

## **Dr. Tim Gombis, Galatians, Session 4, Galatians 2:11-21 Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Gombis, Galatians, Session 4, Galatians 2:11-21, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Tim Gombis's lecture, the fourth in a series on Galatians, focuses on Galatians 2:11-21.** The session examines Paul's confrontation with Peter in Antioch regarding fellowship with Gentiles and Paul's subsequent theological argument. **Gombis highlights Paul's use of this incident to address the issues in Galatia, emphasizing the theological underpinnings of the gospel for both Jewish and Gentile Christians.** Key interpretive challenges within the passage, such as the meaning of justification, "works of law," and "faith in Jesus Christ," are explored in detail. **Ultimately, the lecture unpacks Paul's logic that justification comes through faith in Christ, not adherence to Jewish identity markers, leading to a new multi-ethnic community.**

**2. 19 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Gombis, Galatians, Session 4 – Double click icon to play in  
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]  
Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament →  
Pauline Epistles → Galatians).**



**Gombis\_Galatians\_  
Session04.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Gombis, Galatians, Session 4, Galatians 2:11-21

### 4. Study Guide: Gombis, Galatians, Session 4, Galatians 2:11-21

#### Galatians 2:11-21 Study Guide

##### Key Concepts

- **Confrontation in Antioch:** Paul's public rebuke of Peter for his inconsistent behavior regarding fellowship with Gentile Christians.
- **Hypocrisy:** Paul's accusation against Peter and other Jewish Christians for withdrawing from Gentile fellowship due to pressure from James's associates, despite knowing the theological implications of Christian unity.
- **Justification:** The act by which God declares believers righteous. Paul discusses its future (eschatological) dimension, its present application through faith, its transformative aspect, and its role in including people in the community of God.
- **Works of the Law:** Actions or observances tied to the Mosaic Law, which, according to the "new perspective on Paul," primarily signify markers of Jewish identity rather than legalistic attempts to earn salvation.
- **Faith in/of Jesus Christ:** A debated phrase (Pistis Iēsou Christou) that can be understood as both objective genitive (faith in Jesus Christ, emphasizing human response) and subjective genitive (faithfulness of Jesus Christ, emphasizing divine initiative and Jesus's obedience). Many scholars see it as encompassing both.
- **One New Multi-Ethnic Family of God:** The concept that through Christ, the dividing walls between Jewish and Gentile believers have been broken down, creating a unified community.
- **Co-Crucifixion with Christ:** The theological reality that believers have died with Christ, freeing them from the power of sin and the constraints of the old way of life defined by ethnic and legalistic boundaries.

- **Living to God:** The result of dying to the law; a life empowered by Christ and oriented towards God's purposes, particularly the building of the new multi-ethnic community.
- **Grace of God:** God's unmerited favor. Paul argues that seeking righteousness through the law nullifies grace, as it implies Christ's death was unnecessary.
- **True Self:** The understanding that in Christ, the false, exclusionary self is put to death, and believers discover their authentic identity as fully loved members of God's community.

### Short-Answer Quiz

1. Why did Paul confront Peter in Antioch, and what was the specific behavior that Paul opposed?
2. According to Gombis, why might the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem not have fully grasped the implications of the gospel for fellowship with Gentiles?
3. What was the effect of Peter withdrawing from eating with Gentile Christians, and what similar situation does Gombis draw a parallel to?
4. Explain the "already but not yet" aspect of justification as described by Gombis.
5. According to the "new perspective on Paul," what does Paul likely mean by the phrase "works of the law" in Galatians 2:16?
6. Describe the ambiguity surrounding the Greek phrase "Pistis Iēsou Christou" and the two main ways it can be interpreted.
7. In Galatians 2:17, what theological problem does Paul pose regarding the justification of both Jews and Gentiles in Christ?
8. Explain Paul's cryptic statement in Galatians 2:18 about rebuilding what he once destroyed and how it relates to Peter's actions.
9. According to Gombis, how does the concept of being "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20) enable Paul to fellowship with those previously considered "sinners"?
10. What does Paul mean by saying, "I do not nullify the grace of God," in relation to seeking righteousness through the law?

