

## Galatians Ch 2

In our last gathering we were able to get a little more familiar with this man Saul of Tarsus, the hideous, arrogant know it all, hurtful, despiser of the church, who sought to destroy it by persecuting it above and beyond measure. Because of their seeming rebellion to the law of God for righteousness choosing rather to believe by faith in the person of Jesus Christ for righteousness. (A man whom he didn't even believe was who he said He was), which in turn did nothing but fuel him on all the more in hatred towards them. Who would one day become Paul the apostle, defender of the grace of God and the person whom I would consider to be God's foremost "freedom fighter."

We looked at what it meant to live the exchanged life because we see in Paul such a striking example of the exchanged life, from spiritual rags to riches, and he's sharing a bit of his testimony with the churches in Galatia to remind them of the validity of the gospel that he preaches. Showing them that it wasn't a message that he learned from man or that he got confused when someone was sharing the gospel with him and he's been sharing a confused version of it with them. Because he didn't receive the gospel message from man nor was he taught it by man, but rather it came to Paul by direct revelation of Jesus Christ Himself.

He was content persecuting the church, he thought he was doing God a favor by destroying these followers of Jesus, very sincere in what he did, but unfortunately nothing more than sincerely wrong. and Jesus Christ met him one day on the road to Damascus, he was on his way to incarcerate more believers and Jesus knocked him off his high horse and humbled him before Him and Paul was never the same again. Because you can't meet Jesus Christ and ever be the same, once you have a true encounter with Jesus Christ you'll never be the same and Paul was changed and Jesus personally schooled him by way of revelation in the desert of Arabia, for approximately 3yrs.

Then he went back to Damascus, and then 3yrs later he finally made his way up to Jerusalem to see Peter, not to learn from Peter, because Jesus Christ had already disciplined him, but to see Peter. and He only stayed there a couple of weeks and once it was affirmed that they were in fact of one accord he left. and Other than that he didn't even see any of the other apostles except for James the Lords brother, not the brother of John because he had probably been executed by Herod at that point in Acts ch 12. But what he's seeking to do by sharing all of these facts about himself and the fact that he had very little contact even with the other apostles is affirm to the Galatians that the gospel that he preached to them was authentic. It wasn't man made, but it proceeded directly from the throne of God to him personally. That's why he says there in vs 20 (read through to vs 24)

Why, because he proclaimed to them the gospel of grace, and he did it with authority and passion being such a staggering example of the grace of God himself, being the chief of all sinners according to his own words. and Yet if God can use a life like his in such a paramount way, then I know that God can use me. The reality of the grace of God was exemplified in the life of Paul and the fact that God could save him opened the doors to everyone, which only served to glorify God. Now, he continues in his same train of thought, the ch breaks but his chain of thought hasn't. He's still showing us how he didn't really confer with flesh and blood but rather he started ministering to the lost world around him with the gospel that he had learned by the revelation of Jesus Christ

### Vs1-2

Now we're not going to spend an extensive amount of time in these 1<sup>st</sup> 10 vs or so because I'd like to actually get through all of ch 2 today. But here Paul tells them that it was 14 yrs before he went up again to Jerusalem, he didn't have much contact with the church in Jerusalem as a whole. In fact the church in Jerusalem was a little bit fearful of Paul, they didn't know if he was some sort of secret agent sent there to really wreak havoc of the church seeing as how that's what he did for so many yrs.

Now obviously by this time they knew he was legit but as far as his 1<sup>st</sup> trip that we read of in vs 18 of ch 1, the believers were a little skeptical at that time, so Paul didn't spend a whole lot of time around Jerusalem. But now after 14yrs he decides to go up again not because he was beginning to have doubts as to the legitimacy of his ministry, but because of divine revelation.

The Lord told him to, and when the Lord tells you to do something, you don't question it you just do it. The Lord knew that it would be necessary to clear his integrity so that his ministry might be received and defended with integrity and accountability. So that he could say with conviction look I'm not on my own here the entire counsel of the church in Jerusalem is backing me on this, they teach the same gospel I do, the gospel of grace. Because again the Judaizers were telling people that Paul was on his own and that the original apostles didn't teach what he taught, and they were trying to entangle people in a works oriented righteousness.

