SERIES: We Are Free December 2022-January 2023
SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD
Saturday, December 24, 2022
Scripture: Galatians 2:19-21
TITLE: Make the Trade

Author John Maxwell says to experience growth, we must engage in the law of the trade-off. The law of the trade-off says we must learn to say "no" now so we can experience a better "yes" tomorrow. That's the law of the trade-off. Well, we, too, benefit from the law of the trade-off. This is especially true when it involves religion.

Here's what Paul writes on this in Galatians 2:19.

> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God.

Paul, in verse 19, says through the law, I died to the law so that I might live to God. That is right; there is the trade-off. He gave up. He could no longer play the game of legalism. He could no longer try to earn his salvation by trying to fulfill the law because it was useless. He couldn't do it. No matter how many rituals and ceremonies, and religious activities he did, it would never make up for his sin.

This is the problem with religion. Religion is an endless trap of eternal uncertainty. How can you ever know if you've done enough to tip the cosmic scales? You can't. That's why Jesus came to earth.

In order to experience the assurance of salvation and eternity, you must give up the spiritual death prison that is religion. But I think a lot of us who are saved forget our own hang-ups. Own things we feel like we can't give up. Let’s continue in verse 20:

> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

But Paul got it. He was willing to give up the law, which only condemned because no one could keep it perfectly. Instead, he died to the law so that he might live through Christ.

You see, once Christ died, we too died to the law. We died to ourselves. And we died to our sin. We traded off. We said "no" to religion, legalism, and ourselves and said "yes" to Jesus.

But in case we're confused about our salvation, Paul tries to straighten us out one more time in verse 21.

> I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Some people ask me, wasn't there another way to receive salvation? Wasn't there a better way other than having Christ die for our sins? Verses like Galatians 2:21 scream, “no.” Paul says if righteousness were through the law, in other words, if there was any other way to earn salvation, to win salvation, to earn salvation back, then Christ died for no purpose. In other words, if there was any other way than Christ, death would be meaningless. It's a charade and a sham.

And when we play religion and we turn to legalism, we are saying Christ's death was meaningless. We are attempting to nullify the grace of God. And this doesn't just hurt us. We bring other people down with us.

There is no sin that only hurts us; there is always a ripple effect, and the sin of legalism attempts to nullify the grace of God and pulls people away from God's love.

Today wherever you are, refocus on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Remember, it is by grace, a gift, that you are saved. When we believe this, we will live like it. We are free, so let us live freely. That's the power of the law of the trade-off. Will you make the trade?