

Sunday, February 12, 2023—Galatians 2:21 What Does It Mean to Frustrate the Grace of God?

### Galatians 2:21

- **I do not frustrate the grace of God**—note the first personal signal I, Paul is speaking about himself in this verse. Paul does “not frustrate the grace of God.” The English word “frustrate” carries the following meanings, according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*:
  - Literally, to break or interrupt; hence, to defeat; to disappoint; to balk; to bring to nothing; as, to frustrate a plan, design or attempt; to frustrate the will or purpose.
  - To disappoint; applied to persons.
  - To make null; to nullify; to render of no effect; as, to frustrate a conveyance or deed.
- The underlying Greek word means to “set aside, i.e. (by implication) to disesteem, neutralize or violate:—cast off, despise, disannul, frustrate, bring to nought, reject.” The word is variously rendered as following in the King James Bible.
  - Mark 7:9—“. . . **reject** the command of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.”
  - Luke 7:30—“But the Pharisees and lawyers **rejected** the counsel of God against themselves, . . .”
  - Luke 10:16—“**despiseth**” 4 times
  - I Corinthians 1:19—“. . . and will bring **to nothing** the understanding of the prudent.”
  - I Timothy 5:12—“Having damnation, because they have **cast off** their first faith.”
- Galatians 2:21—in other words, Paul did not do anything in his life that would frustrate, nullify, or reject the grace of God.
  - Galatians 1:6-7—recall that the gospel Paul was preaching is summarized as the “grace of Christ.”
- **for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain**—this verse is the conclusory verse of the chapter. Since verse 16, Paul has been laying out his case for the law’s utter inability to the law to save anyone.
  - Galatians 2:16

- Galatians 2:20
- If we could make ourselves right with God by our own works, Christ did not need to die.
- We “frustrate” the grace of God when we place ourselves under the law.
  - Galatians 5:1-4—it is possible to fall from grace in the sense of our sanctified walk.