached, and needed any confirmation in them from them; for he was fully assured of the truth of them, and assured others of the same; or that he questioned the agreement of the apostles with him; or that his faith at all depended on their authority; but with regard to others, and his usefulness among them. The false teachers had insinuated that his doctrine was different from that of the apostles in Jerusalem, and so endeavoured to pervert the Gospel he preached, and overthrow the faith of those that heard him; and could this have been made to appear, it would in all likelihood have rendered, in a great measure, his past labours in vain, and have prevented his future usefulness: some read these words as an interrogation, “do I in any manner run, or have I run in vain?” no; from the account he laid before the church, the elders, and apostles, both in private and in public, (~~Acts~~ Acts 15:4,12) it clearly appeared what success attended his ministry, how many seals he had of it, what numbers of souls were converted under it, and how many churches were planted by his means; for by “running” here is not meant the Christian course he ran, in common with other believers, which lies in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; but the course of his ministry, which he performed with great activity, application, diligence, and constancy, until he had finished it.

**Ver. 3.** *But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek*, etc..] There was such an agreement between the apostle, and his fellow apostles at Jerusalem, even about this article of the necessity of circumcision, and other rituals of the law of Moses, to salvation; that Titus, whom he brought along with him, an intimate companion of his in his travels, a fellow labourer with him in the ministry, and now upon the spot, though he was a Gentile, an uncircumcised person, yet even not he

*was compelled to be circumcised*: the elders did not urge it, or insist upon it, as proper and necessary; they looked upon it as a thing indifferent, left him to his liberty, and made use of no forcible methods to oblige him to it; yea, were of opinion, as Peter and James in the synod declared, that such a yoke ought not to be put upon the necks of the disciples, and that those who turned to God from among the Gentiles, should not be troubled with these things.

**Ver. 4.** *And that because of false brethren*, etc..] This is the reason why the elders did not insist upon the circumcision of Titus, why he did not

submit to it, and why the apostle would not admit of it: had it been left as a thing indifferent, or had it been moved for in order to satisfy some weak minds, it might have been complied with, as in the case of Timothy; but these men insisted upon it as necessary to salvation; they were sly, artful, designing men; could they have gained their point in such an instance; could they have got such a precedent at such a time, when this matter was canvassing, they would have made great use of it in the Gentile churches, for which reason it was by no means judged proper and expedient. These men are described as “false brethren”: they had the name, but not the grace, which entitles to the character of “brethren”; they called themselves Christians, but were in reality Jews: at the head of these, Cerinthus, that arch-heretic, is said<sup>f27</sup> to be. They are further described as such,

*who were unawares brought in, who came in privily*; into the churches, and into the ministry, into private houses, where the apostles were; or rather into the public synod, where they were convened together about this article of the necessity of circumcision to salvation. Their views, aims, and ends were,

*to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus*; by which is meant, not a liberty to sin, which is no Christian liberty, is contrary to Christ, to the Spirit of Christ, to the principle of grace in believers, and to the doctrines of the Gospel; but a liberty from sin; not the being of it, but the dominion and damning power of it: that branch of Christian liberty the apostle here chiefly designs is a freedom from the law, both the moral law, as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, though not from obedience to it as in the hands of Christ, and as a rule of walk and conversation; but from obeying it, in order to obtain life, righteousness, and salvation by it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; and chiefly the ceremonial law, circumcision, and all the other rituals of it, and the free use of all things indifferent, provided the glory of God, and the peace of weak believers, are secured. This liberty is said to be had “in Christ”, because Christ is the author of it; it is that with which Christ makes his people free; and such as are made free by him, are free indeed; and is what they come to enjoy by being in him; for by having union to him, they come to partake of all the blessings of grace which come by him, and this among the rest. Now the design of these false teachers getting in privily among the apostles, elders, and brethren, was to make their remarks upon this liberty, to object to it, and, if possible, to break in upon it, and destroy it, and so gain another point, which follows:

*that they might bring us into bondage*; to the moral law, by directing souls to seek for justification and salvation by the works of it, which necessarily induces a spirit of bondage, genders to a state of bondage and involves in it; and to the ceremonial law, by engaging to an observance of circumcision, that yoke of bondage, and of day, months, times, and years, and other beggarly elements, which naturally lead on to such a state.

**Ver. 5.** *To whom we gave place by subjection*, etc..] Meaning not the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, who did not insist upon the observance of the rituals of the law as necessary, but were one and all of opinion that the Gentiles should be free from them; but the false teachers with whom they combated, and would not yield in the least unto, so as to be brought into subjection to their impositions, nor suffer others to yield unto them:

*no, not for an hour*; for the least space of time, knowing what advantages and improvements would be made of it, should they allow of the use of these things as necessary for any short time, though it should be agreed then to drop them. This is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they would express their steady adherence to any principle or practice; of which take the following instance from Gamaliel<sup>f28</sup>:

“it happened to Rabban Gamaliel, that he read the first night he was married; his disciples said to him, master, hast thou not taught us, that the bridegroom is free from reading the Shema, i.e. “hear, O Israel”, etc.. the first night? he replied to them, I will not hearken to you to cause to cease from me the yoke of the kingdom of heaven,  
 תְּיָא ה[ֶ] אֶחָד שָׁעָה, “even one hour”.”

The reason why the apostle, and others with him, were so resolute and pertinacious in this matter was,

*that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you*; with the Galatians in particular, and with all the Gentiles in general, which otherwise would have been in danger of being entirely removed from them, at least of being adulterated and mixed with the Mosaic rites, and the inventions of men; whereas the apostle's desire was, that, the Gospel might be continued with them genuine, sincere, and unmixed, in opposition to the shadows of the law, and the false doctrines of men.



