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What Does it Mean to be Justified? Part 3

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How is self-righteousness related to 'the deeds of the flesh' in Galatians 5:19-21?

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We wish to present some additional insights into some of the key texts of Part 1 of this article.

A comment here on Galatians 2:16 may be in order.

“Knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the law**, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not by the works of the law**: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2:16 KJV.

The key to understanding this text is:

What does it mean to be justified? Are good works bad?

We think it will be clear once we break it down. Some people want to insist that works are bad because works are done by those who are trying to save themselves. **But is it true that works are bad?** That

depends on whether someone is trying to do good works in their own strength to save themselves or not. Paul doesn't contradict himself here. **There's another way that good works can be done – they can be done by the Spirit of God.** All this text is saying is that people who try to keep the law and their own strength will not be justified. **We believe that since all our righteousnesses are filthy rags** (Isaiah 64:6 KJV), **then the attempt to save oneself by their works is actually sin.** This is because those who do this make themselves to be their own god, little “g”. It is God’s job to save us, not ourselves – we have no ability of saving ourselves. For someone to be justified - that's an act of grace by God alone, which is Paul's point. Those who are trying to save themselves cannot have the Holy Spirit, or enjoy what it means to really live – which is to be filled with wonderful peace, great love and joy inexpressible! Nor can they ever be truly righteous – it is a hollow shell. **Paul’s point is not that we won't be doing good works, his point is that those who seek to try to work out their own salvation by themselves will not be justified.** We think this is clear! Jesus said, “And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Luke 18:13-14 KJV. The danger for those who trust in themselves, the self-righteous, is that they do not see their need clearly and may fail to confess their sins and humble themselves before God before it's too late, because they may think that they are good and do not need to repent. So those who try to keep the law in their own strength will not be justified, until they ask for mercy, this is what Jesus and Paul taught. If they feel that they are keeping the law, they may have failed to confess the sin of breaking it. Self-righteousness is a form of Spiritual blindness. Therefore Galatians 2:16 does not contradict our passage in Romans 2:13: 'For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.' They are both in perfect harmony with each other, but they're talking about two different things. “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Proverbs 28:13 KJV.

Dear reader, do you wish to be justified? Then humbly ask God for His mercy. That is the key, like Jesus said! It is those who pray to God, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner,’ who will be justified, not those who do not ask for mercy. It is only those who ask for mercy who will get it. Those who think that they are keeping God’s law (by themselves) may not think to ask God for mercy, because they think they are obeying Him. **Galatians 2:16 is talking about those who try to save themselves by their own works, by the flesh; but this will never happen; they do not have the power or the ability of doing this.** *It's a useless endeavor that only ends up in failure.* Paul is not saying here that those who try to be good by the Spirit will not be justified; he makes no such statement. But that is the implication made by those who try to use this text to show that good works are bad or that we should not try to do good works at all.

Now what are “the deeds of the flesh” or “the works of the flesh”?

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: Immorality [adultery & fornication], impurity [uncleanliness], sensuality [lasciviousness], idolatry, sorcery [witchcraft], enmities [hatred], strife [variance], jealousy [emulations], outbursts of anger [wrath], disputes, dissensions [seditions], factious [heresies], envying, drunkenness, carousing [revelings], and things like these, **of which I forewarn you**

just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21 NASB.

Now we believe that “the works of the law,” by which “no flesh shall be justified,” are related to “the deeds of the flesh.” They are both done by the flesh, not by the Spirit of God; they are both sin as we shall see below. They are both done by someone apart from God. I.e. they are both done by the flesh or man. Some may be thinking that “the works of the law” are done by all who are trying to keep the law, without qualification. *Some folks imply that works are “bad,” i.e. all works are bad, and that those who make no effort to obey God are doing exactly what they should be doing.* But the truth is that it is the works done by one’s own strength apart from God that are bad. We and others stipulate that “the works of the law” are man’s efforts to keep the law in his own strength,” which is self-righteousness.

