

2/15/26

Galatians 2

The apostle Paul has established some foundational truths in chapter one, pertinent to the rest of the letter.

- 1) He was an apostle of Jesus Christ, not of man. vs. 1-5
- 2) He was astonished at their receiving a perverted gospel so soon from the true gospel. vs. 6-9
- 3) His gospel was by Divine revelation. vs. 10-12
- 4) His past life against Christianity and his conversion were well established. vs. 13-16
- 5) His early years of ministry were attested to in Damascus, Jerusalem and the Judean churches. vs. 17-24

Keep in mind that chapter one and two deal with the personal aspect of Paul's life and ministry, his apostleship and the gospel of grace, both being authentic directly through Jesus Christ.

* Conversion and consternation would be a good label for these chapters!

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2:1-5 The Christian liberty spied out.

2:1 The visit of Paul to Jerusalem again.

- 1) The particular time is stated, "Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem."

- a) Some believe this speaks of the visit during the famine in Acts, prior to Antioch or the missionary journeys. Acts 11:27-30
- b) If it was, then it would have been foolish to have another council about the same issues. Acts 15
- c) This is actually Paul's third visit to Jerusalem if we compare it to Luke's account. Acts 11:30
- d) So it is best to take this account and relate it to the First church council, after the first missionary journey. Acts 15
 - * From every place you go to Jerusalem, the Scriptures always state the person going "up" to Jerusalem, being the highest point.
- e) The measure of fourteen years depends on how one measure them, from Paul's conversion 35 A.D. or his first visit to Jerusalem 38 A.D.?
 - 1)) Paul places the event at fourteen years after he had gone to Jerusalem to visit Peter, not including his conversion and three years in Arabia. Gal. 1:18; 2:1
 - 2)) Saul was saved on the Damascus Road in 35 A.D. , then he went to Jerusalem to visit Peter in 38 A.D.

- 3)) If we add 14 and 38, it gives us 52 A.D. for the First church council, some put it at 49 A.D.
 - 2) The men that accompanied Paul are named, “with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me.”
 - a) The name Barnabas means son of rest or consolation.
 - 1)) Barnabas had taken Paul to the apostle when he fled from Damascus for all feared he was not genuine. believer. Acts 9:26-27
 - 2)) Barnabas was a Levite of the country of Cyprus. Acts 4:36-37
 - 3)) Barnabas searched out Paul at Tarsus and brought him back to Antioch to teach as God was doing a great work with the Gentiles. Acts 11:25-26
 - b) Titus “Titos” means nurse.
 - 1)) Titus was a gentile and uncircumcised. vs. 3
 - 2)) Titus was an elder and overseer, the Pastor in the church of Crete. Tit. 1:5
- 2:2** The nature of Paul’s journey to Jerusalem.
- 1) Paul was sent by God, “And I went up by revelation.” vs. 2a
 - a) He was directed by divine revelation “apokalupsis”, means to lay bare or unveil, He made it known to Paul.

- b) How Paul was told to go up by the Lord is not stated, whether through a prophet like Agabus or by the Lord directly, we are not told.
- 2) The purpose of his journey is stated, “and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.” vs. 2b
 - * Paul was going up to set forth in words the nature of the gospel he was preaching to the Gentiles.
- 3) The people Paul was going to speak are indicated, “but privately to those who were of reputation.” vs. 2c
 - a) Paul points out privately to those of reputation, referring to the leaders at Jerusalem, yet some point out Acts says the apostles and elders came together to consider the matter. Acts 15:6
 - b) There is no contradiction, but only supplementing of information, it began with a private meeting and finished with a more public forum to announced the gospe of grace was not to be mixed with the Law and letters were sent out to all the churches, warning them about the Judaizers.
 - c) Those of reputation are named James, Cephas and John. Acts 2:9
- 4) Paul was doing this because the gospel was on the line, “lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.” vs. 2c

- a) The gospel either was going to be the preaching of grace through faith or Christianity was going to be made an extension of Judaism.
- b) Lest the gospel he had preached to the gentiles be undermined, made empty and ruined.
- c) The athletic metaphor of a runner is used with the goal of winning souls in the race. 1Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:14; Heb. 3:1

2:3 The focus of the issue was Titus.

