

GAMMA Q&A

14 May 2025

Q1: What three things were described about Paul's relationship with the churches of Judea?

- Unknown by Face, Known by Testimony (Gal 1:22-24)
- Independent Yet Affirmed (Gal 2:1-14)
 - Mutual Respect, not dependence
 - Occasional tension, eg to confront hypocrisy (2:11-14)
 - Not rivalry, but unity in mission (Gal 2:9)
- Seeks Unity between Jewish and Gentile believers (Gal 3:27-29)

Q1: What three things were described about Paul's relationship with the churches of Judea?

Insight: The grace of God not only transforms lives but changes reputations. Paul's conversion story turned skepticism into worship.

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Modern Application:

Just like Paul and the Judean churches, believers today may come from different traditions, regions, or expressions of faith—but if the gospel of grace is central, unity is possible. Respect, collaboration, and truth-telling must all coexist.

Q2: What was the main reason Paul was against circumcision of Titus but agreed to Timothy to be circumcised (Acts 16:1–3)?

- Gal 2:3 "But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek...
- Ac 16:3 "Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

Q2: What was the main reason Paul was against circumcision of Titus but agreed to Timothy to be circumcised (Acts 16:1–3)?

- Why the difference?
- Titus was Greek, and legalists insisted on circumcision for salvation. Paul resisted to protect gospel freedom.
- Timothy had a Jewish mother. His circumcision (Acts 16:1–3) was a missional concession to avoid offense—not a salvation requirement.

Q2: What was the main reason Paul was against circumcision of Titus but agreed to Timothy to be circumcised (Acts 16:1–3)?

1 Cor 9:19-23

19 For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. 21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. 23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

Q2: What was the main reason Paul was against circumcision of Titus but agreed to Timothy to be circumcised (Acts 16:1-3)?

Insight:

Paul opposed works when they threatened grace, but allowed flexibility when it served love and mission.

Q3: What two things caused the apostles to extend the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas?

Galatians 2:7–9

"...when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised... perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship."

Q3: What two things caused the apostles to extend the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas?

- Two reasons:
- 1. They recognized Paul's calling to the Gentiles.
- 2. They saw the grace of God working in him.
- Insight: True gospel unity is based on God's calling and grace, not personal history or institutional background.

Q4: In order to demonstrate that they were justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law, what did Paul ask the Galatians?

■ Galatians 3:2–5

V2: "Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?" (Remind the Galatians how they began their Christian life)

V3: "Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Rebuke them for trying to switch from Spirit to flesh)

V4: "Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?"
(Warn them not to nullify their past experiences and suffering)

V5: "Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?" (Reaffirm that the Spirit and miracles came by faith, not law)

Q4: In order to demonstrate that they were justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law, what did Paul ask the Galatians?

Romans 10:17 — "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."

Insight: Our personal experience of the Spirit confirms what Scripture teaches—justification comes by faith.

Q5: How does one become a son of God?

- **Galatians 3:26-27**
- "...for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith."
- Galatians 4:4-7
- "...God sent forth his Son...to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons... God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!".. So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

Q5: How does one become a son of God?

John 1:12-13

"But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Q5: How does one become a son of God?

- Key truths:
- Faith in Christ makes us God's children.
- We are clothed with Christ and indwelt by the Spirit.
- We are no longer slaves, but sons and heirs.

Insight: Adoption into God's family is by grace, through faith—not law, works, or ethnicity.

Original Question:

We have been learning about showing grace vs the law. Our salvation is by grace, not the works of the law. But how if at a certain point in time, I/we simply are unable to show grace to some people. People who have deliberately cheated you, evil corrupt people who made Ps Raymond Koh disappear? Is it ever ok to struggle showing grace or a warning sign of being not true Christian?

1. Galatians 5:16-17 (The inner struggle):

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other..."

This affirms that Christians still struggle with sin and ungracious attitudes, but are called to walk by the Spirit, not by the flesh.

2. Galatians 5:22-23 (The fruit of the Spirit):

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..."

These fruit are not natural—they are the Spirit's work in us. When we struggle to show grace, we can turn to God, asking His Spirit to produce these fruits in us.

3. Galatians 6:1-2 (Grace in restoring others):

"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens..."

This shows that grace includes **gentle restoration**, even when someone has sinned. But it's also realistic about **the need for care and humility** in doing so.

- What the texts shows us:
- The ability to show grace is not self-generated but Spirit-produced ("fruit of the Spirit").
- The Christian life includes a real struggle with the flesh — it's normal to find grace difficult, especially in cases of injustice or trauma.
- When we can't love or forgive in our own strength, it shows our need for the Spirit, not the absence of salvation.

- Does struggling mean you're not a true Christian?
 No. In fact, the very struggle to show grace and your grief about not being able to is often evidence that you are walking with God.
 Those without the Spirit don't wrestle; they justify hate or feel no tension.
 Cross-references for clarity:
- Rom 7:21-25 Paul admits, "What I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do..." showing the ongoing conflict even in an apostle's heart.
- Lk 6:27-28 Jesus commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who mistreat us. That is not natural it's supernatural.
- Rom 12:17-21 "Do not repay evil for evil... Do not be overcome by evil,
 but overcome evil with good."

- Regarding justice and grace (e.g., Ps Raymond Koh's disappearance):
- God calls us to pursue justice (Micah 6:8) while leaving vengeance to Him (Romans 12:19).
- Grace does not mean ignoring evil or suppressing the cry for justice. It means not letting evil harden your heart or define your identity.
- The struggle to forgive in such cases is legitimate and human, but we are called to a supernatural hope/trust: that God is both just and merciful (Psalm 89:14).