**Ver. 6.** *But of these, who seemed to be somewhat*, etc..] Not the false brethren, but the Apostles James, Cephas, and John, who were  $\mu\upsilon\beta\omega\upsilon\sigma\iota$  , “men of great esteem”: high in the opinion of all good men; not that they were looked upon to be more than human, as Simon Magus gave out that he was “some great one”, and his followers thought him to be “the great power of God”; for such an extravagant conceit of these men was never entertained; nor were they thought to be something when they were nothing, for they really were somewhat; they were ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of grace; they were the Lord's ambassadors, and the apostles of the Lamb. However, says the apostle,

*whatsoever they were*;  $\pi\omicron\tau\epsilon$ , “formerly”, some time ago, which our version does not so fully express,

*it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's person.* This is said, not by way of slight or contempt, but in vindication of himself, whom the false teachers endeavoured to lessen, by giving high encomiums of the apostles at Jerusalem. It looks as if they had upbraided the apostle with being a persecutor of the church before his conversion, when nothing of such a nature could be laid to the charge of these men, and therefore he was not to be set upon a level with them: to which he may be thought to reply in such manner as this, that as for himself, it is true, he had been an injurious person to the saints; and he was ready to own it, for his own humiliation, and to illustrate the grace of God in his conversion; and as these excellent men, what they were before their conversion, it was no concern of his; though, perhaps, was he disposed to inquire into their characters then, some blemishes might be found therein, as well as in his; but it is not what he and they had been, but what they now were: he could have observed, that they were persons formerly of a very low figure in life, of mean occupations, fishermen by employment, and very illiterate persons, when he was bred a scholar at the feet of Gamaliel; but he chose not to make such observations, he knew that God was no respecter of persons, nor was he influenced by any such external circumstances, but chose whom he pleased to such an high office; and that he, who of fishermen made them apostles, of a persecutor had made him one also. Or these false teachers perhaps had objected to him, that these valuable men had been with Christ from the beginning, were eyewitnesses of his majesty, heard the doctrines of the Gospel from his lips, and saw his miracles, had had a similar conversation with him, when he was a preacher of much later date, and could not pretend to such advantages, and therefore ought not to be



equalled to them: his answer is, that whatever privileges of this kind they had enjoyed, as could not be denied but they were considerable, yet this mattered not, nor did it make any great difference between him and them; he had seen Christ too, though as one born out of due time; had received an immediate commission from him to preach his Gospel, and was appointed an apostle by him as they were, without any respect of persons: and whereas it might have been urged, that these men had entertained different sentiments from him formerly, concerning the observance of the law, he signifies he had nothing to do with that, to their own master they stood, to whom they must give an account, who, without respect of persons, will render to every man according to his works: and, adds he,

*for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me;* whatever opinions they formerly gave into, in their conversation with him, when he communicated the Gospel he preached to them, they found no fault with it; they did not go about to correct it; nor did they make any addition to it; the scheme of truths he laid before them, which had been the subject of his ministry, was so complete and perfect, containing the whole counsel of God, that they had nothing to add unto it; which shows the agreement between them, that he did not receive his Gospel from them, the perfection of his ministry, and that he was not a whit behind them in knowledge and gifts.

**Ver. 7.** *But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel,* etc..] James, Cephas, and John, were so far from blaming or correcting anything in the apostle's ministry, or adding anything to it, that they highly approved of it; and as a token of their agreement with him and Barnabas, gave them the right hand of fellowship: the reasons of their so doing are inserted here, and in the following verse, and in the next to that: the reason here given is, because

*they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was to Peter;* by “the uncircumcision and circumcision” are meant the Gentiles and Jews; (see Rom 2:26,27 3:30) by the Gospel of the one, and the Gospel of the other, two Gospels are not designed, for there is but one Gospel, and not another. Paul did not preach one Gospel unto the uncircumcised Gentiles, and Peter another to the circumcised Jews; but the same Gospel was preached by both, and is so called with respect to the different persons to whom it was preached by these apostles. The Apostle Paul was ordained a minister of the Gentiles,

and he chiefly preached among them, though not to them only. Peter was principally employed among the Jews, though also as he had opportunity he sometimes preached to the Gentiles: however, the subject of both their ministrations was the Gospel, which is said to be “committed” to them, as a trust deposited in their hands, not by man, but by God; the management of which required both prudence and faithfulness, and which were eminently seen in these good stewards of the mysteries of God. This being observed by the apostles at Jerusalem, they came into an agreement that one part should discharge their ministry among the Gentiles, and the other among the Jews.

**Ver. 8.** *For he that wrought effectually in Peter*, etc..] The Syriac version renders it, “he who exhorted Peter to”; the Arabic version is, “he who strengthened Peter in”; the Spirit of God is meant, who filled Peter with such eminent gifts, and inspired him with so much zeal and resolution

*to the apostleship of circumcision*, to discharge his office as an apostle among the Jews; and who wrought by him such wonderful works for the confirmation of it, as curing the man that was lame from his birth, striking Ananias and Sapphira dead for telling lies, and raising Dorcas from the dead, and communicating miraculous gifts by the imposition of his hands; and which same Spirit also made his ministrations effectual to the conversion of a large number of souls, as of three thousand by one sermon.

