

August 22nd, 2021 “The Truth of the Gospel”
Galatians 2:11-16, Pastor Karl Payne

Overview

Paul asserts he is a genuine apostle called by God—**Galatians 1:1**

Paul declares the gospel message he proclaims is genuine, taught to him by Jesus Christ—**Gal. 1:11-12**

Paul maintains his apostolic authority is genuine and equal to the other apostles—**Gal.2:5-10**

Paul demonstrates his apostolic authority by confronting Peter in his sin publically—**Gal.2:11-16**

Opposition to the true gospel may include, but not be limited to:

False teaching	Galatians 1:6-9	Inside the church.
False brethren	Galatians 2:4	Outside the church; pretenders/spies; undermining.
An Apostle	Galatians 2:11	Peter, chief of the Apostles, was not exempt.

(Peter may have been fearful and intimidated by the appearance of people representing James, or he may have been attempting to avoid giving offense to believing Jews, not regarding salvation, but regarding social traditions. Either way, he was wrong; giving an appearance that racial and religious loyalties are more important than salvation and oneness in Jesus Christ, and that Gentile believers are inferior to Jewish believers, which he knew was not true, **Acts 10:15, 34, 42-43**.)

11 Peter was not sinless before the cross or after the cross. Paul called him on his sinful example: regardless of his power, position or reputation. God does not show partiality, and neither should we. (“She is my friend.” “His motive was right, even if his action was wrong; God understands.”)

12 Men from James; Jewish Christians from Jerusalem who were believers, but continued to keep the Law as a means to win other Jews to Christ. That was a choice, not a command from God. The city of Antioch was primarily comprised of Gentiles, and the new church was largely made up of Gentile Christians. Peter knew better and said so in Acts 10. The Jerusalem counsel recorded in Acts 15, clearly and final addressed the question of Jewish believers attempting to force Gentile believers to be circumcised and keep the Law. The answer was not ambiguous---No, the Gentiles do not have to be circumcised or keep the Jewish Law for salvation or sanctification, **Acts 15:1, 5; 7-11, 13-20, 28**.

Fear was the stated motive for Peter’s sudden lapse of memory. The fear of man is a poor motivator for a Christian, even if it happens to be sincere, **Prov.29:25; Rom.8:31; 1 John 4:18**.

13 Peter’s sin not only showed his own hypocrisy or shortsightedness, it lead others to sin through his wrong example, creating division rather than equality and oneness in Christ. **Eph.4:1-6---**
Remember Pastor Ed—marriage counseling; divorce and remarriage.

14 Paul not only exposed Peter’s hypocrisy, he did it publically. Why? Probably because Peter’s sin was public rather than private, and promoting a different gospel that other Christians were buying into because of Peter’s reputation and example. Paul was not cruel, but he was certainly direct. He asked questions of Peter rather than calling for his divine damning, which he did in James 1:6-9 when addressing false teachers rather than an apostle who was sinning through example.

15 Some of the Jews had an elitist view of themselves; believing Gentile's were dogs and therefore holding Gentile believers in contempt. Peter had already addressed this wrong teaching and action in Acts 10, so he and the Jewish Christian leaders from Jerusalem knew it was wrong, making their sinful separating from the Gentile Christians all the more sinful. *Remember India and the restaurant in 2019.*

16 Paul reminded Peter and all those within earshot that the Law never has nor will save anyone. Salvation is by grace, through faith, apart from works, when we believe in Jesus Christ as Savior. This was not a new message, **John 3:16-18, 36; Rom. 3:22-28; Gal. 3:22-29**

Attempting to appease outsiders' by modifying the true gospel to win favor, will ultimately only produce bondage. Popularity is not a litmus test for successful ministry. But loving God and our neighbor, in faithful obedience to God's word, as we proclaim the true gospel and make disciples of Christ in all nations will result in hearing God say, "well done my good and faithful servant".

The truth of the gospel must be preserved and proclaimed regardless of the opposition, reputation or motives of those attempting to promote another gospel.

It is possible for a motive to be right, but the conduct wrong when I seek to avoid giving offense but mislead the truth of the gospel in the process. Biblical truth must trump personal feelings/opinions.

The truth of the gospel must be proclaimed and defended. It must supersede ethnicity, race relations and loyalties, cultural traditions, religious traditions, gender, or social status. **Gal. 3:28; Col.3:11**

Many professing Christians have become experts attempting to not offend others by what is said or believed because many professing Christians today do not know what is biblically based and what is not, and are afraid to openly talk about their faith for fear of being personally or socially rejected, or accused of being racist, bigoted, right wing fanatics, unloving, ignorant, homophobic and religious terrorists. Some immature Christians have made an art form out of blending into culture rather than shining out as lights amongst people heading to hell apart from salvation, by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone; given as a free gift when we believe, apart from our own works or assumed merit.

Progressive Christianity of the 21st century encourages trading the foundational truth of the true gospel and the protein of genuine bible study, for the pablum of personal opinions in an attempt to win a hearing and not hurt feelings or egos. This practice is producing a generation of Christians who are spiritually anemic, biblically compromised, and more impressed with themselves than the word of God or God Almighty. God is viewed as Santa Claus to be ignored rather than the sovereign creator to be worshiped, revered and obeyed.

Affirming salvation in Jesus Christ while allowing sin to be promoted, in an attempt to win a hearing or avoid rejection, is to live in a spiritual twilight zone, focused on accommodation and conformity to the will of man rather than the obedience to God; reducing biblical salvation and sanctification to suggestions or personal options and opinions, and God to a feckless demi-god among equally impotent religious traditions and objects of worship.

Compromising the grace of the true gospel for a false gospel that demands circumcision and keeping the Law, or another deviation from the true gospel, is an error, sin, even if it is done sincerely. It is never wrong to stand on the true gospel of Jesus Christ, given by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, as a free gift when we believe.