

## **Justification: An Objection**

Galatians 2:17-19

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Joshua Koura

Camden Valley Baptist Church

[www.cvbaptist.com](http://www.cvbaptist.com)

Galatians Chapter 2:11-21 tells us of a confrontation between the Apostle Paul and Peter. Now, when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed. For before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? We who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

Father, we come to You asking now that You would send the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of our understanding, to bring conviction of sin, but also comfort and consolation through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray, Holy Spirit, that You would empower both myself and the hearers to hear the word and for me to proclaim the word in a way that would honor and glorify Your name. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

Well, last week we considered justification, and at the heart of justification, we understood that a man's being righteous or being declared righteous before God is not built upon his own righteousness or that which he can accomplish by obedience to the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. But we saw that it was not just his faith, or it's not his faith that

counts for righteousness, but the actual righteousness is a gift received, and it is none other than the righteousness of Christ Himself, so that the sinner is viewed by God as clothed in a righteousness which is not his own, namely the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And therefore, he or she stands accepted before God, received as God's own child, and you know, passes condemnation, passes judgment, and enters into the family of God and is accounted as His children. This is the beauty of justification, which is freely ours by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

But every time Paul preached justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ and not by the works of the law, he was met with opposition, and the constant stream of opposition came from the legalistic side of Judaism and the legalistic side even of what existed there in the church at the time. And the objection was simply this: if you say that a man is justified by faith alone and not by the works of the law, and you're encouraging people to forsake, as it were, trusting and obedience to the law so that they might have salvation in Jesus Christ, then are you encouraging people to live sinful lives? This is the constant objection, and to me, it is indicative that it's indicative of the fact that what Paul preached was truly a gospel of free grace. Often your objectors help you know what you've made very clear, and Paul goes on to argue, no, no, that's not exactly how it works. It doesn't mean that we live a life of licentiousness and sinfulness because now we're trusting in Christ alone for salvation, and we're not depending on the law for acceptance before God. He answers that objection many other times by displaying their union with Christ, which we'll look at today.

But Paul uses this word that appears constantly throughout his epistles, particularly in the epistle of Romans, found in verse 17 of this passage. It's translated here in the New King James as "certainly not." So here's the objection: it says here, "If while we seek to be justified by Christ, His righteousness by faith alone in His righteousness, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin?" And he says, "Certainly not," or "God forbid," or "may it never be." Now, whenever you find Paul saying this word, you'll find that everywhere in the book of Romans, particularly, you should look again at what he just said, and then you should follow where he's going. The reason why you should do that is because he's about to answer either an objection that he assumes that the people that he's writing to will make, or one that he knows that has already been made against him by false teachers at the time, or he may be saying it purely because he doesn't want his readers to get the wrong idea. And they are like road rails that keep us from misunderstanding what Paul's actually trying to say.

So this is how Paul argues: he makes his case, then he goes on to pose what people may be thinking, a certain objection, and then he says, "No

way, that's not what I'm talking about," and then he goes on to explain what he is talking about. Now, Paul does that right here in this passage of Scripture. He's talking to Peter, as we've been looking over the last few weeks in Antioch, before the other Jews there, and he is telling them that a man is not justified by works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ. And then he assumes, or maybe he knew that they were saying something like this, this kind of accusation that would come, "Is Christ then the minister of sin?" And Paul says, "No, no, certainly not." Look at verse number 15 of this text, and we understand the context in which it's put. He says in verse number 15, "We who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles," then he goes on to explain that we're justified by faith and not by the works of the law, and then he goes in verse 17, "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are also found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin?" And he says, "Certainly not."

Now, understand what's happening here. Jews that are trusting in their advantage, thinking that because they are God's people by relationship to the Mosaic Covenant, because they belong, they followed Moses, they thought they are the people of God, and therefore they were saying, "We're safe." And Paul says, "Hang on a minute, no one's safe who's not trusting alone in Jesus Christ for their salvation." And so they say, "Hang on a minute, if that's the case, and my relationship to Moses is not enough in terms of making me safe and accepted before God, then you're just saying that I'm no different to those Gentiles that were outside of the Mosaic Covenant." And Paul says, "Yes, precisely. When it comes to your relationship with God, when it comes to your covenant union with God, your relationship to the law is not what establishes that, but rather your relationship to Jesus Christ by faith alone in His name."