*The same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles.* The Spirit of God wrought as effectually in, and by him, as in Peter; filled him with extraordinary gifts for the discharge of his work among the Gentiles, and inspired him with equal zeal, constancy, and intrepidity of mind; wrought as many miracles by him to confirm his mission; such as striking blind Elymas the sorcerer, healing the cripple at Lystra, raising Eutychus from the dead, with many other signs and wonders wrought by him among the Gentiles, through the power of the Spirit of God, whereby they became obedient by word and deed. The same Spirit also accompanied the Gospel preached by him, to the conversion of multitudes, by which means many famous churches were founded and raised among the Gentiles; and this is another reason which induced the apostles at Jerusalem to take Paul and Barnabas into an association with them.

**Ver. 9.** *And when James, Cephas, and John*, etc..] These are the persons all along designed, though not till now named. James was the brother of our Lord, the son of Alphaeus, who wrote the epistle that goes by his

name, made that famous speech in the synod at Jerusalem, (<sup><4153></sup>Acts 15:13), presided in that church, was a man of great holiness, and much esteemed of by the saints, and had a good report of them that were without. Cephas is Simon Peter. This name was given him by Christ, (<sup><4042></sup>John 1:42) and in the Syriac language signifies a “stone”, as Peter does in the Greek, to which our Lord alludes, (<sup><4068></sup>Matthew 16:18). John was the evangelist, and the same that wrote the epistles, was the beloved disciple, and who outlived all the rest:

*who seemed to be pillars*; not as the Arabic version, “who thought themselves such”, but were esteemed so by others, and very rightly. They were pillars among the apostles of the highest note and greatest eminence among them; they were the very chief of the apostles; for though they were all in the same office, and had the same commission, and were employed in the same work, yet there were some who made a greater figure than others, as these did, and are therefore called pillars; they were more conspicuous, and to be observed, and taken notice of, than the rest; they were pillars in the church, set in the highest place there, and the ornaments of it; (see <sup><4001></sup>Proverbs 9:1 <sup><4062></sup>Revelation 3:12). They are called so for their constancy and stability in preaching the Gospel, and suffering for the sake of Christ; they were steadfast and immovable in his work, nor could they be shaken or deterred from it by the menaces, reproaches, and persecutions of men; and they were the means of supporting others that were feeble minded, and of defending and maintaining the truths of the Gospel; and were set, as Jeremiah was, as a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brazen walls against all the enemies of Christ, and his Gospel; and were, as the church is said to be, “the pillar and ground of truth”. The apostle may have respect to the titles of this kind which were bestowed on the Jewish doctors. It is said <sup>f29</sup>,

“when R. Jochanan ben Zaccai was sick, his disciples went in to visit him; and when he saw them, he began to weep; his disciples said to him, lamp of Israel, *ynymyh dwm* [ , “the right hand pillar”, etc.. why dost thou weep?”

So another of their Rabbins is said <sup>f30</sup> to be

“one of the walls, *y dwm* [ w, “and pillars” of the school.”

The character better agrees with these eminent apostles, who when they

*perceived the grace that was given unto me*; meaning not so much the grace of the Spirit of God that was wrought in him, or the good work of grace upon his soul, with which the church at Jerusalem, and the apostles there, had been made acquainted some years before; but the grace and high favour of apostleship, which was conferred upon him, and all those extraordinary gifts of grace, whereby he was qualified for the discharge of it; and particularly the efficacy and success of his ministry through the grace of God which went along with it, and was so visible in it:

*they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship*; as a token of a covenant or agreement between them; they took them, as it were, into partnership with them, admitted them as apostles into their society, and gave their full consent, particularly to this article,

*that we*, Paul and Barnabas,

*should go unto the Heathen*, preach among the Gentiles;

*and they*, Peter, and those that were with him,

*unto the circumcision*, and discharge their office among the Jews; and, to show their joint agreement, used the above rite; and which ceremony was used as among other nations <sup>f31</sup>, so with the Jews, when covenants were made, or partnership was entered into; (see ~~<RHE>~~ Leviticus 6:2) where the phrase, [y tmwçtb, “in putting of the hand”, and which we render in fellowship, is, both by Onkelos, and Jonathan ben Uzziel, rendered aky twptwçb, “in fellowship of the hand”, or “by the right hand of fellowship”; that being given in token of their agreement and consent to be partners together, to which the allusion seems to be here; or to the making of proselytes, to whom they “stretch out the hand” to bring them under the wings of the Shekinah <sup>f32</sup>, or in token of their being proselytes.

**Ver. 10.** *Only they would that we should remember the poor*, etc..] Not in a spiritual sense, as some have thought, though these the apostle was greatly mindful of; but properly and literally the poor as to the things of this world; and may design the poor in general, everywhere, in the several churches where they should be called to minister, and particularly the poor saints at Jerusalem; who were become such, either through the frequent calamities of the nation, and a dearth or scarcity of provisions among them, and which affected the whole country; or rather through the persecutions of their countrymen, who plundered them of their goods for professing the

name of Christ; or it may be through their having given up all their substance into one common stock and fund, as they did at first, and which was now exhausted, and that in a great measure by assisting out of it the preachers who first spread the Gospel among the Gentiles; so that it was but just that they should make some return unto them, and especially for the spiritual favours they received from them, as the Gospel, and the ministers of it, which first went out of Jerusalem: the “remembering” of them not only intends giving them actual assistance according to their abilities, which was very small, but mentioning their case to the several Gentile churches, and stirring them up to a liberal contribution:

*the same which I also was forward to do*; as abundantly appears from his epistles to the churches, and especially from his two epistles to the Corinthians. Now since the apostles at Jerusalem desired nothing else but this, and said not a word concerning the observance of the rites and ceremonies of the law, and neither found fault with, nor added to the Gospel the apostle communicated to them, it was a clear case that there was an entire agreement between them, in principle and practice, and that he did not receive his Gospel from them.

