

## Message Notes:

Focus Passage: Galatians 2:11-21

Opening Quote: “The fear of people can be louder than the voice of conscience.”

Two examples related to “fearing people:”

- NASA “Challenger” Space Shuttle disaster (1986).
- King Henry the 8th (England) and his struggle with religious leaders of his day.

Quotes:

- “History is filled with moments when people stood bravely—until the crowd walked in.”
- “Convictions that seemed strong in private melted under public pressure.”

Galatians 2:11-21

- (Vs. 11-14) Tells the story about a time when the apostle Peter (and Barnabas and others) found themselves intimidated by the presence of Judaizers from Jerusalem. Peter and others withdrew from the Gentiles of Antioch when the Judaizers arrived in town — they were afraid of the “circumcision party.”

One of the dangerous powers of fear is it pulls us into a variety of “other” sins. Sample list:

- lying; deception
- hypocrisy
- silence
- compromise
- partial obedience
- people-pleasing
- cowardice
- Idolatry

Because this was such a serious problem and delicate moment in the history of the Church, Paul used drastic means to address the problem.

- He opposed Peter directly. (2:11)
- He opposed Peter publicly. (2:14)

If one would consider the most serious sins of the 21st century, their list would probably include:

- Various sexual sins
- Varieties of lusts — money and power
- Anger related sins
- Betrayal
- Addictions
- But would anyone include “fear of people” in their list? This was hugely important to Paul in this passage.

In the last half of this passage (2:15-21) Paul addresses the question:

- So, how are we truly made righteous before God? — through Judaistic works? Or through faith in Jesus and His work on the cross?
- What is our true calling before God? (2:20) To be a Christian means: (1) death to our old way of life; (2) accepting a new life/identity; (3) accepting a new purpose; (4) following a new example.

## Discussion Questions:

A major theme in today's study passage (2:11-14) is "peer pressure manipulated by fear."

The opening quote in the sermon is: "The fear of people can be louder than the voice of conscience."

What do you think about this? Agree? When is it not true?

Another quote: "History is filled with moments when people stood bravely—until the crowd walked in." Can you think of some examples of this?

Read Galatians 2:11-14

The apostle Peter:

- traveled from Jerusalem to Antioch
- to visit the growing church
- to encourage Gentiles
- he shared meals; fellowship; teaching.
- Then when the Judaizers arrived he embarrassingly withdrew from the Gentiles out of fear.
- What do you think he was thinking? What do you think he was afraid of?
- Spend some time talking about how the apostle Peter's example influenced other Jewish Christians in the group. (v.13)
- How do you think this situation was reconciled? What would reconciliation require?

One of the dangerous powers of fear is it pulls us into a variety of "other" sins. Sample list:

- lying; deception; hypocrisy; silence; compromise; partial obedience; people-pleasing; cowardice; idolatry
- Spend some time talking about examples of when fear could lead to some of the sins above.

Talk about the following observation — If one would consider the most serious sins of the 21st century, their list would probably include:

- Various sexual sins; Varieties of lusts — money and power; Anger related sins; Betrayal; Addictions
- But would anyone include "fear of people" in their list? This was hugely important to Paul in this passage. Is "fear of people" a major sin?

Spend some time talking about how Paul confronted Peter.

- Was a public rebuke warranted here?
- Is a public rebuke always correct?
- When would a more private conversation be more appropriate?

Spend some time talking about Galatians 2:20

- To be a Christian means: (1) death to our old way of life; (2) accepting a new life/identity; (3) accepting a new purpose; (4) following a new example.
- Talk about the importance of being "secure" in your identity in Christ. What difference does it make? How does it relate to fear of people?