And this is the point that Paul is making here: forgiveness, righteousness is not by the works of the law; it is by faith in Jesus Christ, which establishes what the Bible teaches, a new covenant relationship with God. And this is important for us to get our heads around. So the forsaking of the law for Christ does not make Christ a minister of sin. It does not mean that Christ is encouraging a life of lawlessness and licentiousness, to live however our hearts dictate us to live. Rather, Paul is going to demonstrate by answering this objection that it is certainly not the case, and that's why he says, "Christ certainly is not a promoter of sin. Christ certainly is not a minister of sin. He is a minister of righteousness, and He rules in righteousness over His covenant people. Therefore, you cannot conclude such things."

So he begins by an outright refusal in answer to this objection: "Certainly not, God forbid." It's absurd; it is nonsense to think that. In fact, you don't understand union with Christ if you think that. But then Paul goes on

in verse number 18 to say something quite interesting. He reverses this entirely and puts it back on them, and he asks, we can ask this question, and he'll answer this question: who then is the real sinner? So they're saying, "Christ is a minister of sin." Paul says, "No way." And then he goes, "You want to know who's the one that's truly a transgressor? Christ is not encouraging transgression. You want to know who really encourages transgression?" Look what he says in verse number 18. He says, "For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor."

If I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. And Paul takes a universal hypothetical foolish builder that he puts under the category of himself as "I." He's not saying he's really this person, but you know when you really want to say something to somebody, and you know it might offend them, so you just say "I," but really you're actually trying to convey a message to someone else? This is what's happening here. Paul is saying, "This is true if this is true of me," and what he means, and anyone else, then that's—this is transgression; this is sin; this is wrong. And he gives an illustration or kind of the idea of a builder. He says, "If a builder builds again the very thing that that builder destroys, that's utter foolishness, number one, and it is transgression; it's wrong outright wrong."

What's he referring to? Well, think about what's happening here. Peter and the Jews are no longer sitting at table fellowship with the Gentiles. They're reinstating old covenant laws that segregated the people of God. In one sense, they were building again that which God destroyed in the gospel, that which Paul destroyed by the preaching of the gospel about this new people of God made up of Jew and Gentile, and also what Peter himself destroyed by the preaching of the gospel. You remember what happened with Cornelius, that God has received the Gentiles. And so Paul says, indirectly, "If I build again the things that I destroy, I make myself a transgressor."

If I build again a wall which I destroyed, how foolish, how much of a transgressor, therefore, am I? Now, the context here is acceptability before God, remember that, justification by faith. But the implications—what was the issue here? Paul, Peter is not walking according to the truth of the gospel, and therefore, Paul is trying to help Peter and the Jews understand, and the Galatians also understand, that to behave in such a way is contrary to the truth of the gospel, and to behave in such a way actually is to try to rebuild that which God destroyed through the preaching of the apostles.

And what Paul is saying here is this disunity between Jew and Gentile in the church of God is none other but a direct attack on the gospel itself. That's why Paul could say that he was not walking according to the truth of the gospel. This reintroducing of dietary laws, of Sabbath keeping, of circumcision, of days and observances of months and years, he's simply

saying, "You are erecting a wall that God had brought down in the death of His Son, and you are introducing distinctions that have now been done away with in Christ Jesus." And Paul is saying, "Who's the real transgressor now?"

Think about this: out of all the words that Paul used, what word did he use? Transgressor. Why didn't he say sinner? Why didn't he say, "Who's the one really doing wrong?" Well, the word transgressor is a word that relates to the law itself. Let me ask you this: "If I build again that which I destroy, I make myself a transgressor." What is Paul alluding to? A transgressor of what? Of the law, because a transgression is overstepping a clear marker or a clear boundary that has been set. When you think of transgression, you're thinking of violation of law. You know, "Don't trespass on this property." They've got a boundary; they've got a sign, and that boundary and that fence, you cross that fence, you transgress. The law is that fence, and what Paul is saying here is, is that when you rebuild all distinctions that existed in the law that are now done away with in Christ, he says, "You transgress the law."