### Answer Key to Short-Answer Quiz

1. Paul confronted Peter in Antioch because Peter, after initially eating with Gentile Christians, withdrew and held himself aloof when men from James arrived. Paul opposed this behavior because it implied that Gentile Christians were not fully accepted unless they became like Jewish Christians.
2. The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, being in a completely Jewish context, did not necessarily have the practical opportunities or pressures to fully work through the logic of the gospel regarding fellowship with non-Jewish Christians. They lacked the lived experience of a mixed-race community.
3. Peter's withdrawal sent the message to Gentile Christians that they needed to become like Jews to be fully accepted by God and his people. Gombis compares this to the Corinthian church where the rich excluded the poor from the love feast, implying a difference in social and spiritual value.
4. Justification has an "already" component in that a verdict of righteousness is rendered in the heavenly courtroom for believers at conversion, anticipating the future. It also has a "not yet" component as the full realization and public declaration of this justification will occur on the day of Christ.
5. According to the "new perspective on Paul," "works of the law" likely refers to the distinctive practices of Judaism, such as Sabbath observance, food laws, and circumcision, which marked out Jewish identity rather than legalistic efforts to earn salvation.
6. The phrase "Pistis Iēsou Christou" can be interpreted as an objective genitive, "faith in Jesus Christ," emphasizing the believer's trust. It can also be interpreted as a subjective genitive, "faithfulness of Jesus Christ," highlighting Jesus's own obedience and faithfulness to God. Many see it as intentionally encompassing both aspects.
7. Paul's question suggests that if Jews and Gentiles are both justified in Christ and found among "sinners" (Gentiles), does this imply that Christ's work somehow promotes sin by associating righteous Jews with those considered unclean?
8. Paul argues that if he, having realized the barriers between Jew and Gentile are broken down in Christ and having fellowshiped with Gentiles, were to rebuild those barriers by withdrawing, he would prove himself a "transgressor" for contradicting his own understanding and actions in Christ.
9. Being "crucified with Christ" signifies a death to the old way of life defined by the law and ethnic separation. Having died with Christ, Paul is no longer bound by

those old categories and can freely fellowship with anyone who is also in Christ, regardless of their background.

10. By saying he does not nullify God's grace, Paul means that righteousness comes only through faith in Christ. If righteousness could be attained through the law (or Jewish identity), then God's grace in sending Christ to die would have been unnecessary and pointless.

### Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the significance of Paul's confrontation with Peter in Antioch (Galatians 2:11-14) for understanding the early development of Christian theology and practice regarding Jewish-Gentile relations.
2. Discuss the different facets of justification presented by Gombis, explaining how this concept addresses the conflict Paul is dealing with in Galatians 2:15-21.
3. Compare and contrast the traditional understanding of "works of the law" with the perspective offered by the "new perspective on Paul," and explain how this distinction illuminates Paul's argument in Galatians 2.
4. Explore the implications of the phrase "faith in/of Jesus Christ" (Pistis Iēsou Christou) for understanding the roles of divine initiative and human response in salvation, as discussed by Gombis.
5. Elaborate on Gombis's explanation of "co-crucifixion with Christ" (Galatians 2:19-20) and its transformative impact on identity, community, and the understanding of Christian liberty.

### Glossary of Key Terms

- **Antioch:** A significant early Christian center with a diverse population of Jewish and Gentile believers. It was the location of Paul's confrontation with Peter.
- **Cephas:** The Aramaic name for Peter, one of Jesus's apostles and a prominent leader in the early church.
- **Circumcision Party:** A group of Jewish Christians who believed that Gentile converts needed to be circumcised and follow Jewish law to be fully part of God's people.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the "end times" or the final state of things. In this context, it refers to the future judgment and vindication of God's people.

- **Gentiles:** Non-Jewish people. In the context of the New Testament, this often refers to those outside the covenant relationship with God established through Abraham and the Mosaic Law.
- **Hypocrisy:** The practice of claiming to have moral standards or beliefs to which one's own behavior does not conform. Paul accuses Peter of hypocrisy for acting contrary to his own understanding of the gospel.
- **James:** Likely James, the half-brother of Jesus and a leader in the Jerusalem church. Individuals "from James" held a more conservative view regarding the inclusion of Gentiles.
- **Jerusalem Church:** The original center of Christianity, composed primarily of Jewish believers in Jerusalem.
- **Kosher:** Food prepared according to Jewish dietary laws.
- **Legalism:** A strict adherence to laws or rules, often implying that salvation or righteousness can be earned through obedience to these rules. The "new perspective" argues that Paul was not primarily opposing this form of Judaism.
- **Love Feast (Lord's Supper):** Communal meals shared by early Christians, often associated with the celebration of the Eucharist.
- **Mosaic Law:** The body of laws given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, recorded in the first five books of the Old Testament (the Torah).
- **New Perspective on Paul:** A scholarly viewpoint that interprets Paul's letters, particularly his critiques of "works of the law," as addressing issues of Jewish and Gentile inclusion and boundary markers rather than a legalistic system of earning salvation.
- **Objective Genitive:** In Greek grammar, when the noun in the genitive case is the object of the action or state expressed by the noun it modifies (e.g., "faith in Jesus Christ").
- **Rectification:** The act of making something right or correcting what is wrong. Gombis uses this to describe the transformative aspect of justification.
- **Subjective Genitive:** In Greek grammar, when the noun in the genitive case performs the action or possesses the quality expressed by the noun it modifies (e.g., "faithfulness of Jesus Christ").