Insight:

Struggling to show grace doesn't disqualify your faith—it reveals your dependence on Christ. You are not saved by your capacity to forgive, but by Jesus who forgave from the cross. That same Spirit now empowers you, slowly, to do what you once couldn't.



Encouragement:

When you can't show grace, cry out: "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Lord, I want to forgive. Help my unforgiveness." He does not condemn the struggling heart—He draws near to it.

Q7: Are the sins of Abraham and OT people redeemed by works before Jesus was crucified?

No. Abraham and the Old Testament believers were saved by faith, not by works—even before Jesus' crucifixion.

Galatians 3:6:

"...Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.."

Paul uses Abraham to prove that justification has always been by faith, not by keeping the law. The sacrificial system in the Old Testament pointed forward to Christ, the true sacrifice.

Q7: Are the sins of Abraham and OT people redeemed by works before Jesus was crucified?

Romans 4:1-5:

"What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,"

Q7: Are the sins of Abraham and OT people redeemed by works before Jesus was crucified?

Insight: the cross of Christ works backward and forward in time—Old Testament believers were saved by faith in the promise of God, just as we are saved by faith in the fulfillment of that promise in

Galatians 1:15 – Paul says he was "set apart from birth and called by God's grace."

But in Galatians 2:20, he also says, "I live by faith in the Son of God"—indicating a personal response.

Biblical tension:

- God chooses (Ephesians 1:4-5, Romans 9).
- We are called to respond in faith (Romans 10:9–10).

Think of it like two sides of the same coin:

- From God's perspective, He elects.
- From our perspective, we choose to respond.



Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility in Salvation

Theme	Verse	What It Shows
God chooses the elect	Ephesians 1:4-5 – "He chose us in Him having predestined us"	God's choice is foundational to salvation.
We must believe	John 3:16 – "Whoever believes in Him shall not perish"	Individuals are called to believe and respond in faith.
God grants repentance	2 Timothy 2:25 – "God may perhaps grant them repentance"	Repentance is a gift God enables.
We must repent	Acts 3:19 - "Repent, therefore, and turn back"	People are directly exhorted to repent.
No one can come unless God draws	John 6:44 – "No one can come unless the Father draws him."	Salvation requires God's initiative.
We must come to Jesus	Matthew 11:28 – "Come to Me, all who are weary"	Jesus invites all to come—this is a human response.
God appoints people to eternal life	Acts 13:48 – "as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."	Faith follows divine appointment.
We are responsible to believe	John 5:40 – "Yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life."	People are blamed for refusing salvation.
God works in us	Philippians 2:13 – "It is God who works in you"	God's power enables obedience and perseverance.
We must work it out	Philippians 2:12 – "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling"	Believers have a responsibility to live out their salvation.

- * How They Fit Together
- God initiates, empowers, and guarantees salvation.
- We respond, believe, and persevere—all enabled by His grace.
- These truths are not contradictions, but a divine mystery held together in Scripture (cf. Deut 29:29).

"Work out your salvation... for it is God who works in you..."

— Philippians 2:12–13 (both truths in one breath)

A helpful saying:
"God draws, but He doesn't
drag."

Illustration:

Imagine a blind person in a dark room — even if the exit is open, they won't walk out.

Effectual calling is like God turning on the lights and giving them sight. They freely walk out — but only because God enabled it.

J. I. PACKER Author of Knowing God Evangelism & the Sovereignty

"C. H. Spurgeon was once asked if he could reconcile these two truths to each other. "I wouldn't try," he replied; "I never reconcile friends." Friends?—yes, friends. This is the point that we have to grasp. In the Bible, divine sovereignty and human responsibility are not enemies. They are not uneasy neighbors; they are not in an endless state of cold war with each other. They are friends, and they work together."

Q9: Can we lose our salvation?

■ Galatians 5:4

"You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace."

This doesn't mean accidental sin makes you lose salvation—but it warns against abandoning the gospel in favor of law-based righteousness.

But we must persevere...

Galatians 6:9

"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

Q9: Can we lose our salvation?

John 10:28 (Assurance)

"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."

Matt 7:21-23 (Warning!)

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

Q9: Can we lose our salvation?

Insight: While assurance is real for those in Christ, the call to remain in grace and continue in faith is urgent. We are secure in Christ, not apart from Him.

A fruitful way to discuss this: "The question is not whether we can lose salvation, but whether we ever truly had it."

1. The Spirit Transforms the Heart

- Gal 3:2 "Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?"
- The Christian life begins and continues by faith, and the Spirit renews our desires.
- A Spirit-led person doesn't ask, "What's the minimum I can do?" but begins to say, "How can I glorify Christ with all I am?"

2. True Freedom Serves Others in Love

- Gal 5:13 "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."
- Paul rejects the idea that grace leads to spiritual laziness or self-indulgence.
- The result of true grace is love-fueled obedience, not checkbox religion.

3. The Fruit of the Spirit Is Not the Fruit of Minimum Effort

- Gal 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..."
- These are active, outward-facing, and growing qualities.
- They reflect a heart that is engaged and surrendered, not just trying to "pass the test."

- Grace Leads to Gratitude, Not Complacency
- A heart that truly understands grace won't ask, "How close can I get to the edge of obedience and still be saved?"
- It asks, "How can I love the One who gave everything for me?"

- Insight: "Salvation Is Not a Line to Cross, But a Life to Live"
- The gospel isn't just about entry into heaven
 it's about life in Christ now.
- Grace doesn't produce "laid-back"
 Christians, it produces liberated lovers of God who want to serve.