

Galatians 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

Analysis

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. Paul states devastating consequence. "Christ is become of no effect unto you" (katērgēthēte apo Christou, κατηργήθητε ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ)—literally "you are severed from Christ, rendered inoperative regarding Christ." Katargeō means to nullify, make void, sever. "Whosoever of you are justified by the law" (hoitines en nomō dikaiousthe)—whoever seeks righteousness through law-keeping.

"Ye are fallen from grace" (tēs charitos exepesate, τῆς χάριτος ἐξεπέσατε)—you fell out of grace, dropped from grace-sphere. This doesn't mean losing salvation but never truly embracing it. Grace and law are mutually exclusive operating systems (Romans 11:6). To choose law-righteousness is to reject grace-righteousness. You can't have both. "Fallen from grace" doesn't mean sinning but abandoning grace as the principle of relationship with God, replacing it with works. This is the ultimate fall—from divine favor freely given to human effort doomed to fail.

Historical Context

Arminians cite this verse for losing salvation; Calvinists argue it describes professed believers who never truly believed. Either way, Paul's point stands: law and grace can't coexist as grounds for righteousness. The Judaizers thought adding law to faith strengthened their position; Paul shows it destroys it entirely.

This echoes Jesus's teaching about new wine and old wineskins (Luke 5:36-39)—mixing systems ruins both. The Galatians faced choice: grace alone or not grace at all. Hybrid religion is impossible.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Have you 'fallen from grace' by subtly shifting from trusting Christ's finished work to trusting your own religious performance?
2. How do you recognize when you've moved from grace-based relationship with God to law-based religion?
3. What does it mean practically that Christ is 'of no effect' when you seek justification through law-keeping?

Interlinear Text

κατηργήθητε	άπὸ	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ
G2673		G3588	
	is become of no effect unto you		Christ
	G575		G5547

οἵτινες	ἐν	νόμῳ	δικαιοῦσθε	τῆς	χάριτος
whosoever of you	by	the law	are justified	G3588	grace
G3748	G1722	G3551	G1344		G5485

ἐξεπέσατε
ye are fallen from
G1601

Additional Cross-References

Romans 11:6 (Grace): And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Galatians 2:21 (Grace): I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Hebrews 12:15 (Grace): Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Romans 3:20 (Righteousness): Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Revelation 2:5 (Parallel theme): Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Galatians 5:2 (References Christ): Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.