Let us now see what Paul meant by the word “works” that he used in Galatians 2:16, so that we can understand what “the works of the law” means: Strong’s Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary says that the Greek word for “works” in Galatians 2:16 is ‘ergon’ “from a primary (but obsolete) ergo (to work); toil (as an effort or occupation); by implication an act :- deed, doing, labour, work.” Strong’s Number: 2041. **Now the primary meaning of this word ‘works’ in this passage is someone who is trying to work to earn the law - presumably to earn their salvation, because ‘work’ or ‘ergon’ means the work or the occupation someone does to earn a living.** This key phrase can also be rendered: “Knowing that a man is not justified by the deeds of the law or the deeds of trying to earn the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ...” And: ‘By the works of trying to earn the law or their salvation shall no flesh or man be justified.’ **We conclude here that when Paul wrote “by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified,” he was saying that those who work to earn the law shall not be justified.** Now it is obvious here that Paul is not referring to all works as being bad, but he is meaning that those whose effort or work or toil is to earn the law or their salvation will not be justified, i.e. forgiven and clear before God. **Therefore “the works of the law” here cannot be referring to the act of obeying God’s law by the Spirit when someone loves Him, when they are not trying to earn their salvation - in their own strength – this is not what Paul was teaching here.**

Paul’s text here in Galatians 2:16 is only referring to those who are trying to work to earn the law or earn their salvation. Paul in no way is condemning good works rendered by those who are motivated by love for God and a desire to obey Him, who are doing it by His power.

We say that “the works of the law” in Galatians 2:16 can only be referring to the act of trying to earn one’s salvation by keeping the law. *So let’s try to spin this text in a different way to see if we can make it mean that someone can save themselves through works by trusting in God, and see if that makes any sense: **Are you ready?** ‘Anyone who is being helped by God to have good works, who are trying to earn their salvation through the power of the Holy Spirit, will not be justified.’ **Let’s try this again just to be sure:** ‘Anyone who is trying to earn their salvation by trusting God and letting Him help them to be saved and have good works, is trying to earn their salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit, and will not be justified.’ **Maybe we should have another go at it?** ‘Anyone who has good works from God will not be justified, because they are trying to save themselves by letting God save them.’ **Wait a minute! This doesn’t make any sense!** What rubbish. This is utter nonsense. **Why were we giving these ridiculous wacky statements?** *Because we are trying to illustrate absurdity with the absurd, showing how deep the misconception of the truth is to many people based on extreme examples.* People are so used to hearing*

that “works” are bad and that any effort to be good is “works” – which are interpreted to be bad, that they are greatly confused about the truth of what “the works of the law” means that Paul warned us against. If God is helping someone to keep His law, there is simply no way that they can be saving themselves through their own works, because when the work to be Holy comes from God, not from man, it is the Holy Spirit who is doing it, not them! In no way can it be said that they are trying to keep the law in their own strength apart from God through the power of the Holy Spirit! What nonsense! This is not works by the flesh by any means, but only, solely by the Holy Spirit! The two are mutually exclusive here!

One can be doing things by “the flesh” or by “the works or the deeds of the flesh” or they can be doing things by “the Spirit of God,” but not both! Never the twain shall meet. No man can serve two masters. Jesus declared, ‘No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.’ Matthew 6:24 NASB. **You cannot serve God and the flesh at the same time!** People who are not totally serving God are still serving the flesh. Those who are not totally serving God and still serving the flesh are breaking the first commandment to not have other gods before Him. There is simply no way someone can save themselves by God’s power through the Holy Spirit, that is an impossibility! **Therefore since no man can serve two masters, there are only two ways that someone can attempt to obey God, ‘by the flesh’ in the effort to earn one’s salvation or ‘by the Spirit of God’ because one love’s God and has yielded themselves to Him, allowing Him to work in them to will and to do His good pleasure.** Philippians 2:13. But only one of them is really obeying God. Guess which one? The first one, the self-righteous person, thinks that they are obeying God, but they are not. The second one is able to obey God as they continue to yield to the Holy Spirit. We discovered, based on our word study in Galatians 2:16, that the Greek word ‘ergon’ means to try to work to earn one’s salvation or work to keep the law. So some people’s idea that good works are bad, based on Galatians 2:16, is a fallacy.

No one can try to save themselves by trying to do good works by the power of the Holy Spirit. That is impossible!

“The works of the law” in Galatians 2:16 are “the works done to earn the law” - they are ‘the deeds of the flesh,’ because they are done by man apart from God to save themselves, and all efforts to save one’s self apart from God are sin.