**Ver. 11.** *But when Peter was come to Antioch*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of “Peter”, read “Cephas”, who, by some ancient writers, is said to be not Peter the Apostle, named Cephas by Christ, but one of the seventy disciples. So Clemens<sup>f33</sup> says, that Cephas, of whom Paul speaks, that when he came to Antioch he withstood him to his face, was one of the seventy disciples who had the same name with Peter the Apostle: and Jerom says<sup>f34</sup> that there were some who were of opinion, that Cephas, of whom Paul writes that he withstood him to his face, was not the Apostle Peter, but one of the seventy disciples called by that name: but without any manner of foundation; for the series of the discourse, and the connection of the words, most clearly show, that that same Cephas, or Peter, one of the twelve disciples mentioned, (~~811~~ Galatians 2:9), with James and John, as pillars, is here meant. Our apostle first takes notice of a visit he made him, three years after his conversion, (~~811~~ Galatians 1:18), when his stay with him was but fifteen days, and, for what appears, there was then an entire harmony between them; fourteen years after he went up to Jerusalem again, and communicated his Gospel to Peter, and the rest, when they also were perfectly agreed; but now at Antioch there was a dissension between them, which is here related. However, the Papists greedily catch at this, to

secure the infallibility of the bishops of Rome, who pretend to be the successors of Peter, lest, should the apostle appear blameworthy, and to be reprov'd and oppos'd, they could not, with any grace, assume a superior character to his: but that Peter the Apostle is here design'd is so manifest, that some of their best writers are oblig'd to own it, and give up the other as a mere conceit. When Peter came to Antioch is not certain; some have thought it was before the council at Jerusalem concerning the necessity of circumcision to salvation, because it is thought that after the decree of that council Peter would never have behaved in such a manner as there related; though it should be observ'd, that that decree did not concern the Jews, and their freedom from the observance of the law, only the Gentiles; so that Peter and other Jews might, as it is certain they did, notwithstanding that, retain the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses; and according to the series of things, and the order of the account, it seems to be after that council, when Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, and with others continued there for some time, during which time Peter came thither; (see ~~4453~~ Acts 15:30,35) and the following contention happen'd,

*I withstood him to the face:* not in show, and outward appearance only, as some of the ancients have thought, as if this was an artifice of the apostle's, that the Jews, having an opportunity of hearing what might be said in favour of eating with the Gentiles, might be convinc'd of the propriety of it, and not be offend'd with it: but this is to make the apostle guilty of the evil he charges Peter with, namely, dissimulation; no, the opposition was real, and in all faithfulness and integrity; he did not go about as a tale bearer, whisperer, and backbiter, but reprov'd him to his face, freely spoke his mind to him, boldly resist'd him, honestly endeavour'd to convince him of his mistake, and to put a stop to his conduct; though he did not withstand him as an enemy, or use him with rudeness and ill manners; or as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and false teachers resist the truth; but as a friend and an apostle, and in an amicable manner, and yet with all uprightness: his reason for it was,

*because he was to be blamed;* some read it, "was blamed", or "condemn'd", either by others, by the Jews, for his going into Cornelius's house formerly; but what has this to do with the present case? or by those who lately came from James to Antioch, for his eating with the Gentiles there; yet this could be no reason for the apostle's withstanding him, but rather a reason why he should stand by him; or he was condemn'd by himself, self-condemn'd, acting contrary to the sentiments of his mind, and

what he had declared in the council at Jerusalem; though it is best to render the word, to be blamed, which shows that the apostle did not oppose him for opposition sake, rashly, and without any foundation; there was a just reason for it, he had done that which was culpable, and for which he was blameworthy; and what that was is mentioned in the next verse.

**Ver. 12.** *For before that certain came from James*, etc..] The Lord's brother, mentioned before with Cephas and John, who resided at Jerusalem, from whence these persons came; and who are said to come from James, because they came from the place and church where he was, though, it may be, not sent by him, nor with his knowledge. They were such as professed faith in Christ; they were “judaizing” Christians believing in Christ, but were zealous of the law. Now before the coming of these persons to Antioch,

*he*, Peter,

*did eat with the Gentiles*; which is to be understood, not of eating at the Lord's table with them, but at their own tables: he knew that the distinction of meats was now laid aside, and that nothing was common and unclean of itself, and that every creature of God was good, and not to be refused if received with thankfulness; wherefore he made use of his Christian liberty, and ate such food dressed in such manner as the Gentiles did, without any regard to the laws and ceremonies of the Jews; and in this he did well, for hereby he declared his sense of things, that the ceremonial law was abolished, that not only the Gentiles are not obliged to it, but even the Jews were freed from it, and that the observance of it was far from being necessary to salvation: all which agreed with the preaching and practice of the Apostle Paul, and served greatly to confirm the same, and for this he was to be commended: nor is this mentioned by way of blame, but for the sake of what follows, which was blameworthy:

*but when they were come he withdrew and separated himself*; not from the church, and the communion of it, for then he had been guilty of schism, but from private conversation with the Gentiles: he did not visit them in their own houses, and sit down at table and eat with them, as he was wont to do; which argued great inconstancy and instability, very unbecoming one that seemed to be, and was a pillar in the church of God, as well as much dissimulation, for he knew better than he acted; his conduct did not agree with the true sentiments of his mind, which he covered and dissembled; and which must be very staggering to the believing Gentiles, to see so great a



man behave in such a manner towards them, as if they were persons not fit to converse with, and as if the observance of Jewish rites and ceremonies was necessary to salvation. What induced him to take such a step was, his

*fearing them which were of the circumcision*: that is, the circumcised Jews, who professed faith in Christ, and were just now come from Jerusalem; not that he feared any danger from them; that they would abuse his person, or take away his life; but he might either fear he should come under their censure and reproofs, as he formerly had for going to Cornelius, and eating with him and his; or lest that they should be offended with him, and carry back an ill report of him, as not acting up to his character as an apostle of the circumcision. This led him into such a conduct; so true is that of the wise man, that “the fear of man bringeth a snare”, (<sup>2125</sup>Proverbs 29:25).

