

2/8/26

In Defense of the Gospel

Gal. 2:1-10

Paul having substantiated beyond any doubt the independence of his gospel and apostleship, both equal in authority with the apostles in Jerusalem.

Paul now proceeds to declare to the Galatians how his independent gospel exposed the false claims of the Judaizers as it was put to the test at Jerusalem, before the false brethren who had come to Antioch and before the true brethren in Jerusalem.

The testing of Paul's independent gospel at Jerusalem is described in three movements. Gal. 1:1-10

- I. The situation of the apostle. vs. 1-2
- II. The explanation of the apostle. vs. 3-5
- III. The resolution of the apostle. vs. 6-10
 - * The false brethren. vs. 1-5 (Negative)
 - * The true brethren. vs. 6-10 (Positive)

I. The situation of the apostle. vs. 1-2

- A. The period of time is declared, "Then after fourteen years" after Paul had gone up to Jerusalem. vs. 1a
 - 1. Some say the fourteen years are to be numbered from his conversion and others three years after his first visit to Jerusalem?

- 2. The text gives an ongoing process of events related to each other, so the most logical and simple sense is to take it as fourteen years after the three already mentioned.
 - a. If Paul was saved on the Damascus Road in 35 A.D. , then went up to Jerusalem, three years after, 38 A.D.
 - b. If we add 14 and 38, it is 52 A.D. for the First church council, those measuring it concurrently with his conversion, place the First church council at A.D. 49.
 - c. Paul was already in Antioch by 43 A.D. , he and Barnabas taught the church for one year, 43-44 A.D. Acts 11:25-26
 - d. Agabus prophesied of the famine in 43 A.D. , before Herod's death. Acts 11:28
 - 1) He prophesied during the days of Claudius Caesar, 41-54 A.D.
 - 2) Josephus tells of a famine between 44-48 A.D.
 - g. Herod died after the Passover of 44 A.D. Acts 12:23
 - h. The famine and relief had to have occurred in the summer or the fall of 44 or in 45 A.D. , definitely after the death of Herod.
- B. The place Paul went up to was Jerusalem from Antioch, "I went up again to Jerusalem." vs. 1a
 - 1. Some say that Paul is giving us a chronological order here without any gaps,

making this his second visit to Jerusalem, but it contradicts with Luke who records the journey by Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem from Antioch to relieve the poor saints from the famine as the second. Acts 11:27-30

- a. The obvious explanation is that Luke records all the times Paul went up to Jerusalem, while Paul is telling of the times he went up regarding the questioning of his gospel and apostleship.
- b. This is obvious as you look at the order and the “time” words Paul is using. Gal. 1:17, 18, 21; 2:1

2. To make Galatians 2 refer to the famine event I believe is in error, both of them would put Paul’s conversion somewhere between 29 A.D. to 32 A.D. depending whether you use 14 years or 17, placing it years from the famine mentioned by Josephus in 46 A.D.
3. Most scholars agree Galatians 2 is identical with the First Church Council and that Paul is not interested in recording chronological order but careful chosen events pertinent to the Galatian problem. Acts 15

C. The people who went with Paul were two, “with Barnabas, and also took Tirus with me.” vs. 1a-b

1. Paul was God’s chosen vessel.
 - a. Arrested on the Damascus road. Acts 9

- b. Trained by God directly in Arabia and Damascus for three years. Gal. 1:17-18
- c. Sent to Cilicia for about ten years after visiting Peter and James for fifteen day at Jerusalem. Gal. 1:18-19, 21
2. Barnabas was the son of consolation.
 - * He appears in three verses. vs. 1, 9, 13
 - a. He named Joses and became called by the apostles Barnabas, son of encouragement and consolation, a Levite from the country of Cyprus and generous. Acts 4:36-37
 - b. He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Acts 11:24
 - c. He introduced Paul to the apostles at Jerusalem when no one would believe Paul. Acts 9:27
 - d. He was sent by the Jerusalem church to investigate the work among the gentiles to Antioch and sought Paul to help him. Acts 11:22-25
 - e. He was called and sent out by God with Paul on the first missionary journey. Acts 13:2
3. Titus is said to be a Greek. vs. 3
 - a. Could be he was from Antioch, but not known.
 - b. He is not found in the Acts but permeates Paul's Corinthian epistle. 2Cor. 2:12; 7:15-16; 8:6-24; 9:3-5; 12:18

- c. He is called a faithful servant and one of the highest integrity, Paul's companion calling him a partner and fellow worker. 2Cor. 8:23
 - d. He was the bishop of Crete's church years after Tit. 1:5
 - e. He is called by Paul “my true son in the faith”, which means legitimate. Tit. 1:4
- D.** The purpose for going to Jerusalem was directed by God. vs. 2
1. Paul went up to Jerusalem because he had received direction from God, “And I went up by revelation.” vs. 2a
 - a. The word revelation “apokalupsis” means unveiling, disclosure, laying bare.
 - b. Some believe the prophet Agabus could have revealed this, but there is no need for Paul had been given many revelations. 2Cor. 12:7
 - c. Some see a contradiction with Luke because he says Paul and Barnabas were sent by the Church at Antioch. Acts 15:2
* Once again, the records are supplementary.
 - d. Yet how often we see the divine and human working together, like Peter at Joppa and Cornelius’ servants sent, like Paul on the road to Damascus and Ananias sent to Paul.