We will show below that the effort to be saved by working to earn the law, self-righteousness, is sin. Now since “the works of the law” or “the works done to earn the law” is self-righteousness, which is sin, then it is similar to other sins, because sin is sin. Therefore self-righteousness is similar to the deeds of the flesh, since both are sin and both are done by the flesh. We will also show below that the self-righteous people who put Jesus to death definitely had some of the “deeds of the flesh” that Paul described above in Galatians 5:19-21. We think that those who are trying to keep God’s law in their own strength are always doing at least one of the deeds of the flesh!

With that new thought in mind that “the works of the law” as in Galatians 2:16 are the attempts by those who are self-righteous to save themselves apart from God, and cannot be the works done by those who love God, who have given themselves to Him and are walking by the Spirit, let us now answer the question whether self-righteousness is sin or just a bad idea on how to be saved that doesn’t work:

Some may question whether self-righteousness is sin, or is it rather just a bad idea on how to be saved that doesn't work? Most people probably don't view self-righteousness as sin, but the Bible in fact declares that it is SIN! No! Self-righteousness is not just a bad idea -- it is sin! God declared through the prophet Jeremiah: "Thus says the LORD, '**Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD. For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant. Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and whose trust is the LORD.** For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.'" Jeremiah 17:5-8 NASB. Here the prophet plainly declares that those who trust in themselves to save themselves, Christian though they be, are really turning from the Lord and will be cursed by God! **Is not this trusting in mankind or oneself the very definition of self-righteousness?** From this we see that all self-righteousness is sin and those that do this will be under a curse from God, unless they repent. The one that is cursed, is the one who trusts in themselves or mankind to save them. The one who is blessed by God is the one who trusts in Him completely, and them only – no one else is blessed by God like this – where they are a tree planted by water, which will not be anxious in the year of drought and will not cease to yield its fruit (even in drought conditions).

But those who don't want to obey God, or think that they shouldn't or can't are missing out on the sweetest joy they could ever know and great peace! Note well the blessing God pronounces on those who want to obey Him: "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers." Psalm 1:1-3 NASB. This blessing is not for those who don't want to obey God. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Psalm 40:8-10 KJV. "And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes." Psalm 119:47-48 KJV. "Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight." Psalm 119:77 KJV. "**I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.**" Psalm 119:174 KJV. "Yet they seek Me day by day, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that has done righteousness, and has not forsaken the ordinance of their God. They ask Me for just decisions, they delight in the nearness of God." Isaiah 58:2 NASB. Now from Paul: "**For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**" Romans 7:22 KJV. Now from Peter, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him." Acts 5:32 NASB. Now if this is not enough, listen to what Jesus declared about works: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27 KJV. And Jesus declared, "**Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done** [- works]. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." Revelation 22:12-13 NASB.

In any case, it seems obvious that “the works of the law,” which are ‘the works done to earn the law or salvation,’ which are sin, which no one shall be justified by - that Paul was talking about in Galatians 2:16, are also “the deeds of the flesh,” because they are both done by the flesh or man, never by the Spirit of God (these are the only two options for any deeds that are done). A person may appear to themselves or others as keeping the law, but inwardly they may be breaking it, or having a bad attitude about it, or only “paying lip service” to it, etc. **The act of trying to keep God’s law without relying totally on His help is sin, since anyone trying to act as their own “god” and save themselves apart from total reliance upon Him is sin. This can never satisfy God’s requirement to keep His law, since it is sin to have another god before Him.** Exodus 20:3.

If you do not believe that those who are trying really hard to be good, who are not born again are breaking the 1st Commandment or committing “the deeds of the flesh,” think again and consider what the Jewish leaders did to Jesus the Son of God: They were self-righteous hypocrites by Jesus’ declaration (Mathew 23:13-39): and murdered Him by hanging him on a tree, He was innocent of any sin, (Acts 10:24-43) – by nailing him to a cross (Acts 2:22-23) (getting the Romans to do their dirty work for them). If the murder of the Son of God, who healed the sick, raised the dead, and tried to help His people to be saved is not the definition of evil, I don’t know what would be. Jesus was perfect and never did anything wrong! (He said, ‘Which one of you convicts me of sin?’ John 8:46) What the Jewish leaders did to Jesus represents the end result of self-righteousness and hypocrisy – killing the Son of God! Need we say any more? In any case, the motives of the self-righteous person are wrong and impure, and are already covered by Paul’s list of the deeds of the flesh and “their like”. They hated Jesus without a cause. John 15:25. Hate is covered in Paul’s list of the Deeds of the Flesh in Galatians 5:19-21. Only someone who is born again (John 3:3, 5) with a renewed heart can have good motives and do the right thing on a regular basis. **So it is evident that since “the works of the law” in Galatians 2:16 are ‘the works done to earn the law or salvation,’ are sin, they can also be viewed as “the deeds of the flesh” which are also sin, since by the self-righteous works of the law no one can be justified.**

Paul’s list of the deeds of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21 covers a lot of bad things.