Now, well, this gets here; it gets really confusing. How can reintroducing the law be against the law? Think about that, Paul. How can reintroducing the law be against the law? Well, what Paul and the Apostles and what Jesus taught and understood about the law is that the law wasn't just about commandments. The law also had a prophetic function. And what I mean by that is that the law pointed; the law had a message in and of itself. It was transient; it was passing; it was serving a purpose in the history of redemption. What was that purpose? It was pointing people to Jesus Christ. The law was given to the nation of Israel in covenant relationship with God so that they might know how to live in relationship with God. He declared to them His covenant, and then He laid out His laws. Remember what He says, "I am the Lord your God." There's the covenant relationship. "I have redeemed you out of Egypt," and He goes, "Therefore, you shall keep My commandments. You shall have no other gods before Me," goes on, and all extended through that, through 613 of those laws, was the commandments that were part of the covenant.

But the entire system spoke about Christ. Anywhere in the Bible you turn to in the Old Testament, you just keep reading, and you'll start to see Jesus if God gives you eyes to see Jesus in those places, and you study, and you look. When those lambs are being killed in accordance with the law, the prophetic function of the law was at work: Christ, the Lamb of God. When they were celebrating Passover in remembrance of the fact that they were brought out of Egypt, they obviously had in view, ultimately—maybe they didn't understand it all entirely; I'm sure they obviously didn't have the revelation that we have—but obviously, a Passover that is to come, where

God will rescue His people from sin, death, and hell, and destruction, from the bondage of Egypt, from the bondage of our sin, into the liberty of God's people as His children.

The law, the Torah, Genesis, speaks about justification by faith alone. Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. And the law, in type and shadow, all was pointing, pointing, pointing, pointing, speaking of a time where the nations shall come into the people of God, that Abraham, in Abraham, and in this covenant, all the nations of the earth will be blessed. And the entire law was prophetic and pointing to this, so that Jesus, walking on the road to Emmaus, beginning at Moses and in all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. You know, Jesus was saying there, "The law wasn't merely just about commandments; it had a prophetic function pointing to Me."

And what Paul is saying to Peter before all these people is simply this: when you start to erect those laws that segregated Israel from the nations and segregate you from one another now in the church, you are undermining all that the law pointed to because the law pointed to Jesus Christ and a new people and a new community made up of Jew and Gentile. And He broke down the middle wall of partition between us. Ephesians 2:15 makes it so clear; you can't even miss it. Look what he says here in Ephesians Chapter 2, verse number 15. He says that He, having abolished in His flesh—that is, in the flesh of Christ, in the death of Jesus Christ—having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the hostility, then he goes on to explain that is the law of commandments contained in ordinances. You know what the Bible's saying here? The enmity that existed between Jew and Gentile existed because of their relationship to the law.

And what he is simply saying here is Jesus Christ went in, was born under the law, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem us from the curse of the law and to establish a new people, both Jew and Gentile, in union with Him. And for you, Peter, and Jews at Antioch, to start erecting those things this side of the cross, this side of redemptive history, this side of the coming of Jesus Christ, that is to transgress the very law itself because the law pointed to this day because Abraham himself rejoiced to see My day, and Moses said that there's coming a prophet like unto me, and all that he—him will be blessed, and that they should hear him.

And so what he's simply saying here is that if you resurrect this old administration, if you now bring in this old administration of law, what ends up happening is you give the people a law, and you segregate Jew and Gentile, and you introduce once again sin, condemnation, and death. But what Paul is saying here to Peter is, "We are now this side of the cross, and we be-

long to God's new people. This is the new age; the Messiah has come. This is His new creation; we are His new people." And you transgress against that very law by undermining its prophetic function, which was pointing to Jesus Christ.