- 1) The central issue was circumcision, “Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.”
 - a) Titus being a Greek was being completed by these Judaizers to submit to the covenant of Moses, the Law.
 - b) Once again attempting to make Christianity an extension of Judaism.
- 2) The Old Testament was after heart circumcision and Paul pointed this out to the Romans. Jer. 9:25-26; Rom. 2:25-29; 4:10-14
 - a) The Law was a curse and a tutor or school master to bring us to Christ. Gal. 3:10, 24
 - b) The real circumcision is of Spirit and without hands. Phil. 3:2-3; Col. 2:11
 - c) Paul told the Corinthians to abide in the calling which they were called. 1Cor. 7:18-20

2:4 The manner and method of the opposition.

- 1) The character of the individual identified what they were, “And this occurred because of false brethren.” vs. 4a
 - * The term false brethren “pseudadelphos” indicates they were not true believers of Jesus, emphasizing their character. 2Cor. 11:26
- 2) The manner of their entry or coming to Antioch is described, “secretly bought in (who came in by stealth)” vs. 4a
 - a) They infiltration by “stealth: undetected, used of spies sneaking in a camp to watch for their own protective interest. 2Pet. 2:1; Jude 4
 - b) We have a stealth bomber that flies undected by radar.
- 3) The intent of these false Christians was clear, “to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage)” vs. 4a-b
 - a) They came to spy out. referring with hostile intent to rob them of their liberty in Christ, in order to bring them into bondage.
 - b) The legalism of the Law. 1Cor. 6:12; 8:9, 12-13; 9:19-22; 10:12, 23-24, 31-33
 - c) People desiring to teach and preach their own convictions or their interpretation of scripture as a form or standard for

righteousness, rather than the gospel.
Rom. 1:16-17

- d) Jesus said, “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matt. 15:9
 * The teaching of the Catholic Church, like celibacy, purgatory, confession to a priest, sainthood of individuals and penance, etc. are all the dogmas of man in the Catholic Church!

2:5 The oneness of their unity regarding the gospel.

- 1) Paul, Barnabas and Titus took a stand against them, “to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour.” vs. 5a
 * They did not yield in the least, they were uncompromising!
- 2) The reason for their uncompromizing stand, “that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” vs. 5b
 - a) Again the truth of the gospel was at stake, attempting to be made a sect of Judaism.
 - b) Paul circumcised Timothy because his mother was a Jewess and knew he was going to be traveling with Paul and the Jews would have never stood for it. Acts 16:3

2:6-10 **The apostolic authority of Paul was not inferior.**

2:6 The apostle Paul was not impressed by men.

- 1) The Jewdaizers that were demanding circumcision for salvation and opposed Paul at Jerusalem, “But from those who seem to be something” vs. 6a
 * The Judaizers were claiming to have the authority of the leader at Jerusalem, implying they had greater authority than Paul!
- 2) The apostle Paul was not impressed with man, “whatever they were, it makes no difference to me.” vs. 6b-c
 * Paul was not denigrating the leaders at Jerusalem, but simply replying to the empty boast of the false brethren, who thought more highly of themselves than they ought.
- 3) The spiritual principle is stated, “God shows personal favoritism to no man.” vs. 6d
 * Paul says God does not favor any man’s face, therefore he doesn’t either.
- 4) The proper perspective is stated, “for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me.” vs. 6e
 - a) Paul again was not disputing or being derogatory towards 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 word seemed “dokeo” means to be of the opinion, think or suppose about the Jerusalem leader by people, due to pride or position, in the present active tense.
- 3)) The Judaizers were using this phrase and Paul is utilizing it!
- b) The phrase “added nothing to me”, therefore refers to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, they did not add one thing to Paul’s apostleship nor the gospel he preached.
 - * Paul reminds us of a very important principal, men are all human and they can fail, this is proper perspective.

