

"Paul's Defense of His Apostleship"

Galatians 1-2

Part 5

Introduction: Tonight, in our study of Galatians we are going to look at a passage of Scripture in which Paul defends his Apostleship yet one more time. He is defending his Apostleship and his message in the first two chapters because of the Pharisees who had infiltrated the churches of Galatia that he had planted on his first missionary journey. When they entered into the churches, they declared that the Gentiles had to live by the Law in order to live holy lives. They claimed that apart from the Law the Gentiles would have nothing that would restrain the flesh and they would then go off into licentiousness. They also had convinced the believers at Galatia that Paul's message of the Gospel of grace was incorrect and they had also caused the believers to question Paul's Apostleship.

Notice Galatians 1:6

We see in this verse that they had fallen into apostasy. They had believed the message of the Pharisees. Therefore, Paul uses the first two chapters to confirm the Truth of his Gospel and the authority of his Apostleship. In Galatians 1:11-24 Paul explained that his message was from the Lord with no outside influence. Paul did not even have contact with the churches in Judea.

Notice Galatians 1:21-24

Paul then went into chapter 2 and in 2:1-10 he explained how he had gone to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus to meet with the chief Apostles. Titus was a Gentile and in the meeting with the Apostles Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. This would have spoken loudly to the Galatians because the Pharisees had convinced them they needed to live by the Law and here they could see that the chief Apostles did not require Titus to be circumcised or to live by the Law. Paul also explained that the chief Apostles could add nothing to his message.

Notice Galatians 2:6-9

Now we come to the remaining verses in Galatians 2 and in these verses, he is going to explain to the Galatians that he had to rebuke the chief Apostle who was Peter when he practiced legalism.

I want to take a moment and show you that Peter was the top Apostle.

Matthew 16:18-19

¹⁸ And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

*¹⁹ And **I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven**: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Peter was given the keys to the Kingdom. It was Peter who carried the Gospel to the Jews in Acts 1. It was Peter who carried the Gospel to the Gentiles in Acts 10. When the Apostles are listed in the Scriptures, Peter is first on the list. He is first in Matthew 10, he is first in Mark 3, he is first in Luke 6 and he is first in Acts 1. Peter was the chief Apostle and that is why this text before us is so important. If Paul could correct Peter on legalism how much more does Paul have the right to correct the Pharisees. Let us now get to the passage.

➤ **The Confrontation**

Notice Galatians 2:11

Here we see the confrontation between Paul and Peter. This confrontation had to have taken place sometime before Acts 15.

Acts 15:1-2, 19-20, 23-24

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

² When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

¹⁹ Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

²⁰ But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

²³ And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.

²⁴ Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

This was a ruling that the Judaizers were wrong. So, the confrontation was most likely before this.

➤ **The Reason for the Confrontation**

Notice Galatians 2:12

In this verse we see what had taken place. Peter had no problem sitting and eating with the Gentiles. But there was a group of Judaizers who came from James. This was the Lord's half brother who was a pillar in Jerusalem. He did not send these men but they used their connection with him to intimidate others. That is exactly what happened with Peter. He allowed fear to come upon him. What did he fear? He feared rejection and ridicule from these Judaizers that had come from James. Therefore, he withdrew from the Gentiles. Notice the words of Guzik.

"It is easy to criticize Peter; but every person knows what it means to do something that you know is wrong. Everyone knows what it feels like to go against what you know very well is right. Everyone knows what it feels like when social pressure pushes you towards compromise in some way....This was the kind of behavior that dominated Peter's life before he was transformed by the power of God. This was like Peter telling Jesus not to go to the cross, or Peter taking his eyes off of Jesus and sinking when walking on the water, or like Peter cutting off the ear of the servant of the High Priest when soldiers came to arrest Jesus. We see that the flesh was still present in Peter. Salvation and the filling of the Holy Spirit did not made Peter perfect; the old Peter was still there, just seen less often. We might be surprised that Peter compromised even though he knew better; but we are only surprised if we don't believe what God says about the weakness and corruption of our flesh. Paul himself knew this struggle, as he described it in Romans 7:18."