We'll talk more about that later, but Paul went up again to Jerusalem to clear the air about this whole deal. and He brought with him Barnabas and Titus, a Jew and a gentile, Titus being a gentile who had come to know Jesus Christ through his ministry. Now you have to remember that the churches in Galatia were primarily gentile believers and so Paul is going up to bat here for the gentiles. and So he has with him a Jew who knows the Lord and a gentile who knows the Lord and received the Lord by the hearing of faith and not the works of the law. So that all can see that God doesn't differentiate between the Jew or the gentile, but both have the spirit alike and if God makes no difference, then who is man to do so.

Paul is making an air tight case against the works of the law. Showing that God doesn't acknowledge the works of the Law but faith alone in Jesus Christ Because the fact is that no one, Jew or gentile receives a righteous covering or the spirit of God by the works of the law, but by faith and Paul will state that a little later.

But back to the text Paul took with him Barnabas and Titus and many people feel as though this correlates with Acts ch 15 which you can read later, but since Paul brings these 2 guys up we'll take just a minute to get a little bit familiar with who they are. These guys were partners of Paul's in ministry and it was actually Barnabas who extended to Paul the right hand of fellowship and teamed up with him taking him to Antioch when the gentiles in that region were beginning to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ .

He (Barnabas) was really an amazing leader in the early church, and God used him tremendously, his name was actually Joses. You find out in Acts ch 4 that the apostles named him Barnabas because it spoke of the type of man he was, it means "Son of encouragement". and It's great when the Lord brings those people with a Barnabas type calling on their lives to come along side you in the ministry, they're always full of encouragement, that was Barnabas.

He was a radical disciple, he was one of the 1<sup>st</sup> guys again in Acts 4 that took everything he had, sold it, and laid it at the disciples feet for the development and expansion of the church. He was used powerfully in the early church now for times sake I'm only going to take you to one place, but we could look at several, but this is probably the single most strategic and encouraging works he ever did. Turn to the book of acts ch 11 vs 19-26

Vs22

They didn't send James or John, Peter didn't scout out the work, they sent Barnabas.

Vs24

This is the testimony that he had, these are the things that marked him out, he was a good man, God was doing a good work through him, he was full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, what is it that characterizes your life, what is other people's estimation of you? This was how Barnabas was recognized in the early church.

Vs25-26

This was probably one of the single most profound developments of the early church, 1 man (Barnabas) stirred to go off to another region to seek another man who knew the Lord whom he believed would be an effective minister to these people. and That man wound up being Paul the apostle and a ministry team was born that would rock the entire world.

So what do you think? Was there much fruit abounding to Barnabas' account due to his simple obedience to the prodding of the Holy Spirit to seek out this Saul of Tarsus? You never know what's going to happen when you obey the Spirit of God in reaching out to encourage someone, to bring them along and involve them in the work that God's doing.

To the extent that Paul was used of God sometimes these other guys seem to get lost in his eclipse, but it was Barnabas who in essence acknowledged the hand of God in Paul's life and brought him along and encouraged him in ministry. So Barnabas was a key player, someone was that guy for Billy Graham, and most of us will probably never know his name, but God does, and he will be rewarded accordingly. Every life that God has changed through Billy Graham will abound to his account, that guy could be you, you don't know whom God is allowing you to impact and encourage. (Again we could spend much time speaking on the type of man that Barnabas was and how God used his life but I think that gives you a little bit of an indication.)

Titus was another individual that Paul spent considerable time with in ministry and Paul considered him of the utmost of value, to many of his endeavors in the Lord. In 2 Cor 2:13 We find Paul speaking of getting ready to go in to Troas to minister and he says, "*I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.*"

In other words since Titus isn't with me even though this door has been opened to me to preach the gospel, (you see he had expected Titus to meet up with him and something happened and he didn't make it.) So Troas had to wait for another day, that's how important he considered his partnership with Titus in that region. 2 Cor 7:5-6 "*For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears. Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus.*"

God can comfort us in anyway He chooses, he can just touch our hearts or give us a word in the scriptures, but it's such a precious things when He brings someone your way at your most needy moment and they're just the one who is able to meet your need and comfort your heart. That's who Titus was for Paul at that time, and you can read more of him as well in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor ch 8 vs 6, 16,17 and 23 Titus was of utmost importance to the apostle Paul.