2:7 The result of the meeting at Jerusalem.

- 1) The correction and rejection of the teaching of the false brethren, “But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter.”
 - a) The outcome at Jerusalem turned out contrary to the intent of the Judaizers.
 - b) The elders at Jerusalem, rather than oppose Paul stood with Paul.
 - c) They acknowledged the two different outreaches through the same gospel, Paul

was committed the ministry to the Gentiles, the uncircumcision, and Peter to the Jews, the circumcision.

* The word “saw” means to perceive and comprehend, the Holy Spirit turned the light on, illumination!

- 2) These were not two different gospels, but one gospel of grace to two different cultural groups.
 - 1) The contend for the faith in Christ alone, which was once delivered unto the saints once and for all. Gal. 1:6-8; Jude 3
 - 2) Having broken down the middle wall of partition in the temple and made Jew and gentile one in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:14

2:8 The same God was doing the saving in both camps.

- 1) The explanation in brackets, “(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles).
 - a) There is one God who saves Jews and gentiles.
 - b) The same God was working in and through Peter and Paul.
 - c) The same God works effectively, proficiently through men to save sinners.
- 2) This did not mean that Paul did not preach to Jews or Peter to Gentile.

- a) Paul was commissioned by Jesus to bear my name before the Gentiles. Acts 9:15
- b) Paul said, “I am the apostle of the gentiles.” Rom. 11:13
- c) Yet Paul preached first to the Jew, then he went to the gentiles.
- d) Peter likewise preached to the house of Cornelius and ascertained at Jerusalem that God saved the Gentile in the same way, grace alone. Acts 10
- e) Paul said that one water, one plants but God gives the increase. 1Cor. 3:5-7

2:9 The main leaders at Jerusalem came to an agreement.

- 1) The apostles at the Jerusalem council, “and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars.” vs. 9a-d
 - a) James is the half-brother of Jesus.
 - b) Two of apostles, Cephas is Peter and John the beloved.
 - c) The reference to “who seemed to be pillars” is as the true authority opposed to the false Judaizers.
- 2) The apostle recognized God’s grace imparted to Paul and Peter, “perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

- a) Paul and Banabas were given the right hand of fellowship to continue preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised Gentiles.
 - 1)) The gospel of grace apart from the Law was affirmed!
 - 2)) This again did not mean Paul never preached to the Jews for he always went to the synagogue first, the Gentile.
- b) Peter was to continue preaching to the gospel to the circumcised Jews.
 - * This again did not mean Peter never preached to the Gentiles for Jesus sent him to the house of Cornelius to preach. Acts 10
- c) The word “Koinonia” means partnership, participation and oneness, the right hand being the true and genuine one.
 - * The oneness must always be in the word of God. Amos 3:3
- 3) The apostle Paul flippantly used terms “Pillars” for the false leaders to bring them back to reality. vs. 2, 6, 9
 - * Paul is opposing the inflated self image and abuse of influential power at the expense of the gospel and people!

2:10 The simple request of the elders.

- 1) This regarded the poor, “They desired only that we should remember the poor.” vs. 10a

- 2) This was Paul's practice, "the very thing which I also was eager to do." vs. 10b
- a) They brought relief during famine to the saints in Judea. Acts 11:27-30
 - b) Also Paul returned with an offering for the poor saints to Jerusalem. Acts 21; 2Cor. 8-9

2:11-16 The rebuke of Peter by Paul.