**Ver. 13.** *And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him*, etc..] Not the men that came from James, for they never acted otherwise, and therefore could not be said to dissemble; but the Jews that were members of this church at Antioch from the beginning; or who came along with Paul and Barnabas, and stayed with them there; (see <sup>4155</sup>Acts 15:35) and who before had ate with the Gentiles, as Peter; but being under the same fear he was, and influenced by his example, concealed their true sentiments, and acted the very reverse of them, and of their former conduct:

*insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation*; so good a man as he was, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost; who had been a companion of the Apostle Paul's in his travels among the Gentiles, had greatly assisted him in preaching the Gospel to them, was a messenger with him at the council in Jerusalem, heard the debates of that assembly, and the issue of them, returned with him to Antioch, and was one with him both in principle and practice; and yet so forcible was the example of Peter, and the other Jews, that, as with a mighty torrent, he was carried away with it, and not able to withstand it; such is the force of example in men who are had in great veneration and esteem: wherefore it becomes all persons, particularly magistrates, masters of families, and ministers of the Gospel, to be careful what examples they set, since men both of grace and sense are much influenced by them.

**Ver. 14.** *But when I saw that they walked not uprightly*, etc..] Or “did not foot it aright”; or “walked not with a right foot”: they halted, as the Jews of old did, between two opinions, being partly for God, and partly for Baal; so these seemed, according to their conduct, to be partly for grace, and

partly for the works of the law; they seemed to be for joining Christ and Moses, and the grace of the Gospel, and the ceremonies of the law together; they did not walk evenly, were in and out, did not make straight paths for their feet, but crooked ones, whereby the lame were turned out of the way; they did not walk in that sincerity, with that uprightness and integrity of soul, they ought to have done:

*nor according to the truth of the Gospel*; though their moral conversations were as became the Gospel of Christ, yet their Christian conduct was not according to the true, genuine, unmixed Gospel of Christ; which as it excludes all the works of the law, moral or ceremonial, from the business of justification and salvation, so it declares an entire freedom from the yoke of it, both to Jews and Gentiles. Now when, and as soon as this was observed, the apostle, without any delay, lest some bad consequences should follow, thought fit to make head against it, and directly oppose it:

*I said unto Peter before them all.* The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read “Cephas”, as before. The reproof was given personally and principally to Peter, though Barnabas and others were concerned with him, because he was the first in it, the chief aggressor, who by his example led on the rest; and this was given publicly before Barnabas, and the other Jews that dissembled with him, and for their sakes as well as his; before the Jews that came from James for their instruction and conviction, and before all the members of the church at Antioch, for the confirmation of such who might be staggered at such conduct; nor was this any breach of the rule of Christ, (<sup>4085</sup>Matthew 28:15) for this was a public offence done before all, and in which all were concerned, and therefore to be rebuked in a public manner: and which was done in this expostulatory way,

*if thou being a Jew*; as Peter was, born of Jewish parents, brought up in the Jews' religion, and was obliged to observe the laws that were given to that people:

*livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews*; that is, he had done so, he had ate with the Gentiles, and as the Gentiles did, without regarding the laws and ceremonies of the Jews relating to meats and drinks; being better informed by the Spirit of God, that these things were not now obligatory upon him, even though he was a Jew, to whom these laws were formerly made:

*why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* he asks him, with what conscience, honour, and integrity, with what consistency with his own principles and former practice, he could compel, not by force, nor, it may be, even by persuasions and exhortations, but by his example, which was very strong and powerful, the Gentiles, to whom these laws were never given, and to observe which they never were obliged; how he could, I say, make use of any means whatever to engage these to comply with Jewish rites and ceremonies. The argument is very strong and nervous; for if he, who was a Jew, thought himself free from this yoke, and had acted accordingly, then a Gentile, upon whom it was never posed, ought not to be entangled with it: and in what he had done, either he had acted right or wrong; if he had acted wrong in eating with the Gentiles, he ought to acknowledge his fault, and return to Judaism; but if right, he ought to proceed, and not by such uneven conduct ensnare the minds of weak believers.