- **Torah:** The first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), containing the foundational laws and stories of Israel's covenant with God.
- **Transgressor:** One who violates a law or command. Paul suggests Peter becomes a transgressor by rebuilding the barriers Christ has broken down.

## **5. FAQs on Gombis, Galatians, Session 4, Galatians 2:11-21, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**

### Frequently Asked Questions on Galatians 2:11-21

#### **1. Why did Paul confront Peter in Antioch, as described in Galatians 2:11-14?**

Paul confronted Peter because Peter, who had initially been eating with Gentile Christians in Antioch (a mixed Jewish and Gentile church), withdrew from this fellowship when certain men from James arrived from Jerusalem. These men held the view that fellowship with Gentiles was unlawful. Peter's withdrawal, driven by fear of their disapproval, sent the message that Gentile Christians needed to become like Jewish Christians to be fully accepted, implying that their Christian identity alone was insufficient. Paul saw this as hypocrisy and a betrayal of the gospel's inclusive nature.

#### **2. What was the significance of Jewish and Gentile Christians eating together in the Antioch church?**

The act of Jewish and Gentile Christians eating together, likely in the context of the Lord's Supper or a love feast, was a radical step that embodied the unity of the Christian community beyond ethnic boundaries. It challenged the traditional Jewish understanding of separation from Gentiles and demonstrated the new reality in Christ, where all believers are part of one family regardless of their background. Peter's initial participation affirmed this, but his subsequent withdrawal undermined this powerful symbol of gospel unity.

#### **3. What is Paul's understanding of "justification" in the context of this passage (Galatians 2:15-21)?**

Paul understands justification not merely as a legal declaration of righteousness at conversion, but as a multifaceted concept with eschatological, transformative, and inclusive dimensions. It is the future verdict of God anticipated in the present for those in Christ. Justification also involves being made right and, crucially in this context, defines who belongs to the people of God. Paul argues that justification, leading to inclusion in God's people, comes through faith in Christ, not through adherence to Jewish identity markers or "works of the law."



**4. What does Paul mean by "works of the law" in Galatians 2:16, and how does this relate to the "new perspective on Paul"?**

Traditionally, "works of the law" was often interpreted as legalistic attempts to earn salvation through obedience to the Mosaic Law. However, the "new perspective on Paul" suggests that in this context, "works of the law" refers to practices that marked Jewish identity, such as Sabbath observance, food laws, and circumcision. Paul's argument, in this view, is not against legalism as such, but against the idea that these Jewish identity markers are necessary for justification and inclusion in God's people, which is now based solely on faith in Christ, open to both Jews and Gentiles.

**5. What are the different ways to understand the phrase "faith in Christ Jesus" (or "faith of Jesus Christ") in Galatians 2:16 and its implications?**

The Greek phrase can be understood as either an objective genitive ("faith in Jesus Christ," emphasizing our belief in him) or a subjective genitive ("faithfulness of Jesus Christ," emphasizing his own fidelity and obedience to God, particularly leading to the cross). Some scholars argue for one interpretation over the other, while others suggest Paul intended both meanings. Understanding it as the "faithfulness of Jesus Christ" highlights God's initiative in salvation through Christ's work. Recognizing both aspects emphasizes that justification comes through being incorporated into Christ's faithful life and our own faith response.

**6. What is the theological problem Paul addresses in Galatians 2:17, and how does he resolve it in verses 18-20?**

The theological problem is this: if Jews who seek justification in Christ are also found to be "sinners" (by associating with Gentile "sinners"), does this make Christ a promoter of sin? Paul refutes this by explaining that "rebuilding what I have once destroyed" (verse 18) would make him a transgressor. This refers to abandoning the inclusive fellowship in Christ and returning to the separationist practices based on Jewish identity. He resolves the dilemma by stating, "For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (verses 19-20). Through his union with Christ's death, Paul has died to the old system of the law as a means of defining God's people and is now alive in Christ, free to participate in God's new, inclusive community.

**7. What does Paul mean when he says, "I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died needlessly" (Galatians 2:21)?**

Paul argues that seeking righteousness or justification through adherence to the law (particularly in the sense of maintaining Jewish identity as necessary for inclusion) would render Christ's death meaningless. If the law could have brought about the new creation and the justification of both Jews and Gentiles, then God's grace manifested in Christ's sacrificial death would have been unnecessary. Paul affirms that God's grace, received through faith in Christ, is the sole basis for this new reality and inclusion in God's people.

**8. When Paul says, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20), what does he mean for individual Christian life and identity?**

This statement signifies a radical transformation in the believer's identity. The "old self," defined by cultural, ethnic, or status-based distinctions and exclusionary practices, has been crucified with Christ. The new life is lived in union with Christ, empowered by his faithfulness and characterized by love and self-giving. It doesn't mean the abolition of the individual, but rather the realization of their truest self in Christ, freed from the need for self-justification through external markers and empowered to live in an inclusive community, reflecting Christ's love and service to others.