2. Paul went up to communicate to those in Jerusalem the gospel he preached, “and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.” vs. 2b
 - a. The word communicated “anathemai” means to lay before, proposed two times in the New Testament.
 - b. The other when Festus laid before King Agrippa Paul’s case. Acts 25:14
 - c. Paul had not really gone up for this reason in his first visit nor was that his purpose. Gal. 1:18
3. Paul went up to meet with the leaders, “but privately to those who were of reputation.” vs. 2c
 - a. The word of reputation identifies chosen leaders of the Jerusalem church, four times in chapter. Gal. 2:3, 6, 9
 - b. It implies a recognized authority.
 - c. It could equally be the phrase used by the Judaizers to oppose Paul.
 - d. Some find contradiction with Luke, due to the fact that it appears in not so private at the time, but they are complementary, having met privately the public declaration was given. Acts 15:4, 6, 12
4. Paul went up to prevent any schism or division that would hinder the gospel as one and oppose the work of the Gentile, “lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.” vs. 2d-f

- a. The phrase “run in vain” describes Paul’s labor among the Gentile world.
 - 1) The word vain “kenos”, means fruitless and without affect.
 - 2) It is in the present subjunctive, running.
- b. This metaphor is one of an athlete, which is used by Paul often. 1Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 2:16; 1Thess. 3:5

Illustration

Have you ever been in a tense family situation where certain things had to be cleared up and corrected, this is exactly what was happening.

Application

1. How often in the church be it on the level of sheep or Shepherd do we hear someone use a name of reputation to intimidate, impress or influence an individual.
 - a. To give the impression that they are known and supported in their activities or to make request for finances.
 - b. To gain personal benefit by name dropping.
 - * James warns about partiality to rich and that it is evil and sin, for God is no respecter of persons as well as many other Scripture. Ja. 2:1-4, 9; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1Pet. 1:17; Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17; 16:19; Prov. 28:21

2. How often men of reputation are referred to as the measure of truth, rather than the Scriptures because of their success or past experience.
 - a. The believer needs the courage to confront on the basis of scriptural truth, but with the spirit of gentleness. Gal. 6:1
 - b. The believer needs to confront not because he wants to argue, but because the truth of the gospel is at stake. 1Tim. 1:3-4; Tit. 1:10-11

The situation of the apostle was critical!

II. The explanation of the apostle. vs. 3-5

- A. The problem was declared. vs. 3
 1. Titus was a Greek, “Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek.” vs. 3a
 - a. As a Greek he was learning the customs and the Jews, who were still struggling with their prejudice.
 - b. Gentiles were unclean.
 2. Titus had been pressured by these Judaizers to be circumcised, but Paul objected, “was compelled to be circumcised.” vs. 3b
 - a. Titus was a precedent case for biblical doctrine for salvation, grace through faith alone apart from circumcision.
 - c. The demand was based on the covenant to Abraham. Gen. 17
 - d. God desired a circumcision of the heart. Gal. 5:3-4; 6:12-13

* Jer. 9:25-26; Rom. 2:25-29; 4:1-12;
Phil. 3:1-3; Col. 2:11

B. The persons creating the problem were identified. vs. 4

1. Their measure came up short, a counterfeit, “And this occurred because of false brethren” vs. 4a
 - a. The same term is used for the false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 2Cor. 11:13, 26
 - b. They did not measure up to the truth of the gospel. vs. 5
2. Their method was described as infiltration of the church body by deception and investigation, “secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus.” vs. 6b
 - a. The phrase secretly brought in, “paraisago” means to bring in alongside and used of foreign enemies onto a city by a faction within the walls.
 - b. The phrase spy out “kataskopesai” means to make a treacherous investigation with hostile intent.

* Found only here in the New Testament.

 - 1) The LXX used it like this. 2Sam. 10:3;
1Chron. 19:3

2) The emphasis is in looking out for the weak points to defeat, destroy and conquer their liberty.