**Ver. 15.** *We who are Jews by nature*, etc..] I Paul, and you Peter and Barnabas, and the rest of the Jews at Antioch. Some are Jews by grace, in a spiritual sense, as all are that are Christ's, that are true believers in him, that are born again, and have internal principles of grace formed in their souls, of whatsoever nation they be; (see <sup><4128></sup>Romans 2:28,29 <sup><4119></sup>Revelation 2:9). Others become Jews by being proselytes to the Jewish religion: such were the Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, that were dwelling at Jerusalem, when the Spirit was poured down on the apostles on the day of Pentecost, (<sup><4116></sup>Acts 2:5), but these here spoken of were such as were Jews by birth; they were born so, were descended of Jewish parents, and from their infancy were brought up in the Jewish religion, and under the law of Moses, and in the observance of it:

*and not sinners of the Gentiles:*  $\mu\lambda$  [ $h$   $t\omega\mu\omega\alpha$   $y$ ]  $\zeta\rho$ , “the wicked of the nations of the world”, as the <sup>f35</sup> Jews call them. Not but that the Jews also were sinners both by nature and practice, were involved in the guilt of sin, under the power of it, and defiled with it, as the apostle elsewhere most fully proves: nor is this said with regard to the vain opinion the Jews had of themselves, as very holy and righteous persons, who in their own apprehension needed neither repentance nor remission; and who looked upon the Gentiles as very unholy and unfit for conversation with them: but this more particularly respects that part of the character of the Heathens, that they were without the law, and were under no restraints, but lived in all manner of wickedness, without hope and God in the world, and so were

notorious sinners, filled with all unrighteousness, profligate and abandoned to every evil work, and are therefore called emphatically “sinful men”, (<sup>(~~247~~)</sup>Luke 24:7). And indeed the word *εθνος*, Gentiles, among themselves is sometimes used for *μερος τι ποσηροτατον*, “a certain most wicked part” of Gentiles in a city <sup>f36</sup>, and so may here design such who lived the most dissolute lives and conversations, to which the Jews are opposed, who had a written law, and were under a better regulation and discipline. The reason of this description, both in the positive and negative branch of it, is to observe, that since they, the apostles, and others, who were born Jews, and so under the law of Moses, and, until Christ came, were under obligation to observe it, but had now relinquished it, and wholly and alone believed in Christ for righteousness and life; then it was the most unreasonable thing in the world, by any means whatever, to lead the Gentiles, who never were under the law, to an observance of it.

**Ver. 16.** *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law*, etc..] That is, Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and other believing Jews knew this, and that from the law itself, which requires perfect and sinless obedience, and accuses, holds guilty, and adjudges to condemnation and death for the least failure, both as to matter or manner of duty; and from the prophets, which declare that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God, and who bear witness to the doctrines of remission of sin, and justification by the righteousness of Christ; and from the Gospel, in which this truth is most clearly revealed; and from the illumination of the blessed Spirit, who led them into all truth; and from the revelation of Jesus Christ they were favoured with; and from their own experience, being fully convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and of the necessity, suitableness, and fulness of the righteousness of Christ. By “the works of the law” are meant, not only obedience to the ceremonial law, though this is included, but also to the moral law; for it can hardly be thought, that the men the apostle opposes could ever dream of justification by their compliance with the rituals of the ceremonial law if they believed there could be no justification by their obedience to the moral law; for if there is no justification by the latter, there can be none by the former: the words are therefore to be taken in the largest sense, as rejecting all works of the law, of whatsoever kind, from justification in the sight of God; and such works are designed, as are performed by sinful men in and of themselves, otherwise men are justified by the works of the law as performed by Christ in their room and stead, but

not by any as performed by themselves, for at best they are very imperfect, and so cannot justify; they are opposed to the grace of God, to which the justification of a sinner is always ascribed, and therefore cannot be by works; such a scheme would disannul the death of Christ, and promote boasting in men, and indeed is impracticable and impossible:

*but by the faith of Jesus Christ;* not by that faith, which Christ, as man, had in God, who promised him help, succour, and assistance, and for which he, as man, trusted in him, and exercised faith upon him; but that faith of which he is the object, author, and finisher; and not by that as a cause, for faith has no causal influence on the justification of a sinner; it is not the efficient cause, for it is God that justifies; nor the moving cause, or which induces God to justify any, for that is his own free grace and good will; nor the meritorious or procuring cause, for that is the obedience and bloodshed of Christ; nor is faith the matter of justification; it is not a justifying righteousness; it is a part of sanctification; it is imperfect; as an act it is a man's own, and will not continue for ever in its present form, nature, and use; and is always distinguished from the righteousness of God, by which we are justified, which is perfect, is another's, and will last for ever. Men are not justified by faith, either as an habit, or an act; not by it as an habit or principle, this would be to confound justification and sanctification; nor as an act, for as such it is a man's own, and then justification would be by a man's works, contrary to the Scripture: but faith is to be taken either objectively, as it relates to Christ, the object of it, and his justifying righteousness; or as it is a means of receiving and apprehending Christ's righteousness; the discovery of it is made to faith; that grace discerns the excellency and suitableness of it, approves of it, rejects a man's own, lays hold on this, and rejoices in it:

*even we have believed in Jesus Christ;* we who are Jews by nature, being fully apprized that there is no justification by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ, received by faith, have quited all confidence in our own works, and are come to Christ, and believe in him, not only as the Messiah, but as the Lord our righteousness:

*that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law;* not that faith, as before observed, has any causal influence on justification. These Jews did not believe in Christ, in order by their believing to procure their justification before God, and acceptance with him, but that they might receive, by faith, this blessing from the Lord in

their own conscience, and enjoy the comfort of it, and all that spiritual peace which results from it, and which they could not find in the works of the law:

*for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*; reference seems to be had to (~~GEN~~ Psalm 143:2) and contains a reason why these believing Jews relinquished Moses in his law, in whom they formerly trusted, and looked to, and depended on for their justification, because that by obedience to the law of works no sinful mortal man can be justified in the sight of God,

**Ver. 17.** *But if while we seek to be justified by Christ*, etc.] As they did, and not only sought for, but obtained what they sought for, because they sought for it at the hands of Christ, and not as it were by works, but by faith, even a justifying righteousness in him.

