

Romans 10:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Analysis

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth—Telos nomou Christos (τέλος νόμου Χριστός): Christ is the telos (τέλος) of the law. This crucial word means both "termination" and "goal/fulfillment." Christ is the law's terminus: it no longer functions as a means of justification for believers (Gal 3:23-25; Eph 2:15). But Christ is also the law's telos in the sense of aim and culmination—the entire Mosaic system pointed forward to Him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39, 46).

For righteousness to every one that believeth—eis dikaiosynēn panti tō pisteuonti (εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι): Christ ends the law as a means to righteousness but fulfills the law as a revelation of righteousness. The dative participle pisteuonti (πιστεύοντι, "the one believing") indicates the sole instrument: faith alone. This verse is the hinge of Romans 9-11, resolving Israel's tragedy—they sought righteousness through law-works when Christ had already accomplished and fulfilled it all.

Historical Context

Jewish Christianity struggled for decades with law-observance (Acts 15; Galatians; Hebrews). The Jerusalem council (AD 49) addressed Gentile freedom from circumcision, but many Jewish believers continued Mosaic practices (Acts 21:20-26). The destruction of the temple in AD 70 forced reconsideration of ceremonial law's purpose. Paul's sustained argument in Romans, Galatians, and

Hebrews that Christ has fulfilled and therefore ended the law's covenantal function was revolutionary and remains controversial in some Messianic Jewish contexts today.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding Christ as both termination and fulfillment of law protect you from both legalism and antinomianism?
2. In what ways do you unconsciously return to law-based relating to God, even after believing the gospel?
3. How should this verse shape your reading of the Old Testament—particularly Leviticus and Deuteronomy?

Interlinear Text

τέλος	γὰρ	νόμου	Χριστὸς	εἰς	δικαιοσύνην	παντὶ
is the end	For	of the law	Christ	for	righteousness	to every one
G5056	G1063	G3551	G5547	G1519	G1343	G3956

τῷ	πιστεύοντι
G3588	that believeth
	G4100

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 3:24 (Faith): Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

John 1:17 (Word): For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:14 (Parallel theme): For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Isaiah 53:11 (Righteousness): He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Colossians 2:17 (References Christ): Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Colossians 2:10 (Parallel theme): And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Romans 3:22 (Faith): Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

1 Corinthians 1:30 (Righteousness): But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Matthew 3:15 (Righteousness): And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.