



## [Romans 2:13](#)

(13) (Because the hearers of the law are not just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

*A Faithful Version*

To many Protestant theologians, the apostle Paul is the champion of [grace](#). Frequently, they quote his epistles to give credence to their doctrinal positions. For instance, Martin Luther built an entire Reformation on one verse—[Ephesians 2:8](#)—which he proceeded to mistranslate and misuse! His rallying cry, "By grace you have been saved through [faith](#) alone," adds the word "alone" to Paul's thought. Luther is famous for disparaging the epistle of James as "an epistle of straw" because he despised James' assertion that Christians are justified by faith with works ([James 2:14-26](#)).

However, such theologians are uncomfortable with certain portions of Paul's writings because he fails to toe the once-saved-always-saved line. One of these passages is [Romans 2:1-16](#), which expounds upon the judgment of [God](#). Probably the best-known verse from this chapter is verse 13: "For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified."

What a blow! Paul agrees with James! Keeping [God's law](#) is vital to our justification! This has important ramifications for those who refuse to change their behavior after accepting [Jesus](#) as their Savior: Failure to keep God's law is [sin](#) ([1 John 3:4](#)), and those who sin "will be judged by the law" ([Romans 2:12](#)), and "the wages of sin is death" (see [Romans 6:23](#); [Ezekiel 18:4](#), 20). Jesus Himself says, "I tell you, . . . unless you [repent](#) you will all likewise perish" ([Luke 13:3](#), 5).

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

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