

Romans 3:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Analysis

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. Paul addresses a final objection: does justification by faith nullify (katargoumen, καταργούμεν, "make void/abolish") the law? Mē genoito (μὴ γένοιτο, "God forbid/may it never be!")—Paul's emphatic rejection. Rather, nomon histanomen (νόμον ἱστάνομεν, "we establish the law").

How does faith establish law?

1. Faith acknowledges law's verdict of universal guilt, driving us to Christ.
2. Faith receives the righteousness law demands but cannot produce.
3. Faith produces obedience law requires but works-righteousness cannot achieve (Romans 8:4).
4. Faith fulfills law's purpose—pointing to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

Far from abolishing law, the gospel establishes law's true function and fulfills its purpose. Jesus came not to abolish but fulfill (Matthew 5:17). Only the gospel honors both law's authority and humanity's inability.

Historical Context

This charge plagued Paul: that his gospel undermined Torah, making him a false teacher and antinomian. Paul will spend Romans 4 showing faith establishes law by demonstrating Abraham's justification by faith preceded and grounded the

giving of Torah. The law is not enemy but schoolmaster leading to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does faith in Christ's work actually uphold the law rather than undermine it?
2. What is the proper role and function of God's law in the life of one justified by faith?
3. How do you avoid both legalism (trusting law-keeping for justification) and antinomianism (dismissing law's authority in sanctification)?

Interlinear Text

νόμον	οὖν	καταργοῦμεν	διὰ	τῆς	πίστεως	μὴ
the law	then	Do we	through	G3588	faith	God forbid
G3551	G3767	G2673	G1223		G4102	G3361
γένοιτο·	ἀλλὰ	νόμον	ἱστῶμεν			
G1096	yea	the law	we establish			
	G235	G3551	G2476			

Additional Cross-References

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

Matthew 5:17 (Word): Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Romans 10:4 (Faith): For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Romans 8:4 (Word): That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 9:21 (Word): To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

Galatians 2:19 (Word): For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

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