- 2:11** The apostle Paul used one of the leaders of the church to prove his point that no one is beyond accountability to the Scriptures.
- 1) Paul confronted Peter, "Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face." vs. 11a
 - a) Antioch was in Syria on the Orontes River, the third largest city of the Roman Empire after Rome and Alexandria.
 - b) This is where God began an incredible work among the Gentile who would launch all the missionary journeys through Paul. Acts 11:19-26
 - 2) Paul revealed the reason, "because he was to be blamed." vs. 11b
 - a) Paul was not impressed nor thought that certain men cannot be approached.
 - b) The Proverb says, "Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Prov. 27:5-6

- 1)) Nathan confronted David. 2Sam. 12
 - 2)) Elisha confronted Gehazi. 2Kings 5
 - 3)) Paul rebuked Peter.
- * We are, if need be, to rebuke some before all. 1Tim. 5:20

2:12 The fault of Peter. for fearing those of the circumcision

- 1) Peter would regularly eat with the Gentiles, it is in the perfect tense, "for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles". vs. 12a-b
- 2) Peter withdrew, "but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself." vs. 12c-d
 - a) The word was used of troops withdrawing for shelter, due to caution.
 - b) Peter began to separate himself step by step, a gradual separation, it is in the perfect tense.
- 3) The reason is stated, "fearing those who were of the circumcision." vs. 12e
 - a) Peter feared what the Judaizer from Jerusalem would say and do, who came from James.
 - 1)) "The fear of man brings a snare: but he who puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe." Prov. 29:25
 - 2)) "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom." Prov. 1:7; 9:10

b) Peter remember was at the house of the tanner when he received a vision of unclean animals and Jesus told him to eat and he objected, then Jesus told Peter what God has cleanse, do not to call common or unclean, referring to the Gentiles, then sent him to the house of Cornelius. Acts 10

1)) Now if Peter did this after the church council at Jerusalem, he bore greater blame!

2)) James suggested that Paul take a vow with four men in Jerusalem temple and was accused of bringing Gentiles into the temple and went about to kill Paul. Acts 21:18-26

2:13 The consequences that magnified Peters blame.

1) Paul also accuses certain Jews at Antioch followed his bad example, “And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him.” vs. 13a

* They conducted themselves with duplicity, as if to be two different persons!

2) Paul as well, accuses Barnabas, “so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.” vs. 13b

a) He had been the one to take a chance on Paul. Acts 9:26

b) He had been the mentor at Antioch. Acts 11:25-30

c) He had been the head of the first missionary journey. Acts 13:4

3) Paul is putting the blame of all these men on Peter.

* The aorist passive places the fault on Peter as Barnabas was carried away by irrational emotions!

2:14 The rebuked of Peter publicly.

1) Paul observed the contradiction of Peter, “But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel.” vs. 14a

a) The reference to not walking straightforward “orthopodeo” which mean upright, a present indicative tense.

* We get our word orthopedics from it.

b) The measure was the truth “alethia”, truth under any matter under consideration and refers to the gospel, not Paul’s opinion.

2)) Paul confronted Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?” vs. 14b-e

a) Paul rebuked Peter for living as a Gentile without concern for the dietary law and now by his conduct was demanding that the Gentiles live like the Jews.

- b) Some commentators terminate Paul's words to Peter at this verse, while others think they run till verse twenty-one.

2:15 The apostle Paul points out the covenant privilege of the Jew.

- 1) Paul includes himself, "We who are Jews by nature." vs. 15a
 - a) The Jews were the chosen people through Abraham. Gen. 12:1-3
 - b) The nation of the Jews was redeemed from Egypt through Moses, but still sinners by nature." Ex. 3-4
- 2) Paul indicates their distinction, "and not sinners of the Gentiles." vs. 15b
 - a) The Gentile were sinners separated from God, having no covenant till now in Christ.
 - b) The section from this verse to verse twenty-one is transitional from the personal to the doctrinal!

2:16 The justification of man by faith.

- 1) The Law can only accuse man, "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law." vs. 16a
 - a) Paul is quoting the Psalms. Ps. 143:2
 - b) James says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Ja. 2:10

- 3) The work of Jesus alone justifies Jew and Gentile, "but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified." vs. 16b-e
 - a) The contrast is between works and faith alone in Jesus Christ. Eph. 2:8-9
 - 1)) Faith is the means to salvation.
 - 2)) Grace is the source of salvation.
 - b) The death of Jesus was in our stead, substitutionary, vicariously. 2Cor. 5:21; 1Jn. 2:2
 - c) The death and resurrection of Jesus declares us righteous, justified. Rom. 5:1-2
 - * We trust His person and faithfulness having atoned our sins on the cross on our behalf!