You might think of bad things that are not in this list, but Paul adds “and things like these”. This covers the other gross sins, bad attitudes, and other antisocial behavior or selfishness in general, etc. It was not necessary for Paul to list every “deed of the flesh”; you should be able to get the idea what they are from his list. **It seems obvious here that Paul’s list of the deeds of the flesh covers just about every willful or habitual sin that a person can commit, or bad attitude they can have if not all of them. Man in his unrenewed state is capable of evil; this is our inherited nature. But thanks be to God, he has not left us stuck with no way out! “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”** 1 Corinthians 15:57 KJV. That is why God has provided the Holy Spirit to those who want Him, so that they will not stay trapped in sin and have the most wonderful fruits of the Spirit and new life with Him, instead of the deeds of the flesh and being overcome by their evil tendencies, bad habits and bad attitudes and being lost! Amen! **Thanks be to God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”** Romans 6:17-18 NASB. **“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are**

perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?" 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 NASB. **"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"** 2 Corinthians 9:15 NASB. Amen.

Can someone saved by grace still practice the deeds of the flesh and be saved?

Many insist that we are saved by grace, which is true, but they think that no change is needed in them or required by God – that they are covered by Jesus' death - no worries. Have you heard this before? **But what does Paul say in Galatians 5 above?** That people who practice such things as "the deeds of the flesh" and "their like" shall not inherit the kingdom of God! We would not want to base our belief on being saved and going to Heaven with the thought that God can't or won't give us the victory over the flesh; that we are doomed to keep committing the sins of the flesh over and over again. It is very dangerous to your soul to think that you can continue to practice the deeds of the flesh after becoming a Christian; that there is no fallout from it! **This is a most decisive statement – that those who practice such things as "the deeds of the flesh" and "their like" will not inherit the kingdom of God, which contradicts what many people teach from Paul's writings.** It's one thing to try to make Paul the center of the Bible, making him the "acid test" for salvation and for deciding what is the truth in the Bible and what is not, ignoring the rest of the Bible that doesn't agree with their interpretation (which is not good), but it's quite another thing to take part of what Paul taught, and pit it against other things that he taught, ignoring things that he taught that they don't want to believe. **But this is a "jungle of illogic,"** as the character Spock on the T.V. show Star Trek would say. *At the very least if one follows Paul, they should believe everything he wrote as 'the gospel truth' without argument about it or cherry picking 'the truth' from it.* The fact is that Paul taught that those who practice the deeds of the flesh, in Galatians 5:19-20, will not go to Heaven unless they repent! **Could we make this point any more clear?**

"The works of the law" can never justify anyone, because we discovered that the effort of trying to keep the law in one's own strength is sin. (Self-righteousness.) *We believe that what Paul meant by "the works of the law" in Galatians 2:16 was works of self-righteousness, because the works done by keeping God's law by His power are not self-righteousness by any means, but real righteousness!* and those with God's power ask for forgiveness and get it from Him (which is to be justified by Him). **"For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power."** 1 Corinthians 4:20 NASB. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." 1 Corinthians 1:18 KJV. The saints are justified by God because of their belief in Jesus to save them, and yielding to Him all the way, not because of how good they are or for their righteous deeds, but because they love Him and want His most wonderful salvation. Oh how sweet it is! **"For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace"** Romans 8:3-6 NASB. **Yes we are weak! But He is strong!** We can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us! Philippians 4:13 KJV. Notice that Paul declared that God "condemned sin in the flesh!" Paul makes no mention here of any exclusion for those who are Christian. **God condemned all sin in the flesh (for all Christians and non-Christians alike), by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin.** This means when someone sins they are condemned and come under the

curse of the law again, even if they were already a “Christian,” since God sending His Son to die on the cross for our sins condemned all sin in the flesh. Therefore the Bible does not teach the doctrine of once-saved-always-saved, since God condemns sin in the flesh when it happens, even if the person doing it was already a Christian and “saved” as some people call it. – Because they must confess their sin and repent if they wish to be saved, just like the sinner who is living out there in the world. Notice that Paul declared why God sent His own Son: to provide a way that the requirements of the Law might be fulfilled in us! God has provided a way to obtain the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! **Thanks be to God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!**