And so what he's simply saying is, then who's the real transgressor? Peter, Christ, who turns us away from the law, brings us in union with Himself in new covenant relationship with Him, fulfilling God's redemptive plan of history, or those who try and resurrect the wall that God brought down in the death of His Son? Who's the real transgressor? Amazingly, how Paul crafts his argument, it's almost like he deals a death blow to this once and for all. "Is Christ the minister of sin?" You kidding me? Not in the slightest.

But you still got to answer the objection: how then will Christ's new covenant people live in obedience to God? You're justified by faith alone in Jesus Christ; that's great, that's wonderful, and they turn from the law to Christ. But then what? They just go and live however they please and do whatever they want? Is that the way that it works with this justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ? You know what Paul does? He doesn't answer it by saying, "No, no, no, no, we keep the law, and these are the laws we keep, and these are those." I love how he answers the question. He answers the objection in verse number 19 by showing this union that has been newly established through the Lord Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection.

Nobody says in verse number 19, "For I through the law died to the law that I might live unto God." Here we go, living unto God; that's what it's all about. How do I live unto God, not only in terms of my salvation but in terms of a vibrant unity of praise and adoration and holiness to God? How do I live to God? Look what he says here: "I through the law died to the law in order that I might live to God." What does he point to here? He points to a new union that the believers under the new covenant have with their Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, depicted as we will witness today in the baptism of Alan, pictured by baptism, a death and burial and the resurrection, a death and burial and a resurrection. And he's saying all that are united to Christ in His new covenant have undergone a death, a burial, and a resurrection.

How are they gonna live in accordance to righteousness? How are they gonna walk in newness of life? That's exactly it; they have newness of life in the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "I through the law died to the law," and what he's simply saying is the doctrine of justification doesn't lead to licentiousness; it leads to a new union with Jesus Christ that by its very union, fruit comes into the life. This justification is not alone; it leads to a life of sanctification, of holiness. The Spirit of God poured out into the hearts of those who believe in Jesus.

Not only that, this new covenant union gives for us who are part of the new covenant a greater knowledge of forgiveness and righteousness that the Old Testament Saints did not have. They had, but I said a greater knowledge, a greater knowledge of forgiveness of sins. You know, every time those lambs were slain in the Old Testament, there was a reminder of sin, but the book of Hebrews talks to us of Christ's once and for all sacrifice that doesn't continually give us a reminder of sin but it continually gives us a reminder of forgiveness and mercy in the death of Jesus Christ.

What he says in Hebrews Chapter 9, verse 14, "How much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living and true God?" See that? The blood of Christ cleansing your conscience, forgiveness, assured of forgiveness in such a way that in this new covenant, that causes us—it cleanses us and causes us to go from dead works to serve the living and true God. And in Hebrews Chapter 10, verses 3 to 4, he says, "In those sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year, for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could ever take away sin."

So all these people are making sacrifices; eventually, they're starting to figure out, like, "Is this it? Like, I mean, for the rest of our days, kill a lamb, slay, kill a lamb. Is this what it's going to be like for the rest of our days?" And they probably started to think, "None of us more than this. There's an ultimate redemption which the prophets have been speaking of. There's a lamb who's going to be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace will be upon him, that he will bear our sins, that we might be brought into new relationship with God." And it's more than just lamb killing and lamb killing; there's a Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world. And we're looking to Him.

And along the line there, the types and shadows were pointing to this one coming Lamb and Savior. And by the new covenant in His blood, He gave us who believe in His name forgiveness and righteousness and the knowledge of that in a way that never has been felt in the history of redemption. And this new covenant does something else for us; it produces inevitable fruit. And this is Paul's entire argument: you cannot move from old covenant to new covenant and then be fruitless. That's just indicative of the fact that you have not moved from one to the other.

And the best thing to do now is to cite the new covenant promises in Ezekiel. Ezekiel 36:26-29, He says, "I will give you a new heart and a new spirit within you. I will take out the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I'll give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you—listen to these words—and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. You will keep My judgments, and you will do



them." Why? Because God's doing a new covenant work in their hearts that will secure the obedience of His people forevermore.

