



## Famous Chapter 2's of The New Testament

Galatians 2 is a great Bible chapter. Yet, I just want to touch on chapter 1 first for context. Paul is one of the cornerstones of the New Testament. His letters (Epistles) make Christianity deeper. His life, to this point, could be described as a student of God. He was a star pharisee (religious law). God chose to remove him from, in his words, the Jewish religion (his mother's womb). He identifies now as: found in Jesus the Christ. This was pointed out by Paul to dispel legitimate mistrust and fear of him. He was formerly (by reputation) a Christian prosecutor by Jewish law.

Paul, opens Galatians 2 fourteen years later in Jerusalem. He has been endorsed by the remaining Apostles. Paul is frustrated with the division among the believers. He sees Jews and gentiles divided. In a way, Paul sums up what he is about to say (later) in Galatians 3:28 *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* The Jews claim that to be under the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament. Jews must be circumcised under that law. Gentiles (everyone else) generally are not. Then an argument arises: who adheres to the law and who is free under faith in Christ Jesus? So, the battle lines are drawn between Jew (the circumcised) and Gentile (the uncircumcised).

I love this exchange between Paul and Peter. For the most part Peter is considered the first Pope of the Catholic religion. Yet, he never really founded it. Peter is just the first appointed by Jesus to head the church. Within that, Paul finds Peter segregating himself from the gentiles.

They were clearly in the back while the Jews remained in the front with Peter. Paul gives Peter a tongue lashing about accepting everyone. Like in Galatians 3:28, Paul believes everyone should be accepted in the church under equal footing. This is a great chapter directly because the Jewish Paul has flipped his stance. In the past he was only a Jew, but now Paul accepts everyone in Christ Jesus.

Sometimes Paul's writing is so Jewish and wordy. It's possible to skip over the tough complicated points he makes. Now I hope I have you prepared to read these two verses.

Galatians 2:16 *"know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So, we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified."*

Galatians 2:20 *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*

Paul is telling the Galatian readers and Jews alike that we are all welcome under Jesus the Christ. The law can't block you. Being uncircumcised can't suspend you. No matter your gender God will invite you in. Verse 20 is great because Paul washes himself of being Paul the Jew. He is now Paul the Apostle under Jesus the Christ crucified. He is devoted to Gods Son over the law and the signatures of Jewish past. Faith in God was always seen in how a Jew looked or lived. Now God judges by the heart. The lives we lead will display our faith by the good deeds we do and the love we have for each other.

In a nut shell Galatians 2 paints a picture that Christianity has fought for centuries. A picture of grace and acceptance under God. Those who believe in their hearts that Jesus is Lord

are saved. In the beginning, that was set aside only for the Jews, while the gentiles were pagan and outside of Gods kingdom. Now, under Christ, all can come and believe. Throughout the Old Testament God invited gentiles to believe. Take a look at Ruth and Rahab. The Jews are Gods chosen race yet, all people are his creation. God spent generations developing his laws, ways, and church through Jewish people. The Jewish nation has its place in God's kingdom. Yet, Jesus came to proclaim the good news that now the gentiles can be adopted into his kingdom as well. Galatians 2 exists to proclaim this point. That is why this chapter is so famous.