

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 2ND-3RD, 2024 // GALATIANS

ENDORSEMENT (GALATIANS 2:1-10) "THEN AFTER FOURTEEN YEARS..."

Not only was Paul's authority to teach the gospel being attacked, but the Judaizers were also saying he was in opposition to the apostles in Jerusalem.

- His response to this gossip/slander was evidence that he presented his revelation to the original disciples, and they affirmed it.

NOT RUNNING IN VAIN

Paul didn't necessarily need the approval of the other apostles. He went back to Jerusalem to create **unity in the mission of the Church** and to make sure all Christians were teaching salvation through grace, not works.

- **We can and will differ on minors, but Christians must unify over biblical majors!**

PAUL'S ENTOURAGE

Jesus was a companion of Paul's. The apostles called him Barnabas, "Son of encouragement." Titus was a young Greek man saved and disciples under Paul, who travelled with him.

- Titus was pressured by the Judaizers to get circumcised but agreed with Paul that this would negate salvation through faith.

WE CAN SENSE SOME SARCASM AND ANGER

Paul says the disciples are "recognized as important" and that "makes no difference to [him]." He also calls Jesus' inner circle, James, Peter, and John, "those recognized as pillars."

- This reminds us that even the best leaders are still human, and **we should find balance by honoring people without idolizing them.**

RIGHTEOUS ANGER AND TAMING THE TONGUE

Paul was angry at the false teachers and may have felt that the disciples were being too soft on them. In his anger he was controlled and focused on things worth getting upset about.

- **There are times for righteous anger, but we must be slow to it (James 1:19-20) and let the Spirit tame our tongue (James 3:8-14).**

AFFIRMED BY THE ORIGINAL APOSTLES/DISCIPLES

Not only did Titus feel no conviction to follow Jewish customs, the other apostles affirmed Paul and his ministry to the Gentiles. They asked that he not forget the poor, which he honored.

- This is a subtle reminder that **we're to first help the "poor in spirit," but Christians are also called to serve the community.**

CORRECTION (GALATIANS 2:11-14)

ANOTHER PIECE OF EVIDENCE

In his defense of his calling from God, Paul presents a tense situation he had with the strongest church leader, Peter, when he had to "oppose him to his face."

- Peter was being hypocritical because he hung out with Gentiles, but would withdraw from them when the Judaizers were around.

THE DANGER IN FEARING PEOPLE

Peter was afraid people wouldn't like him, so he played both sides. **In his desire for acceptance, he partnered with an anti-Christian message.**

- **If possible, we're to live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:18), but we must know there will always be a hatred of Christians (Matthew 10:22).**

"JOINED HIS HYPOCRISY"

Some Christians including Barnabas were mimicking Peter, so Paul had to confront him "in front of everyone" because **the hypocrisy would hurt the integrity of the church.**

- **We must be humble as we strive to live out our faith, be willing to be held accountable, and lovingly hold others into account.**

ASKING FOR THINGS WE'RE UNWILLING TO DO

Paul calls out Peter for asking people to live up to a standard he wasn't even living up to.

- **Christians are to lead by example. If we claim to hold ultimate truth and want to see true love, morality, kindness, respect, etc. flourish, we must first demonstrate these qualities.**

THE MEANS OF LIVING (GALATIANS 2:15-21)

PLACING OURSELVES ABOVE OTHERS

"Gentile sinners" was often used by Jews to express superiority to non-Jews. Paul uses it to emphasize his message of grace through faith and the false teaching of the Judaizers.

- **Though we have saving knowledge of Jesus, we're of no greater value than those who don't. Jesus loves all people (1 John 2:2).**

JUSTIFICATION THROUGH THE WORK OF CHRIST (V16)

Paul writes we're not "justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus." This means **we should strive to uphold the 10 C's (moral law), but we're going to fail.**

- **When we trust in Jesus, His work on the cross graciously justifies (declares righteous) us in front of God the Father.**

"IS CHRIST... A PROMOTER OF SIN? ABSOLUTELY NOT!"

The argument against Paul's message of grace and freedom from the law was people would live in sin with no moral compass.

- Salvation and grace is activated by genuine faith in Jesus. **People with genuine faith do not look for excuses to sin but strive to honor God with how they live.**

SALVATION = DEPENDENCY ON JESUS

"For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live for God" means that **through Christ we are liberated from the weight of having to save ourselves.**

- **Knowing we're incapable of perfectly following the 10 C's should lead us into a life of dependency on a perfect Savior.**

SALVATION = TRANSFORMATION THROUGH JESUS

Paul says he was "crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." This means our old self ceases to exist, is free from sin's claim, and is empowered to live righteously.

- **Salvation changes our identity and leads to a lifestyle that puts God first (Romans 6). In this, we experience amazing change.**

"I LIVE BY FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD..."

The key to unlocking salvation and lasting change in our lives is putting our faith in **the One Who "love[s] and gave himself for [us]."**

- If simply following rules saves us, Christ died for nothing. But, **since we know we're incapable of perfection, we can lean on Jesus for salvation and restoration.**

THE DANGER OF PEOPLE PLEASING

- We are to live at peace with others as much as possible, but **if we overly seek the affirmation of people, we will inevitably compromise biblical integrity.**
- It is vital we know that Jesus, Christians, and the true teachings of the Bible will always garner a level of opposition.

A WAR ON HYPOCRISY

- Because we will face hostility for our faith, **we must live in a way that doesn't validate accusations or hatred against us (1 Peter 2:12).**
- We must also be humble, honest, and not put expectations on others that we are unwilling to live up to. **Hypocrisy damages us, others, and the integrity of the church.**

GRACE AS THE MEANS FOR LIFE

- Salvation by grace through faith is not a license to continue in a sinful lifestyle. Instead, **sincere faith should make us utterly dependent on Jesus for guidance, help, and strength.**
- **Genuine faith will produce a dramatic transformation in how we think and act.**
- If we "set aside the grace of God," we're then left to accomplish salvation, restoration, and righteousness (morally right), via our abilities. This path leads to failure.
- On the other hand, **if we will place our trust in the One Who loves and gave Himself for us, He will save, sanctify, and justify us.**

AN INVENTORY

- Do we live out the faith we claim to possess?
- What is keeping us from surrendering completely to Jesus? What part of our life are we reluctant to give to God?
- Do we honestly think we can manage life on our own? Have our ways produced positive, fulfilling, and lasting change?