Romans 7:18

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Application:

The fear of man will take us down the path of compromise every time. Notice what Jesus said.

Matthew 10:28

²⁸ And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

When Jeremiah was called to be a prophet God commanded him not to fear the people.

Jeremiah 1:7-8

⁷ But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

⁸ Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

We are called to stand for the Lord and to speak the Truth of His Word but when the fear of man comes upon us, we lean to the path of compromise.

Proverbs 29:25

²⁵ The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

➤ **The Results of Peter's Compromise**

Notice Galatians 2:13-14

There were two consequences that resulted from Peter's actions.

- 1. Peter's compromise negatively impacted others. It impacted other Jews and it impacted Barnabas.**

Peter was the chief Apostle and he therefore had great influence over other people. When he moved away from the Gentiles it caused the other Jews who were there to do the same and it caused Barnabas to do the same.

- 2. Peter's compromise demanded a public rebuke.**

Peter's actions were in fact telling the Gentiles that they must live under the Law as do the Jews. By withdrawing from the Gentiles, he was stating that he could have no fellowship with them because they were not under the Law. Peter's actions were distorting the message of the Gospel.

Application:

Let us understand that people watch us and our actions often speak louder than our words. People may deny what you preach but they cannot deny what you live.

James 3:1-2

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

² For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

James warns those who desire to be teachers because teachers are held to a higher level of accountability.

➤ **The Reason this Needed to be Addressed.**

Notice Galatians 2:15

Paul reminds his readers that there was arrogance in the heart of the Jews toward the Gentiles. This statement was the attitude of the Jews. Notice what Paul wrote in Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:11-18

¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

¹² That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

This is what Jesus had done but Peter was not living this Truth when he separated from the Gentiles.

Notice Galatians 2:16

Peter was teaching with his actions the need for the Gentiles to be under the Law. But the Truth is that no one is justified by the Law and no one is sanctified by the Law. Notice in this verse that the word "justified" is used three times. It is driving home Paul's point. The word "justified" is a legal term that means "to declare righteous." It is what happens the

very moment that we trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. When we come to Jesus we come as guilty sinners, but the moment we exercise faith in the finished work of Jesus we are then declared by God to be righteous.

Romans 3:20-22

²⁰ *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

²¹ *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets:*

²² *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

Notice Galatians 2:17-18

Keep in mind that the Pharisees claimed that Paul's teaching would lead to a life of unrestrained sin. Here in verse 17, he rebukes their accusation. He is basically asking, "If the Gospel that I am preaching is creating sin then is Jesus Christ a Minister of sin?" He answers with an emphatic "NO!"

I have heard this accusation made against those who preach eternal security. They say if you tell people they are secure and cannot lose their salvation then you are giving them a license to sin, Paul's response to that would be, "Then you are saying that Jesus is a Minister of sin, which is impossible. He came to take away our sin."

1 John 3:5-6

⁵ *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

⁶ *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*

In verse 18 Paul tells his readers that he had come out from under the Law and to go back to the Law would make him a transgressor. In other words, to go back under the Law would arouse sin in his life. We are Law breakers by nature.

Notice Galatians 2:19-20

Here in verse 19 and 20 Paul points to our position in Jesus Christ. Because we are in Jesus and have been crucified with Jesus, we are now dead to the Law. In other words, no Law has any authority over a dead man.

Illustration:

We are under the laws of our government here in the USA but only while we are alive. When we die the law has no more authority over us. In the same way when we were saved, we were crucified with Jesus and we died with Him so the Law has no authority over us. Why would anyone desire to go back under that which was such a heavy burden? In Jesus Christ we have liberty. We do not live by the Law we live by faith. He then provides the power to live a holy life.

Conclusion:

Notice Galatians 2:21

Righteousness comes about by grace not by following the Law or man's set of rules. To put people under the Law or to give man a set of rules to follow makes the death of Jesus unimportant.

What is a spiritual life?

It is living a life controlled by Jesus Christ as He works through me.