And Paul's saying, "You want to say Christ is the minister of sin? I, through the law, died to the law. It was the law that slew me. How did it slay me? It showed me my sin, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. It convinced me of my sin; it showed me that I'm condemned, and it showed me that I needed help and mercy. But there was no more lambs to offer, for Christ has come. He is the true Lamb." So by the acknowledgment of my sin, the law condemned me because it exposed my sin. And where can I get my sacrifice? Not the blood of bulls and goats, but Christ, the risen Lamb, who takes all my sins away.

And I ran to Him. Paul says, "That very law that showed me my sin, it also showed me my Savior because everything in the law that exposes me points me to Christ also as my only hope." And he goes, "So I, through the law, died to the law. I was crucified with Christ." That's what he's gonna say in verse 20. "I died with Christ. I was crucified with Christ to the law, to sin, and I'm raised to walk in newness of life. The sin, the law points out my sin; it points also out my Savior, and it leads me as a schoolmaster to faith in Jesus Christ."

This is the whole point of Romans Chapter 7 that was read to us in the Bible reading. There is this union depicted in baptism of the sinner going down into the death of Jesus Christ and being raised up with Him, dead to sin, dead to the law, and now living in the newness of the power of this new covenant that has come upon the people of God by faith in Jesus Christ. He's saying, "I'm no longer under the rule of the law, the power of the law, the reign of the law, the mastery of the law. I am married to another, and that is Jesus Christ, my Lord. And I, therefore, in that new union, I live to God."

The Spirit of God writes the laws in my heart; He points me to Christ; He shows me Christ, and I live in the power of the Holy Spirit all the days of my life in obedience to God. It's Christ the minister of sin? No, this is His new covenant people; this is His kingdom. The resurrection of the life of Jesus Christ, I am under His rule, the law of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, the reign of Jesus. He rules in my heart, and I commune with Christ. And as I fellowship in the consciousness of my forgiveness with Jesus, I experience in my life a new assurance and a new power that helps me live for God in a way that the law could not secure for me.

Paul answers in the same way Jesus answers: "A branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abides in the vine." That's it. "I through the law died to the law that I might live unto God." How does a branch bear fruit? It's

abiding in the vine. Turning away from what? Law works, in order to have justification in faith, faith in Christ. How you gonna live for Jesus? You don't understand; I'm united with the resurrected Jesus. How can I not live for Jesus? How can I not serve Him, love Him, and obey Him when He has shown me the forgiveness that He secured for me in the cross, and it overwhelms my soul?

How can I not live for Him? And the danger of what was happening there at Antioch is the same thing that happens to us in the Church of Jesus Christ today. We do not live in the power of our union with Jesus Christ. We continue to look back to law works in order to be accepted before God. We continue to look back to whether or not I'm ticking the certain boxes in order for me to be on that straight path, as opposed to me fellowshiping and communion with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me," Paul said, "and gave Himself for me." And my question to us this morning is, do you trust the power of that new covenant union, or are you looking for something more? Do you understand that what Christ has accomplished for you is sufficient for not only your justification but also to bring you to holiness of life?

I think this is well illustrated for us personally in that story of that sinful woman in Luke Chapter 7 that came into the house when Jesus was there with the Pharisee, and she comes in, and she starts bawling her eyes out, and she gets down and breaks this box of expensive perfume and starts anointing Jesus's feet. And she weeps, and with her tears, she washes His feet. Then with her hair, which is the glory of a woman, she takes down, and she dries Jesus's feet from her tears. And the Pharisee is looking, saying, "Man, what's wrong with this woman? There's something serious. If this man was a prophet, he would know who this woman is. She's sinful. What is he doing letting her touch him?"

What a beautiful picture of the gospel, Jesus letting us touch Him, union, fellowship, communion. You know what Jesus says to the Pharisee? This is all going on in his head; Jesus knows exactly what's going on. He says, "Let me tell you a story, and I want to ask you a question. There was a creditor who had two debtors. One owed him 50 denarii; one owed him 500 denarii. Big difference, right? And this—they couldn't pay, this man, this creditor. And so they said, 'We can't pay you.' And the creditor said, 'I forgive you. Don't worry. 50 denarii, paid. 500 denarii, paid. It's debts paid; it's forgiveness has been had. It's okay.'"