*We ourselves also are found sinners*; that is, either we should be so, were we not to rest here, but seek to join our own works with Christ's righteousness for our justification, and so make Christ the minister of sin, of an imperfect righteousness, which cannot justify, which God forbid should ever be done by us; or we are reckoned sinners by you, judaizing Christians, for leaving the law, and going to Christ for righteousness; and if so, Christ must be the minister of sin, for he has directed and taught us so to do; but God forbid that any such thing should be said of him: or if we are still sinners, and unjustified persons, notwithstanding we seek to Christ to be justified by him, but need the law, and the works of it to justify us, then Christ, instead of being a minister of righteousness, is a minister of the law, the strength of sin, which accuses for it, and is the ministration of condemnation and death on account of it, which God forbid should ever be: or this is an objection of the adversary to the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, as if it made void the law, discouraged the performance of good works, opened a door to licentiousness that men might continue sinners, and live as they wish, being under no restraints of the law, or under obligation to obedience it, and by such doctrine make

*Christ the minister of sin*; who hereby teaches men to live in sin, and in the neglect of duty; to which the apostle answers,

*God forbid*; as holding such consequences in the utmost abhorrence and detestation; (see ~~GEN~~ Romans 6:1,2,15 7:7).

**Ver. 18.** *For if I build again the things which I destroyed,* etc..] Which must be understood not of good things, for formerly he destroyed the faith of the Gospel, at least as much as in him lay, and now he built it up, established, and defended it; in doing which he did no evil, or made himself a transgressor, but the reverse; he showed himself a faithful minister of Christ: but of things not lawful, such as the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, which were now abrogated, and he had declared to be so all over the Gentile world; and therefore should he go about to establish these things as necessary to salvation, or teach men to join the observance of them with Christ's righteousness for justification, then, says he,

*I make myself a transgressor:* for he could not be otherwise, be the case how it would with respect to the abrogation, or non-abrogation of the law; for if the law was not abolished, then he made himself a transgressor of it; by neglecting it himself, and teaching others to do so; and if it was abolished, then it must be criminal in him to enforce the observance of it as necessary to a sinner's justification before God. Now though the apostle transfers this to himself, and spoke in his own person to decline all invidious reflections and characters; yet he tacitly regards Peter, and his conduct, who had been taught by the vision the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and acted accordingly by conversing and eating with the Gentiles, and had declared that law to be an insupportable yoke of bondage, which the Gentiles were not obliged to come under; and yet now, by his practice and example, built up and established those very things he had before destroyed, and therefore could not exculpate himself, from being a transgressor: or these things may regard sins and immoralities in life and conversation; and the apostle's sense be, that should he, or any other, take encouragement to sin from the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, as if he was the author and minister of sin, and allowed persons in it; this would be to establish sin, which the righteousness of Christ justifies from, and engage in a living in sin, to which, by Christ's righteousness, they are dead unto; than which, nothing can be, a greater contradiction, and which must unavoidably make them not only transgressors of the law, by sinning against it, but apostates, as the word *παραβατης* here used signifies, from the Gospel; such must act quite contrary to the nature, use, and design of the Gospel in general, and this doctrine in particular, which teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that being dead to sin, they should live unto righteousness.



**Ver. 19.** *For I through the law am dead to the law*, etc..] The apostle further replies to the objection against the doctrine of justification, being a licentious one, from the end of his, and other believers, being dead to the law: he owns he was dead unto it, not in such sense as not to regard it as a rule of walk and conversation, but so as not to seek for life and righteousness by it, nor to fear its accusations, charges, menaces, curses, and condemnation: he was dead to the moral law as in the hands of Moses, but not as in the hands of Christ; and he was dead to it as a covenant of works, though not as a rule of action, and to the ceremonial law, even as to the observance of it, and much more as necessary to justification and salvation: and so he became “through the law”; that is, either through the law or doctrine of Christ; for the Hebrew word **hrwt**, to which **νομος** answers, signifies properly doctrine, and sometimes evangelical doctrine, the Gospel of Christ; (see ~~2MB~~ Isaiah 2:3 42:4 ~~8R7~~ Romans 3:27) and then the sense is, that the apostle by the doctrine of grace was taught not to seek for pardon, righteousness, acceptance, life, and salvation, by the works of the law, but in Christ; by the doctrine of the Gospel, which says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved; he became dead to the law, which says, do this and live: or through the books of the law, and the prophets, the writings of the Old Testament, which are sometimes called the law, he learnt that righteousness and forgiveness of sins were only to be expected from Christ, and not the works of the law; things, though manifested without the law, yet are witnessed to by the law and prophets: or through the law of his mind, the principle of grace formed in his soul, he became dead to the power and influence of the law of works, he being no longer under the bondage of that, but under grace, as a governing principle in his soul: or the word law, here twice used, may signify one and the same law of works; and the meaning be, either that through Christ's fulfilling the law in his room and stead, assuming an holy human nature the law required, and yielding perfect obedience to it, and submitting to the penalty of it, he became dead to it; that is, through the body of Christ, (see ~~8R4~~ Romans 7:4) and through what he did and suffered in his body to fulfil it; or through the use, experience, and knowledge of the law, when being convinced of sin by it, and seeing the spirituality of it, all his hopes of life were struck dead, and he entirely despaired of ever being justified by it. Now the end of his being dead unto it, delivered from it, and being directed to Christ for righteousness, was, says he,

*that I might live unto God*; not in sin, in the violation of the law, in neglect and defiance of it, or to himself, or to the lusts of men, but to the will of God revealed in his word, and to his honour and glory; whence it most clearly follows, that though believers are dead to the law, and seek to be justified by Christ alone, yet they do not continue, nor do they desire to continue in sin, or indulge themselves in a vicious course of living, but look upon themselves as under the greater obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

