

Galatians – Freed to be Free

A study of the book of Galatians

Chapter 2 – Defending Gospel Freedom

Galatians 2:1-10

Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. ²I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain. ³Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. ⁴This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. ⁶As for those who seemed to be important—whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance—those men added nothing to my message. ⁷On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. ⁸For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. ⁹James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. ¹⁰All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

1. What did Paul say he was afraid of at the start of chapter 2? Why this?
2. What specific issue, which was by itself a thing to work through, but which also came to serve as a stand in for the much broader problem comes to center stage in **v. 4**? Why wasn't Titus compelled?
3. Flashing back to the beginning of the body of the letter in **ch. 1**, how did this matter and the others arise in the first place? Why didn't Paul and company give in at all? Why is this such a massive statement for the book of Galatians?
4. **Agree or Disagree:** Paul is being spiteful in **v. 6** as he talks about those who seemed to be important.
5. After talking it out with the believers in Jerusalem, what was the determination which, thankfully, proved Paul's fears ungrounded?
 - What was the proposed plan for Paul and Barnabas?
 - What is the final instruction they gave Paul and Barnabas? Why this?

Galatians 2:11-21

When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. ¹² Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³ The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. ¹⁴ When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs? ¹⁵ "We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' ¹⁶ know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified. ¹⁷ "If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! ¹⁸ If I rebuild what I destroyed, I prove that I am a lawbreaker. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

6. Why did Paul oppose Peter to his face? What was the issue? (This is a prime example of the application of gospel freedoms! See **I Corinthians 8, 10:23-33** and **Romans 14-15** for thorough explanations of how gospel freedom is applied with love)
7. Peter saw the vision of sheet lowered from heaven and heard the Lord's instruction to kill and eat all sorts of animals declared clean since Christ fulfilled the law (**Acts 10:19-23**). How could this happen to Peter?
 - What was the result of Peter's hypocrisy in Antioch?
8. Why not take Peter aside and speak to him discreetly instead of speaking to him in front of the whole group?
 - Why refer to the Gentiles as "sinners"? What powerful points does he make in **v. 15-16**?
 - Why does Paul ask the question he does, only to answer it right away, in **v. 17**?
9. How is it that if a person tries to rebuild what is destroyed, they prove themselves a lawbreaker? See **Matthew 23:3b-4**.
10. For how we live this life, what it looks like and where our ability comes from to do it, I am hard pressed to find a clearer verse of explanation than **Galatians 2:20**. What is our life and how do we live it?