

Galatians 2:11-21 – Even Inside the Church We Must Defend the Gospel
Community Group Galatians Lesson 4

- I. Summary: Come Back to God's Only Gospel** **Gal. 1:1-2:10**
Wake up! You have followed cursed men away from the gospel of grace which gave you the only true means of relationship with God. They have attempted to add something to the gospel of grace and their error has already been formally refuted by the Church's apostles.
- II. Just as the apostles refuted the Judaizers, I refuted Peter** **Gal. 2:11-14**
- A. Historical context for the second event in Galatians 2 **Acts 15:22-35**
Apostles and elders send key leaders along with Paul back to Antioch after correcting the false teaching that the church at Antioch had requested (so that when that church hears what the apostles decided, they won't think it is just Paul saying it). Peter is not among those mentioned (Acts 15:22, 27), so it is likely he comes at a later time.
- B. Paul rebuked Peter. **Gal. 2:11-13**
1. In contrast to Paul having received the "right hand of fellowship" from the apostles in Jerusalem (Galatians 2:9), Paul opposes Peter 'to his face' because he stood condemned (not "to hell," but "judged").
 2. Peter had been eating with Gentiles as he had learned that he could (Acts 10) but now began to progressively refrain from doing so after some other brothers came from Jerusalem and he feared judgment (*from the circumcision party*, v. 12).
 3. Peter's behavior implied Christians need to obey Jewish regulations.
 4. Peter's behavior implied he had been obeying Jewish regulations.
 5. Others followed his example, including even Barnabbas.
 6. Peter's behavior confused the gospel and created division in the Body.
- C. While the apostles' refutation in Acts 15 was about outsiders' false doctrine, this was about insiders' community behavior which reflects an implied doctrine.
- D. **How is it that you, being a Jew, live like Gentiles and then attempt to compel Gentiles to live like Jews?** Paul's direct rebuke of Peter. **Gal. 2:14**
Height of hypocrisy: Require something from another that you are not doing yourself.
- E. The gospel is *Jesus died for our sins and was raised from the dead so that those who believe are justified by grace through their faith in Christ* **Gal. 2:15-16**
1. Even though we are Jews, we know that a man is not justified by works of the law.
 2. Even though we are Jews, we know a man is justified by faith in Jesus Christ.
 3. We Jews believed on Jesus Christ so that we would be justified by that faith.
 4. We believed because we knew we could not be justified by our works.
 5. By the works of the Law, no one is justified.

- F. If we could be made right by the law, Christ died needlessly. Gal. 2:17-21
1. If while trusting in Christ, I am found a sinner, that isn't caused by Christ. By implication, it doesn't require I return to the Law. That is to say, if I am trusting in Christ's righteousness and I sin, that isn't proof I need the Law again. 2:17
 2. In fact, if I tried to rebuild the Law which already showed me I was a sinner, I will still be a sinner. 2:18
 3. I died to the Law through trying to live by the Law. 2:19
 4. I was crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ. 2:20
 5. I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. 2:20
 6. I will not nullify God's grace by trying to re-establish the law as the means of my justification or sanctification. If I did that, Christ died without reason. 2:21

III. Our Takeaways

- A. When we add required behaviors to people's story of salvation, we have left the gospel.
- B. Paul's opposition is not to doing good things. He will get to that in the last two chapters of Galatians. His opposition is that when people put requirements of "you do have to do this" in order to *really* be accepted by God, they are trying to add to the gospel.
- C. You actually can't add to the gospel without destroying the gospel, because the gospel is all about justification by faith alone in Christ alone.
- D. The whole gospel is that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead in order that whoever believes in Him will be given eternal life by God's grace. Anything added to that detracts from and actually destroys the whole.
- E. If you add to the basic gospel, you are reconstructing a law you already have learned you can't keep and which can't justify anyone.

IV. Discussion

- A. Rebukes are normally private – (Matthew 18:15). The one in Galatians 2:11-21 was intentionally public and sharp and certainly different in tone from the one Paul will teach us later in Galatians 6:1. What is it about this particular disagreement with Peter that made it worth such a sharp and public rebuke?
- B. Explain why Paul stated so many times in Galatians 2:16 that "justification is by faith" and that "no one is justified by works of law." Why did he need to say both, and why repeat each one multiple times?
- C. If you were going to state Paul's main points through the first two chapters, how would you put it, and if scripture is for our instruction, correction, reproof and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16), how can that main point written 2000 years ago be helpful for us today?

V. Homework

Memorize Galatians 2:20