3. Their motives were destructive, to bring them into bondage, the law, “that they might bring us into bondage).” vs. 4c
 - a. The word bondage “katadouloo” means to enslave utterly.
 - b. The word is used also in Corinthians. 2Cor. 11:20

C. The refusal to yield is declared. vs. 5

1. Their resistance was constant, “to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour.” vs. 5a
 - a. The situation was a heated dissension. Acts 15:1-2
 - b. They would not compromise at all!
2. Their reasons for resisting was, “that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” vs. 5b

* This was the true and genuine doctrine of the gospel opposed to perversion!

Illustration

One day a young man asked for Jonathan Edward’s daughters hand, but he continuously said no, as the young man asked, why, is she not a Christian? Yes, responded Jonathan Edwards, but there are some people who only the Holy Spirit can live with.

* Truth is painful at time but necessary!

Application

1. The church needs to have the boldness and the knowledge of Christ to oppose those who do not teach the truth of the gospel. 1Pet. 3:15

- a. Sometimes it may involve one person.
- b. At other times it may mean sitting down with leaders.
- c. Sometimes it may mean public exposure.

2. The church needs to realize that there are false brethren in every church body. Titus 1:10; 2Jn. 1:7

- a. They infiltrate as wolves in sheeps' clothing, trying to draw disciples after themselves, Acts 20:30
- b. They build entire theology on a pet doctrine, usually error, twisting the Scriptures. 2Pet. 3:16
- c. They usually proclaim to have a truth ignored by the church or new revelation like kingdom or dominion theology, positive confession, professing to know God but in works deny Him. Titus 1:16

3. The church needs to awaken to the tremendous infiltration and contamination by psychology and reason that make the cross of Christ of non-effect. 1Cor. 1:17-18

- a. Inner healing that takes you back to relive your memory in order to be over it.
- b. Imagery is an artificial setting which you imagine very positive and it becomes reality and truth, same methods as New Age.
- c. Childhood memories, “which are as permanent and unalterable as the grain in a piece of oak.”

- d. So we have to go back and understand because faith is not enough but reason is superior, this is nothing but full blown psychology on the Christian airwaves. 1Cor. 2:14-16

The explanation of the apostle was straight and to the point!

III. The resolution of the apostle. vs. 6-10

- A. The personal confrontation by the apostle. vs. 6
 - * Confrontation is something that most people try to avoid, until they have no choice.
 - 1. Paul objected to the abuse of represented authority by the false brethren. vs. 6
 - * Paul has returned to his thought of verse two those of “reputation”, the leaders at Jerusalem in verse six, “those who seem to be something”.
 - a. The Judaizers were falsely representing the leaders as if they were in support of them by mentioning them, “But from those who seemed to be something.” vs. 6a
 - b. They were using the leaders past relationship to Christ to intimidate and influence, “Whatever they were”. Paul says. vs. 6b
 - c. They failed to realize that it would make no difference to Paul, “it makes no difference to me.” vs. 6c

- d. They foolishly gave themselves away by showing favoritism and being impressed with men, “God shows personal favoritism to no man.” vs. 6d
 - * God shows no favoritism to any man, literally He does not receive the face of a man.
- 2. Paul objected to their implications that his authority was inferior to the leaders in Jerusalem, “For those who seemed to be something added nothing to me.” vs. 6e
 - a. Paul was not disputing or being derogatory to these leaders as our English would imply.
 - 1) The phrase “Whom seem” in verse six, twice in verse nine and one time “of reputation” in verse two are all the same word, those of recognized authority.
 - 2) The Judaizers were using this phrase and Paul is utilizing it!
 - b. Paul was declaring that his authority and gospel were not supplemented by these leaders.
 - * The word added “prosanatitheemi” means to contribute or supply something by another, translated “confer” in the previous chapter. Gal. 1:16

B. The personal recognition of the apostle. vs. 7-8

- 1. Paul was recognized by the leaders in Jerusalem in view of the evidence that he had been given the gospel for the Gentiles, “But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me.” vs. 7a-b
 - a. The word saw “oida” means to know, understand, comprehend and perceive.
 - b. The word is used of Jesus when He saw the Multitudes. Matt. 8:18
 - c. The entire church was aware of Peter's testimony regarding Cornelius. Acts 15:7-11
 - 1) The circumcision had contended with Peter. Acts 11:1-3
 - 2) Peter explains that God sovereignly saved them. Acts 11:14-16
 - 3) Peter's conclusion was who was he to withstand God. Acts 11:17
 - 4) The circumcisions conclusion was that God had granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. Acts 11:18
 - d. Paul and Barnabus declared how many miracles God had performed among the Gentiles. Acts 15:12
 - e. The prophets agreed to the calling of the Gentiles, James said. Acts 15:14-17
- 2. Peter was recognized by the leaders in Jerusalem to have been committed the gospel for the Jews, “as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter.” vs. 7c