2:17-21 **The Jew was a sinner as a Gentile, law only declared man to be guilty before God.**

2:17 The Jew and legalism.

- 1) The first question, "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners?" vs. 17a
 - a) Are the Jews found to be sinner by abandoning the Law and trusting Jesus?
 - b) The answer is NO!

- 2) The second question, “is Christ therefore a minister of sin? vs. 17b
 a) Certainly not!
 b) Absolutely no!

2:18 The consequences of trusting the Law again after trusting Christ.

- 1) The premise, “For if I build again those things which I destroyed.” vs. 18a
 a) This means by building again on the Law, trusting it for justification before God.
 b) This was what Peter and the others who had played the hypocrites had communicated by their conduct!
- 2) The conclusion, “I make myself a transgressor.” vs. 18b
 a) If the Jew build again on the Law he abandoned by trusting Christ, then he became a transgressor.
 b) The word transgressor means one who disregards the ethical spirit of the law.
 c) Jesus declared the law to be spiritual, it went beyond outward compliance, “You have heard that it has been said, if a man commit adultery he is guilty, but I say to you if you lust in your heart, you have already committed adultery.” Matt. 5:27-28

2:19 The explanation of the transition from Law to grace.

- 1) The proclamation, “For I through the law died to the law.”
 a) The Law was holy, just and good, but Paul sinful in nature and therefore slew him being unable to keep it. Rom. 7:11-14
 b) The Law was a tutor to bring us to Christ. Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:24-26
 c) Paul died to the Law and thereby able to marry another, as a woman whose husband died. Rom. 7:1-2
- 2) The purpose and outcome, “that I might live to God.”
 a) Paul now lived to God through the Spirit. Rom. 8:1-4
 b) Putting to death the Old Man daily. Rom. 6:6, 11

2:20 The result of such a decision.

- 1) First regeneration, “I have been crucified with Christ.” vs. 20a
 a) Paul was born again, it is in the perfect tense, once and for all, past completed action having present results.
 b) Paul identified himself with the work of Christ on the cross in his stead for his justification, **imputed righteousness**.
- 2) Second justification, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” vs. 20b-c

- a) Paul having come to the understanding that he could not measure up to the Law and died to the Law.
- b) Paul now yielded constantly to Christ to bring about the life of Himself through Paul, which is **imparted righteousness**.
- 3) Third sanctification, “and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.” vs. 20d
 - a) In the flesh refers to the human body of sin nature with all its infirmities by the power of the Holy Spirit. 2Cor. 10:2-3
 - b) Faith in the person of Christ and His work on the cross, who is the “Son of God” for the ability to live in a righteous way before God through the Spirit.
 - * This is an ongoing process called sanctification!
- 4) Fourth, illumination, “Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” vs. 20e
 - a) The motive for salvation is God’s love.
 - b) The evidence of God’s love is giving Himself in death for me personally.
 - c) The means of salvation is faith in Christ.
 - d) The source of salvation is God’s grace.

2:21 The conclusion of the postles.

- 1) Paul did not act or play the hypocrite as Peter and the other apostles, “I do not set aside the grace of God.” vs. 21a

- a) The phrase “set aside “atheteo” means to do away with something laid down.
- b) The reason being it is the only way of salvation. Eph. 2:8-9
- c) The reason being that Christ is the end of the law to all who believe. Rom. 10:4
- 2) The act of doing so is to declare that righteousness can come through the Law and declaring that Christ died in vain, “for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.” vs. 21b-c
 - a) The implications are severe beginning with the fact that God is lying.
 - b) Then God crucified His Son without reason and no effective benefit.
 - c) That the Law can save man.
 - 1) Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, faith is God's revelation to be obeyed. Rom. 14:23
 - 2) Blessed is he that is not offended in me! Blessed is he that does not misunderstand my ways! Matt. 11:6