Listen to: **“Thanks be to God”** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhp2PLEobws> From **The Messiah** by Handel.

Sin can never justify sin.

The works of the law done by somebody in their own strength apart from God can never justify anyone because they are sin - sin can never justify sin. But the works of the Spirit are done by the Spirit of Christ only and bring life and peace - it is Christ who justifies us, who clears our debt of sin and makes us righteous. Only Christ can justify our sins through His righteous life, and through His death on the cross, and help us to be righteous. **But it is those alone who believe that Jesus can forgive their sins, and save them from their sins - who are justified – no one else.** Those who are justified by Jesus are the ones who can walk by the Spirit and have life and peace.

Do you wish to inherit the kingdom of God?

Galatians 5:19-21 declares that those who do the deeds of the flesh (and keep doing them, never getting any victory over them), will not inherit the kingdom of God. **Do you wish to inherit the kingdom of God?** Yes - then ask God to help you to not practice the deeds of the flesh, but walk by the Spirit.

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16 NASB.

This is the key to getting the victory, being free, and losing the shame that sinning again and again brings. **Yes we repeated this again – we want you to get it.** We cannot stress this too much! If you wish to be more like Jesus and stop hurting yourself and others and to please God, walk by the Spirit.

But some may say ‘I do not practice the deeds of the flesh.’ Many people who claim to be obeying God, keeping His law, are not, because they have not yielded to Him all the way and been completely converted. They might not think that they do the deeds of the flesh, but they are. So that while many of them appear on the outside to be keeping God’s law, on the inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence as Jesus declared (Matthew 23:25 NASB) or they have bad thoughts or have anger or unforgiveness towards others, and they sometimes outwardly break God’s commandments and try to hide it. But all of our righteousness is not righteousness at all. **The only way someone can be good and do good is by God’s help.**

The Fruits of the Spirit

Brother Paul does not stop there with his description of the deeds of the flesh, he continues by saying... “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” Galatians 5:22-24 NASB. So you don’t have to be stuck with the deeds of the flesh! God has given you another option: you can walk by the Spirit, receive His Holy Spirit and have the fruits of the Spirit in your life! **You need not keep practicing the deeds of the flesh.** God has made ample provision for your need.

What does Paul mean when he said “against such things there is no law”?

(Galatians 5:23.) **What things?** Against the Fruits of the Spirit there is no law. The law tells us how God wants us to live: how we are to treat Him and others. The law condemns us every time we break it and fail to love Him and others. When someone knows God, they have the fruits of the Spirit in their life, and will love Him and others. See also 1 John 4:7-8. When someone has the Fruits of the Spirit, they have the Holy Spirit (because this is the only way anybody can ever get the Fruits of the Spirit), and they are being given the victory over the deeds of the flesh day-by-day. When you allow God to help you to obey Him, you don’t come under the condemnation of the law, or if you sin, you ask for forgiveness from God and get it and thus don’t stay under the law.

How can someone stay under the law? Or come under the law again?

People come under the curse of the law or stay under it every time they sin if they do not ask for mercy, stop believing that Jesus can save them, stop humbling themselves before God or reject their salvation. They will stay under the law until they humble themselves before God and ask for mercy again. The law is God’s perfect standard of righteousness. It seems to me that there is no way someone can lose, if they keep humbling their heart before God and keep asking Him to give them the victory. So why would anyone not want to do this? What do they have to lose? Their eternal life is at stake if they harden their heart against God, but why would anyone want to do this? If someone has experienced the wonderful peace that all get who ask for forgiveness and believe, yielding to God all –the-way, and taste of His most precious gift of the Holy Spirit in full, the Comforter, and keep His abiding presence in their heart every hour of every day, why would they be worried about their salvation? You are safe in the arms of Jesus! Don’t leave Him, and you will remain safe! And if you sin, you still have an advocate with the Father! 1 John 2:1 KJV/NASB. So just ask for mercy and be clean again!