- a. The word “for” denotes to whom the gospel was to be given without any reference to distinction in “kind” of the gospel.
 - b. The word committed means “to put in trust with” implying permanent commission in the perfect tense.
 - 1) The term is used as a technical word in the imperial government of Rome.
 - 2) Paul declared this again. 1Tim. 1:11; Tit. 1:3
 - c. The gospel for the uncircumcision did not forbid Paul from preaching to the circumcision as is evident in Acts or Peter to the uncircumcision or gentiles.
3. Paul and Peter were recognized to be mere vessels of God’s Holy Spirit as effective instruments, “(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)” vs. 8
- a. The apostleship refers to the sphere of ministry, not the kind of gospel again.
 - b. The word effectively is “energo” gives us our word energy.
 - * God’s Holy Spirit is the One who makes man effective!
- C. The personal confirmation of the apostle. vs. 9-10
- 1. Paul and Barnabas were confirmed by the leaders at Jerusalem because they perceived

- the grace given to them by God, “and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.” vs. 9a-f
- * The word Grace speaks of their particular call and ministry to the Gentile.
- a. The priority is given to James because he was the leader of the church at Jerusalem and the key spokesman at the council. Acts 15:13
 - b. The pillars refer to the three, James, Cephas and John.
 - 1) A metaphor of stability and strength in the building and house of God.
 - 2) The word comes from the word “stuo”, to stiffen, a post or support, found four times in the New Testament. Gal. 2:9; 1Tim. 3:15; Rev. 3:12; 10:1
2. Paul, Barnabas and Peter were confirmed as having two distinct commissions to two cultural ministries, but the same gospel, Jew and Gentile being one in the church in fellowship with God, both were given the right hand of fellowship, “that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.” vs. 9g
- a. The phrase “right hand” in Scripture speaks of honor, authority, power and privilege.

- b.** The word “fellowship” is “koinonia”, which implies many things, partnership, oneness, commonness.
- * The word is used of fellowship with the believer, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the Gospel, and the Father. Acts 2:42; 1Cor. 1:9; 2Cor. 13:14; Phil. 1:5; 1Jn. 1:3
- 4.** Paul and Barnabas were confirmed by their care for the poor, “They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.” vs. 10
- a.** This was not a condition or stipulation to be accepted in the fellowship as the English might imply, but an affirmation of what they were already doing.
- 1)** The word “remember” implies benefit or care and literally, keep on remembering.
 - 2)** The word eager is “spoudazo”, means diligence, prompt, earnest, action.
 - 3)** The tense declares it was going on before this, the aorist active indicative tense. Eph. 4:3; 2Tim. 2:15; 2Pet. 1:10,15; 3:14.
- b.** This was Paul’s practice continuously.
- 1)** The Old Testament commanded it. Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 19:10; Deut. 15:7-11; Amos 2:6-7
 - 2)** The apostle Paul was a constant doer of it in the New Testament. Rom.

15:25; 1Cor. 16:1; 2Cor. 8:1; 9:1; Acts 11:29; 12:25; 24:17

- 3)** Luke says that after they wrote the letters to be sent to the Gentiles to protect them from the Judaizers they returned to Antioch. Acts 15:22-35

Illustration

When you take a diamond to confirm its genuineness, it does not make it authentic, but only verifies its genuineness, so with Paul and Barnabas!

Application

- 1.** How often men want to be recognized by other to meet their own emotional or psychological need, so they go into the ministry.
 - * The motive is not love for others but love for self. (chief seat, marketplace, etc.)
- 2.** At other times people want to be recognized to receive glory and admiration.
 - a.** What do you have that you have not received? 1Cor. 4:7
 - a.** Recognition comes from God and in His timing, if it ever comes! Ps. 75:6-7
 - b.** Recognition comes when evidence is seen in our lives regarding God's word by the Holy Spirit. 1Cor. 4:2
- 3.** How each of us need to be confirmed as to the grace given to us in a particular ministry.

- a. We need to confirm that we are all in the same fellowship in spite of our diverse gifts and callings. 1Cor. 12:4-7
- b. We need to confirm our care for people by our diligence and consistency in the present and future, not thinking that I have already attained but laying hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Phil. 3:12-14

The resolution of the apostle was grace through faith in Jesus, not Law!

Conclusion

The testing of Paul's independent gospel at Jerusalem exposed the false claims of the Judaizers and it was described in three movements.

- I.** The situation of the apostle was critical!
- II.** The explanation of the apostle was straight and to the point!
- III.** The resolution of the apostle was grace through faith in Jesus, not Law!