And Jesus says to the Pharisee, "Which one among those two people do you think would love the creditor more?" And you know what he said? "The one who was forgiven 500 denarii." And he says, "You answered well." And

he says, "Because he who is forgiven much loves much." And he said, "I walked into your house; you didn't give me any water to wash my feet. You gave me no kiss. But this woman, since she walked in, she has not ceased to kiss my feet and to wash my feet with her tears."

And he says, "This woman has been forgiven much." Now, get this; let me ask you this: was the woman forgiven there or before she came to Jesus? Before she came to Jesus. The loving much was the demonstration of the fact that she had been forgiven much. This is the whole point of the purpose of the parable. But you know what Jesus says to her afterward? "Daughter, your sins are forgiven you." Hang on a minute, what is Jesus doing at that moment? He is speaking the assurance of forgiveness to her soul.

This Pharisee did not understand the power of justification. He did not understand the power of having our debt cleansed entirely forevermore from our sins and having righteousness credited to our account. He did not understand the power of that, and all he could see was this woman—she looks crazy. Yes, she was crazy for Jesus because He had forgiven her much.

That woman was living unto God. She, through the Lord, died to the law and she's living unto God in the power of that new life which she has, the consciousness of because of justification. Do you understand the new covenant should speak every single day to our souls—forgiveness, forgiveness, mercy, righteousness—not in the law, in Christ Jesus. And you know what we should do as the people of God because of that? We should lay our glory down, get at the feet of Jesus, and say, "How can I live unto God?"

And all who have tasted of the power of that saving grace in justification and had the acknowledgment of the forgiveness of their sins, they are motivated like no other to live for God in a way that is more powerfully demonstrated than ever in the history of God's working in the world. You love much.

So I love God more. First question: Have you been united to Christ? Have you seen that One who bled for your sins? Have you trusted in that Lamb that died in your place? Have you cast your soul by faith in that crucified One? You look at your life and say, "There's no real change happening in me." I ask you, have you been forgiven much? Do you understand that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ?

Have you come to the conscious realization that unless Jesus Christ gives me His righteousness and I receive it by faith, I have no acceptability or standing before God? Have you forsaken law works? Have you forsaken your own efforts to advance your relationship with God? Have you come to the place where you said, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling"? Have you fallen down at Jesus's feet and said, "God be merciful to

me, a sinner"? Or are you still taking up in your own strength your salvation?

All you'll do is hit that wall every time and find that there's no power to live for this One. But the moment you put your hands up and say, "I surrender, Jesus. I've got nothing. If You don't do for me what I can't do for myself, I'm lost forevermore," and you come to Him by faith and you're united with Christ in His life, you will find that you will be raised to walk in newness of life.

What He said of the new covenant will be true in you. You'll walk in the power of a new life. You will start asking yourself, "Man, what's wrong with me? I'm different." That's why you look at these Christians, think, "What's wrong with them? They change like that." That's what I'm born again. I'm born again. "It's wrong with these born-again, you know. They're changing all over the place." Well, this is the whole point. This is the power of regeneration. This is the power of Christ's new covenant work, and the Spirit is poured out into their hearts in such a way that they realize more than ever before that I am forgiven much.

And you don't have to wrestle them into obedience. They say, "What next, Lord?" Like Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what will You have me to do?" They live unto God.

Dear people of God, brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, do not turn back to depending on your own strength or trying to resurrect a wall that has been destroyed. Live in the power of the new life that you have in Jesus Christ. Otherwise, you will get very quickly discouraged in your life, and you will find yourself that you're just—it's like running on a treadmill that's been maxed up to the highest tension point, and you just want to give up.

Give up now. Trust in Jesus Christ and look to His word. Yes, look to His law, but through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and walk in the power of His might. See that the law is really about Him. It's really about Him.

Let us pray.