

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 3RD, 2024 // GALATIANS

NOT GIVING UP (GALATIANS 2:1-5)

PAUL'S DEFENSE CONTINUES

Not only was Paul's apostolic authority disputed, but it seems **some believed Paul to be a renegade, operating in opposition to the apostles in Jerusalem.**

- Though **his message did not come from the apostles** as he pointed out previously (Galatians 1), **it was not in opposition to them and was even endorsed by the apostles.**

PAUL WENT ACCORDING TO A REVELATION

Paul went to Jerusalem three years after his conversion (Galatians 1:18-19) and now describes a second trip he made 14 years later.

- Paul stated that he went **"according to a revelation"** and presented the gospel he preached **"to those recognized as leaders."** **When God reveals, we respond. We must obey when God speaks.**

PAUL'S TACTFUL APPROACH

Paul knew it was necessary to confirm his message with the leaders **to ensure he was not running or had not been running in vain.**

- He addressed them privately **to avoid unnecessary conflict that could damage the ministry.** If left unchecked, that conflict could **hinder his work in planting churches and making disciples.**

PAUL'S TRAVELING MATES

Paul recounts his trip to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus, a Gentile.

- Paul's point was to show that Jerusalem's leadership understood the gospel of grace as he taught it because **Titus (an uncircumcised Gentile convert) was accepted by the leaders in Jerusalem.**

BRIDGES OR BARRIERS?

Paul stated that those who forced the issue of circumcision on Gentiles were **false brothers who attempted to bring people under bondage.**

- Instead of teaching freedom for all people, they created barriers, keeping people from receiving the gospel. **Have we put up barriers to the gospel, or are we doing everything we can to remove them like Paul?**

PILLARS (GALATIANS 2:6-10)

THE FAMOUS AND INFLUENTIAL LEADERS

Paul did not receive his message from these important leaders and nothing was added because the message was inclusive.

- James, Peter, and John extended **"the right hand of fellowship"** to them, recognizing that **God had called Paul to take the gospel to the Gentiles as He had commissioned Peter to take it to the Jews.**

THESE DISTINCTIONS WERE NOT ABSOLUTE

Paul didn't pursue people based on their previous "worth" and what they could add to him personally. Paul pursued everyone equally because they were **counted as worthy** by God when added to the Kingdom of God.

- **There is no favoritism with God, so there should not be any among His people** (Galatians 3:28-29).

ONE CHURCH

They acknowledged his calling and requested only that he not forget the poor Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Paul agreed and honored their request by bringing a large offering from the Gentile Christians for the Jewish Christians (1 Corinthians 16:1-3).

- **Paul championed love and unity among all Christians.**

HYPOCRISY (GALATIANS 2:11-13)

FLEXING HIS APOSTOLIC MUSCLE

Paul moves from reminding the churches in Galatia about his acceptance by the Jerusalem leaders to a time when **he corrected the biggest church leader—Peter.**

- **This admonishing and correcting of Peter proved Paul had apostolic authority.**

PETER'S HYPOCRISY

Peter, a Jew, had no problem eating and fellowshiping with Gentiles because **he understood and affirmed the gospel of grace as taught by Paul until a group of Judaizers arrived** (*those Jewish Christians who believed in and enforced a combination of law and grace to Gentile Christians*).

REACTING THROUGH FEAR OF MAN

Peter's actions did not line up with what he claimed. **Out of fear of what the group of Judaizers** (*the circumcision party*) **would think, Peter drew back and separated himself from the Gentiles.**

- **Peter was promoting their false, legalistic beliefs and compromising grace through his actions.**

AFFECTING OTHERS

Peter's treatment of the Gentiles in the church was noticed and opened the door to be followed by others.

Verse 13 tells us, **"the rest of the Jews ... [and] Barnabas [were] led astray by their hypocrisy."**

- **"The sins of teachers are the teachers of sins"** (John Trapp). **Our compromise and sin, even if not witnessed and followed by others, still affect more than ourselves.**

RIGHTEOUSNESS (GALATIANS 2:14-20)

POTLUCK AT THE CHURCH OF ANTIOCH

Because there was a very public denial of the truth of the gospel, **Paul confronted Peter publicly.**

- **Paul reminded Peter that he no longer adhered to the strict observances of Mosaic Law, yet in the presence of certain men, he pretended as if he still held to all of the laws all of the time.**

JUSTIFIED THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS

Paul reminds the Jewish crowd that though they were born Jewish, they are not considered right before God (*justified*) through their adherence to the law but by faith in Jesus Christ.

- Paul knew that **even the strictest observer of the law could never be considered right before God by what he did under the law but only through faith in Jesus.**

"IS CHRIST THEN A PROMOTER OF SIN?"

Paul did not correct Peter without taking the chance to speak directly to the Judaizers present.

- **We seek to be justified by Christ and not Jesus plus our works. Though Jesus justifies sinners before God, he is not the author or approver of sinful lifestyles.**

TRANSGRESSORS OF GRACE

If Jesus came to fulfill the law, but we continually try to build upon it, then we are transgressors, **violating the law of grace.**

- **We continue to violate the law of grace when we live in unrepentant sin.** We were not given the grace to continue in our sin, but we are united with Christ in His death to be freed from the pressure and penalty of sin (Romans 6:1-7).

HE CAME TO FULFILL THE LAW

Paul understood the law the way Jesus explained it in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Paul had **died to the law**, seeing that he could never live up to it and its standard.

- The law made him guilty before God, not justified. **If we could be made right before God by obeying the law, then why would He send his Son to suffer and die on the cross?**

"I DIED..., SO THAT I MIGHT LIVE"

Paul says that **he died to the law when Jesus died on the cross so that he could be freed to live for Christ.**

- We are alive in Christ, and Christ is alive in us. **This new life given to us through Christ is lived through faith and not on the foundation of law-keeping, lest Christ died for nothing.**

INVENTORY

- What moves us? Paul went to Jerusalem for the second time because of **a revelation.** Peter turned his back on what he knew to be the truth because of **fear of man.** **Again, what moves us?**
- **Are we reading the Word and praying and allowing ourselves to be moved by the Spirit?**
- **To avoid conflict, discomfort, and disassociation, are we being moved by fear of man?**
- **Are we unwilling to compromise the truth regardless of what it might cost us or give us?**
- **Do we know that sin doesn't just affect us as individuals?**