

TITLE: DEFENDING THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL (Part 2)

TEXT: GAL 2:1-14

INTRO: Judaizers had come in and taught that Christians must obey the Mosaic law too, and these Galatians had listened to them! This is what Paul is combating. In ch.1 he asserted his apostleship and the true gospel. He continues this in ch.2, while transitioning to a refutation of the Judaizers. There are perversions of the gospel all around us, unfortunately even in the church. We need to defend the gospel, even when it's in a difficult situation. Paul shows us two such situations in Gal 2.

I. THE GOSPEL DEFENDED (v. 1-10):

A. Defense given (v. 1-5)

1. (v. 1) *I went to Jerusalem again* (he had gone after Arabia & Damascus, & also when he delivered alms to the church - Acts 11:30). Now he & Barnabas go again to deal with the Judaizing teachers (Acts 15). "*And took Titus*" – this isn't mentioned in Acts 15, but we'll see in v. 3 why he brought him.
2. (v. 2) "*by* (according to) *revelation*" – apparently this trip had been revealed to Paul by God. "*I communicated to them the gospel I preach among the Gentiles*" (this is the point of the conference – what to teach the Gentiles). "*but privately to them of reputation*" ("to seem" – Peter, James, & John–v. 9), *lest...I had run in vain*" – he told them what he taught so they would know & understand prior to dealing with this publicly among the Judaizers and Pharisees that had converted. Otherwise, Paul's work w/the Gentiles could've been jeopardized if the Judaizers had influenced others at this meeting.
3. (v. 3) Titus wasn't compelled (constrain, necessitate) to be circumcised. The "compellers" are mentioned in v. 4.
4. (v. 4) Paul labels these guys 5 times – "**1** *Because false brethren*, **2** *unawares brought in* (smuggled in), **3** *who came in privately* (secret, stealth), **4** *to spy out* (plot against) *our liberty in Christ Jesus*, **5** *to bring us into bondage* (enslave)."
5. (v. 5) We didn't give in (yield) to them by subjection (this is the difference between Timothy & Titus) not for one hour (not at all). Paul had Timothy circumcised because he didn't want to be a stumbling block to the Jews that weren't yet aware of the change of law. There is a clear difference with Titus. He was a Greek, and was being *required* by the Jews to be circumcised! It's not that it would've been wrong for him to be circumcised, but it would've compromised the gospel if it were done as a **requirement to be saved!** So the gospel is defended twice: **1** in word–v. 2, and **2** in practice–v. 3-5.

B. Defense accepted (v. 6-10)

1. (v. 6) Those who *seemed* to be esteemed – Paul doesn't exalt anyone unnecessarily, not even apostles. God doesn't accept persons – nobody is righteous in His sight without Christ, so nobody can boast (**Eph 2:9**). They added/imparted nothing to me (they didn't provide any additional knowledge – they recognized that he didn't need it). This is what Paul was saying in ch. 1 – spiritually/doctrinally, he was sufficient because of Jesus' revelation to him (**1:12**).
2. (v. 7-9) When they saw that Paul had been committed to taking the same gospel to the Gentiles as Peter had to the Jews, they (James, Cephas, & John) gave their fellowship. Jews' response? According to **Acts 15:22**, the *whole church* accepted it.
3. (v. 10) They made it a point to encourage help for the poor (probably the poor of Judea – **Acts 11:27-30**).
4. The acceptance of this defense proved:
 - a. Paul's apostleship was genuine, and not inferior to Peter's in any way.
 - b. Paul's gospel was correct, and just as he said in 1:6-9, cannot be changed in any way with God's approval. These points will be important as he begins to discuss law vs. faith (old vs. new) in **ch. 3**.

II. THE GOSPEL OFFENDED (v. 11-14):

A. The offense confronted (v. 11)

"*When Peter came to Antioch* (Paul's "HQ"), *I withstood* (oppose, resist, stand against) *him to the face* (open confrontation with Peter – he didn't go around talking to everyone else about it)...*he was to be blamed* (at fault)."

- B. **The offense described (v. 12)**. Peter ate with the Gentiles (shows fellowship), until some from James came. It seems that Peter was practicing what he preached (**Acts 10-11; 15:7-11; Gal 3:9**) – eating w/Jew & Gentile alike in Antioch. But he feared the Jerusalem Jews, who apparently, even after the conference, had still not fully accepted the Gentiles. Maybe this is why the Antioch church, rather than the Jerusalem church, grew and became the HQ for Paul on his missionary journeys.
- C. **The offense perpetuated (v. 13)**. The negative influence of one person can be amazing, but how much more that of several church leaders? Who will be the strong person & stand up against this? The Antioch congregation had several Gentile members (**Acts 11:20-21**), apparently being accepted as equals until now. These church leaders from Jerusalem were being a horrible influence. Even Barnabas was part of it! This was a dangerous situation for this church; it filled Paul with righteous indignation!
- D. **The offense rebuked (v. 14)**. Paul calls this hypocrisy "*walking not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel.*" This action of Peter and the others was a violation of and departure from the gospel, and had to be addressed! He didn't go to Peter privately (per **Matt 18:15**), but publicly, because it was not a personal sin against Paul. "*If you, a Jew, live like the Gentiles* (not under the law), *why do you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews* (under the law)?" This was the logical conclusion from his actions – if there is still separation between Jew & Gentile, then Christ hasn't come and the law is still intact (this is just being consistent)! - We aren't told Peter's response, but we know he repented: **1** We would've been told otherwise; **2** He wrote two letters. This rebuke must've been very difficult for Paul:
 1. This was the apostle Peter! Though weak during Jesus' ministry, he had become a strong, respected leader in the church.
 2. There were already questions about Paul's authority. But this shows how important it is to stand up for the gospel!
 3. This was a very unpopular issue to address. Many Jews accepted Gentiles into the church, but as 2nd class citizens. Compare the plight of blacks in the church 50 years ago (and unfortunately, sometimes even today).

CONCLUSION: Like Paul, we must be willing to defend the gospel publicly & privately, in word & in practice, even rebuking members of the church publicly if a similar situation arises. This is never easy, but Paul said to imitate me as I imitate Christ (**1 Cor 11:1**).