Listen to: **If My People Will Pray** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-p-5rBgENC>

Why would people rather believe in eternal security than asking God for forgiveness?

The Bible teaches that we need to die daily (1 Corinthians 15:31) and keep our heart humble before God and ask for His mercy. “If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people.” Leviticus 23:29 NASB. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV. “O LORD, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; Thou wilt strengthen their heart, Thou wilt incline Thine ear” Psalm 10:17 NASB.

“He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way.” Psalm 25:9 NASB. “Seek the LORD, all you humble of the earth who have carried out His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the LORD’S anger.” Zephaniah 2:3 NASB.

There shouldn’t be anyone concerned about being lost, because all someone has to do to be clear before God is to humble their heart before Him and ask for forgiveness. So why would people rather believe in eternal security? Or OSAS? Do they want to stop asking God for forgiveness? Do they want to stop being humble before God? Or are they confused on how to be saved?

Let us now comment on another passage we used in Part 1 from Galatians 3:13-14:

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE’ in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians 3:13-14 NASB.

Paul declares here that Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. Let us hone in on that. **What did Christ redeem us from?** He not only redeemed us from the curse of the law, death, by giving us the ability of being saved and having eternal life, he also redeemed us from the cause of the curse of the law – which is sin. He redeemed us from being stuck in sin and our sinful addictions we do over and over again that we have no power to break. **The curse of the law is brought on by sin.** Death is brought on by sin. It would do little good if Jesus just redeemed us from death but not from the sins that bring death. **If Jesus just redeemed us from death what would that make us?** That would make us eternal sinners, would it not? If He redeemed us from the law itself, as some assert that He did, that would make us eternal sinners would it not? **But what did Christ do?** He also redeemed us from the power that sin holds over us! Sin produces the death. It would do no good for Jesus just to redeem us from the law or from death, if He did not also redeem us from sin too. This is implied in this passage. **The curse of the law is brought on every time we sin, especially for sins of will or bad habits.** Therefore Jesus also redeemed us from the cause which brings the curse of the law – sin! This agrees perfectly with Jesus’ other declarations that He came that we might be free indeed from the bondage of sin. “Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:34-36 KJV. **So from Jesus own mouth the declaration was made “whoever commits sin is the servant of sin” and that He came to make us free from sin, if we would let Him.** This indicates that whenever someone sins they are the servant of sin, for if they are made free from it, they wouldn’t fall back into it, unless they stopped allowing Jesus to make them free and return back to bondage. It makes no difference that this person is a Christian or not, or had given their heart to Jesus and were baptized or not – if they fall back into their old habits of sin, then they will need to come clean with Jesus again and allow Him to free them again, or go back to the bondage of sin and be under the curse of the Law again – and there they will stay, until they make some kind of a confession and yield their heart back to Jesus again! But why would someone not want to confess and give their heart back to Jesus again? Don’t they love Him? It’s hard to believe that someone could love Jesus and yield to Him all –the-way, yet fail to confess their sins to Him if they temporarily lose their hold on Him and sin... We

think that is hard indeed, if not impossible! No, if someone loves Jesus, they will not find it hard to yield to Him and ask Him for mercy when they need it, and every time they sin they need it – but they will keep their heart humble before Him at all times and His Father.

Are there eternal sinners as we postulated above?

No! To prove this point note what God here said in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve sinned: “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’ – therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.” Genesis 3:22-23 NASB. **So God prevented man from becoming immortal sinners in the Garden of Eden so they were thrust out due to their sin.** And as we discovered above in John 8, Jesus came to make us free indeed from the bondage of sin! **So God does not give baptized Christians who gave their heart to Him a pass on sin and going back to their old ways. He will not make them eternal sinners by any means! Oh no! Because Jesus came to destroy the works of the Devil, which is sin! “The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”** 1 John 3:8 NASB.