**Ver. 20.** *I am crucified with Christ*, etc..] Not literally, for so only the two thieves were crucified with him, but mystically; Christ was crucified for him in his room and stead, and so he was crucified with him, and in him, as his head and representative. Christ sustained the persons of all his people, and what he did and suffered was in their name, and on their account, and so they were crucified and suffered with him, as they are said to be buried with him, and to be risen with him, and to sit together in heavenly places in him. Moreover, their old man was crucified with him; when he was crucified, all their sins, the whole body of them, were laid upon him, and he bore them, and bore them away, destroyed and made an end of them; they received their mortal wound by his crucifixion and death, so as never to be able to have any damning power over them; and in consequence of this the affections and lusts are crucified, and the deeds of the body of sin mortified by the Spirit and grace of God, in regeneration and sanctification, so as not to have the dominion over them; the world is crucified to them, and they to the world; and this is another reason proving that justification by Christ is no licentious doctrine. This clause is, in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, put at the end of the preceding verse.

*Nevertheless I live*; which is to be understood, not of his natural, but of his spiritual life; the life of justification he lived, by faith, on the righteousness of Christ; and the life of sanctification which he had from Christ, by the quickening influences of his Spirit, by virtue of which he walked in newness of life. The believer is a mere paradox, he is dead to the law, and “yet lives” to God; he is crucified with Christ, and yet lives by him; yea, a crucified Christ lives in him.

*Yet not I*; not the same I as before, but quite another man, a new creature: he did not now live as in his state of unregeneracy, and whilst in Judaism; he was not now Saul the blasphemer, the persecutor, and injurious person; nor did he now live Saul the Pharisee: or the life he had was not of his own

obtaining and procuring; his life of righteousness was not of himself, but Christ; his being quickened, or having principles of life and holiness implanted in him, was not by himself, but by the Spirit; and the holy life and conversation he lived was not owing to himself, to his power and strength, but to the grace of God; or it was not properly himself, or so much he that lived,

*but Christ liveth in me*: who was not only the author and maintainer of his spiritual life, but the life itself; he was formed in his soul, dwelt in his heart, was united to him, was one with him, whence all vital principles and vital actions sprung, and all the communion and comforts of a spiritual life flowed.

*And the life which I now live in the flesh*; in the body, whilst in this mortal state, whereby he distinguishes that spiritual life he had from Christ, and through Christ's living in him, both from the natural life of his body, and from that eternal life he expected to live in another world; and which, he says,

*I live by the faith of the Son of God*; meaning, not that faith which Christ, as man, had, but that of which he is the author and object, by which the just man lives; not upon it, for the believer does not live upon any of his graces, no, not upon faith, but by faith on Christ, the object; looking to him for pardon, righteousness, peace, joy, comfort, every supply of grace, and eternal salvation: which object is described as “the Son of God”; who is truly God, equal with his Father; so that he did not live upon a creature, or forsake the fountain of living waters, but upon the only begotten Son of God, who is full of grace and truth: of whom he further says,

*who loved me*; before the foundation of the world, from everlasting, prior to his love to him; and freely, without any regard to worth or merit, and though he was a blasphemer and a persecutor; and him personally, and particularly, in a distinguishing manner, of which he had a special knowledge and application by the Spirit of God; and was a reason and argument constraining him, and prevailing on him to live to him who loved him, and died for him, or, as he adds,

*and gave himself for me*; his whole self, his soul and body, as in union with his divine person, into the hands of justice, and unto death, in his room and stead, as an offering and sacrifice for sin, and which he did freely and voluntarily; and is a strong and full proof of his love to him. Now though

Christ gave his life a ransom for many, and himself for his whole church, and all the members of his mystical body, yet the apostle speaks of this matter as singularly respecting himself, as if almost he was the only person Christ loved and died for; which shows that faith deals with Christ not in a general way, as the Saviour of the world, but with a special regard to a man's self: this is the life of faith; and these considerations of the person, love, and grace of Christ, animate and encourage faith in its exercises on him.

**Ver. 21.** *I do not frustrate the grace of God*, etc..] Or “cast it away”, as the Vulgate Latin version reads it; or “deny it”, as the Syriac and Arabic; or “despise, reject, and make it void”, as other versions; meaning either the grace of the Son of God in giving himself for him, just mentioned by him; or the particular doctrine of grace, justification, he is speaking of, as proceeding from the grace of God, upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ; or the whole Gospel, all and each of which would be denied, despised, rejected, made null and void, be in vain, fallen and departed from, should justification be sought for by the works of the law: but this the apostle did not do, and therefore did not frustrate the grace of God: which to do would be to act the most ungenerous and ungrateful part to God, and Christ, and to that love and grace which are so largely displayed in the free justification of a sinner.

*For if righteousness come by the law*; if a justifying righteousness is to be attained unto by the works of the law, or men can be justified by their obedience to it,

*then Christ is dead in vain*; there was no necessity for his dying: he died without any true reason, or just cause; he died to bring in a righteousness which might have been brought in without his death, and so his blood and life might have been spared, his sufferings and death being entirely unnecessary; which to say is to cast contempt upon the wisdom, love, and grace of God in this matter, and to offer the greatest indignity to the person, character, sufferings, and death of Christ. Wherefore it may be strongly concluded, that there is no righteousness by the law of works, nor to be attained that way, otherwise Christ had never died; and that justification is solely and alone by his righteousness.