Christians who fall back into willful habitual sin must repeat the cycle of confession, humbling and yielding to God and asking for His help, etc. each time they fall. Because Jesus came to make us free, and He will not allow someone to keep sinning and bring sin into Heaven, and will not give Christians a pass on sinning, while condemning only those who are not Christians for doing the same thing. If you think about this, this would be unfair! In the judgement if God did this wouldn't the unbelieving non-Christians make the cry “Unfair!” and have credibility? Yes! But no, God is not unfair! God has to treat everyone the same way, and not grant special favors to Christians who think they are above the law. The very idea that God would give Christians a pass on sin, while coming down on unbelievers or non-Christians for committing the exact same sin or similar sins is ridiculous. Jesus rebuked hypocrisy when He saw it – when it needed rebuking! Just note what He said to the “religious leaders” of His day who thought that they were righteous and Holy: Matthew 6:1-5; 15:1-9; 22:15-22; 23:-12,13-37; Mark 7:6; Luke 11:37-54; 12:54-56; 13:15. If the scribes and Pharisees needed rebuking for their sins by Jesus (the leaders of God's people who should have known better, why do Christians not need rebuking for sin too? Are Christians who repeatedly go back to their old sins any better than the Jewish leaders who put Jesus to death on the cross? We think not. Do they think that they get a free pass on sin, a “get out of jail free card” that covers all sinning from then on after they give their heart to the Lord? Why would Jesus rebuke the hypocrites of the Jewish leaders, and say nothing to the Christian “hypocrites” of our day? No, He expects more from people who have become Christian than those out there in the world with no or little knowledge of right and wrong and for the Scribes and Pharisees of old.

Note what Hebrews has to say about those who have the knowledge of the truth (i.e. Christians) who go back into willful sinning: “For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.” “How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:26-27,29 NASB. Christians who go back to sin again and again and do not yield themselves to Christ

and ask for forgiveness for their sins will eventually go too far and be lost. But those who have a new life with God will not mind humbling themselves before Him and dying daily to sin, nor confessing their sins each time they sin and will give themselves to Him continually. This is why the meek (or the humble or the gentle) will inherit the earth - the new earth in Heaven, where there will be no more sin, no more crying, no more sighing and no more dying! Revelation 21:4 “Blessed are the gentle [i.e. the meek], for they shall inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5 NASB.

Summary

Summary Points:

- * **Good works can only be done by the Spirit of God** – only by those who have received His Spirit.
- * **It’s only those who ask God to be merciful to them who will be justified** (and get mercy). Luke 18:13-14.
- * **“The works of the law” in Galatians 2:16 are “the works done to earn the law” - they are ‘the deeds of the flesh’** because they are done by man apart from God to save themselves, and all efforts to save one’s self apart from God are sin.
- * **‘By the works of trying to earn the law or salvation shall no flesh or man be justified.’** Galatians 2:16.
- * **The deeds of the law cover most everything bad that you can do, think or say.** Galatians 5:19-21.
- * **Those who practice the deeds of the law without repentance can not, will not inherit the kingdom of God!** Galatians 5:21.
- * **God condemned sin in the flesh by sending Jesus to die for our sins that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us.** Romans 8:3.
- * **Self-righteousness is sin. Trusting in yourself is sin.** Jeremiah 17:5-6.
- * **Self-righteousness is someone making oneself their own god, and breaking the first commandment.** Exodus 20:3.
- * **Those who trust in themselves or mankind instead of God alone will be cursed by God.** Jeremiah 17:5-6.
- * **The works of the law can never justify anyone.** Galatians 2:16 KJV
- * **Only Jesus can justify someone.**
- * **Trying to keep the law cannot justify sin.**
- * **Sin cannot justify sin.**
- * **The self-righteous practice the deeds of the flesh.** Galatians 5:19-21.
- * **The self-righteous put to death Jesus, the innocent Son of God.**
- * **The end result of self-righteousness is death, eternal death.**
- * **Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD.** Jeremiah 17:7-8.
- * **Those who delight in obeying the Lord will be greatly blessed!** (Texts too numerous to re-cite here.)
- * **God provided a way for us to have good works and be good.**
- * **The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.** Romans 8:6 NASB.
- * **Those who are justified by Jesus are the ones who can walk by the Spirit and have life and peace.** Luke 18:13-14 KJV.
- * **Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.** Galatians 5:16 NASB.
- * **Against the Fruits of the Spirit there is no law.** Galatians 5:24 NASB.
- * **Every time we willfully or habitually or carelessly sin against God we come under the law and it condemns us.**
- * **The law condemns sin in Christians and non-Christians alike.** Romans 8:3-6 NASB.
- * **Those who confess their sins to God and humble themselves before Him asking for mercy will get it and will not then be under the law.**
- * **Those who pray, seek God’s face, humble themselves and turn from their wicked ways will be forgiven and God will heal their land.** 2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV

- * **Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law.** Galatians 3:13-14 NASB
- * **We come under the curse of the law every time we willfully or habitually sin and we stop being under the law every time we confess and are forgiven.**
- * **Those who stop confessing their sins, stop humbling themselves before God will stop being forgiven.**
- * **There is no eternal security, except through continual trust in God; when we get to Heaven we will then be forever safe.**
- * **The only security we can have is trusting in the LORD, humbling our heart before Him, confessing our sins, and asking Him to help us.**
- * **Those who love Jesus and have tasted of the good things to come of the heavenly gift of the Holy Spirit will not find it hard to humble themselves before God and stay penitent and contrite before Him and stay forgiven, because they know the true value of what He is doing for them.**
- * **There are no eternal sinners (“special people”) whom God allows to go on sinning and live forever.** Genesis 3:22-23 NASB.
- * **Those who are Christian, who give themselves to Jesus, do not get a pass on sin, with God condemning the non-Christian for the same or similar sins that they commit – this would be unfair!**
- * **Jesus came to make us free! No need to stay stuck in the endless round of bad habits and habitual sin.** John 8:34-36
- * **Since Jesus rebuked the hypocrisy and sins of the scribes and Pharisees, then He will also rebuke the hypocrisy and sins of Christians too.** Matthew 6:1-5; 15:1-9; 22:15-22; 23:-12,13-37; Mark 7:6; Luke 11:37-54; 12:54-56; 13:15.
- * **No one gets a free pass on sin.**
- * **Those who keep humbling themselves before God will have a new life with Him, will be humble, gentle and will inherit the earth – the New Earth, where there will be no more sin, no more crying, no more sighing and no more dying.** Matthew 5:5 NASB; Revelation 21:4.
- * **We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.** Philippians 4:13 KJV.
- * **Thanks be to God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!** 1 Corinthians 15:57 KJV.

No doubt there are other truths and thoughts that could be garnered from these passages that we have enumerated so far in this series from part 1 to part 3. We may not have stated everything in the most eloquent manner that it could be stated in. But if you will study out these texts you should see deeper truths in them. These truths are necessary because they help expose lies and deceptions. **There is no reason for anyone to be deceived!** God has revealed in the Holy Bible all that we need to know to be saved and be forever happy in Heaven! *So avail yourself, dear reader of this rich resource to make your calling and election sure, with much prayer.* 2 Peter 1:10 KJV. Amen.

It is necessary for those who wish to be saved to pray to God for understanding, and obey everything He has revealed for them to do. If they do not love what has already been revealed to them or don't want to do it, a pleasing lie will be given to them and they will accept it, so that they might be damned because they believed not the truth or took pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. Those who do not long for the victory over sin will not have it. **Those who do not long to be more like Jesus will not become more like Him.** Those who want to continue in sin will find a teacher who will tell them that they are OK - what they want to hear. **You'll find what you're searching for.** If you're tired of the sin and the endless round of disappointing God, yourself, and others – **if you have longed for a better life you can have it! It is within your reach!** *Heaven is within your reach dear reader!* **Do you want it?** It is yours if you will search for it and find it as a hidden treasure, as the pearl of great price. Matthew 13:44-46. **You may have that victory over sin that you always wanted; you may have relief and freedom from the shame that sinning brings.** You can have salvation if you want it. But if you'd prefer to go on

with your sin and misery, God will not prevent you from doing that, though it will make Him sad, oh so sad! God will save you if you want Him to. If you love Him, want to obey Him, want to be like Him, and long for a better life you can have it. If you long for freedom from sin and shame you can have it. **This is within your reach dear reader!**

May the grace of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen.

Now for the song for today: Safe in the Arms of Jesus!

Listen to: [Safe in the Arms of Jesus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOHtcyPNit0) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOHtcyPNit0>

A most beautiful rendition of this by Harvest Celebration – a blast from the 70’s! As good as it gets! Oh so smooth!

By [John Foll](#), written 10/05/2019 - 10/26/2019.

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