So these are the 2 guys that Paul had with him when he went up to Jerusalem to continue his defense of the gospel that he preached. and When he got there the 1<sup>st</sup> thing he did was share those things with guys like Peter and James (the Lords brother) and John those who were of reputation and he took them in and shared them privately. Why, not because he was unsure of the message he taught but because if they weren't of 1 accord with him in this, then this legalistic poison would very possibly be accepted into the gentile churches that he had ministered to. and Then all the labor that he had invested into them would've been pointless, so before he debated these legalist publicly, he wanted to make sure that the leaders of the church were going to back him up, which they did.

Vs3

So Titus being a gentile right in the middle of the church in Jerusalem with many people who felt as though you couldn't be saved unless you were circumcised, wasn't compelled or constrained to be circumcised. He didn't put any confidence in the flesh, because he understood that circumcision was a matter of the heart and symbolized the cutting away of the flesh life. Paul wrote in *Phil 3:3* "*For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*" and The very act of circumcision is to put confidence in the work of the flesh, it's saying now I *know* I'm saved because not only did I receive Christ but *I* have been circumcised. Now I know I'm saved because I received Christ but I was baptized, so you're putting confidence in the work of the flesh and thereby taking away from the work of the cross, be careful.

Vs4

Notice that, you have liberty in Jesus Christ you're free in Him, not free *to* sin but you've been set free *from* sin. You're no longer a slave to sin but you've been given freedom, liberty. So now when you blow life, it's because you *chose* to, you didn't *have* to, you can't cop to that old cliché "that's just who I am" or "that's just the way I am." That's not what my bible tells me, my bible tells me that when you received Jesus Christ you became a new creation, old things passed away and behold all things were made new.

You're not your own anymore because you were bought at a price, and that price was the blood of Jesus, and in Him there's true freedom. Not law, but grace, but oh how so many people once they see you enjoying your freedom in Christ want to bring you into bondage. Wait a minute brother, Jesus is good and all, but if you want to be righteous in the sight of God then you'd bettered adhere to these here rules.

Listen sister you're not truly holy unless you wear that ankle length dress and no make up, make up is of the devil, but no make up is holy. A perm is Satanic, but straight long hair is holy. and At the risk of offending someone, which isn't my intention but all I can say to that mentality is hogwash. That's adding to the cross and seeking to perfect an already finished righteous covering that's found in Christ alone, adding anything else to that work is a modern day form of Judaism. Paul says here that they didn't yield to that mentality even for an hour, why vs 5

Vs5

Praise God Paul stuck so adamantly and vehemently to his guns, none of those things are the truth of the gospel. That's "*teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*" and God hates that, because it creates a spiritual hierarchy. "*Well I'm righteous because I do this and this and so I'm a little higher than you in the sight of God, but one day if you keep striving maybe you can be as spiritual as me.*" and People begin to get all pious and self-righteous and try and play this intimidation game with you trying to place themselves in a position of authority over you, notice what Paul says.

Vs6

I love that, I don't even know that I can comment on it, it doesn't get much clearer than that. God is no respecter of persons, there's only 2 types of people in this world, those who are in Christ and those who aren't and those who seek to make themselves out to be some high and mighty person, what a joke. That's plastic and it reeks of pride, Jesus taught humility, servant-hood taking the lowest seat, washing feet, these people like to lord over people like the heathens.

They've lost sight of the teachings of the Lord they claim to serve, Jesus said no servant is above his Master, and we call Him our master, and He called us to be imitators of Himself and He said I didn't come to be served but to serve. So these people who seek to elevate themselves over others and they put off this aura of being somebody, whoever they are it makes no difference nor adds anything to me. God shows no personal favoritism, now I'm not saying we're to be disrespectful to people because God is the creator of all life and in that we should respect one another. But not in the sense of some super spiritual authority that rules over you like a dictator, we're all co-equals in Christ. Now there is authority in the body of Christ, but that's not where this is going and that's a subject for another study.

## Vs7-9

Now he's obviously not speaking of 2 different gospels he's been spending this whole time establishing the fact that there's only one and they both teach it. He's simply saying that God has put a specific call on his life and an anointing on his life to share that gospel in an effective fruitful way to the gentiles. and Peter has that same anointing in sharing that same gospel with the Jews. Certain people have certain personalities that God can utilize in various ways to reach various people. So I see nothing wrong with various types of churches, I praise God for the variety that He has given to man.

Some people can relate to God and are ministered to by God in a liturgical type setting, fine God loves them enough to meet them there, some like a little more emotional based gathering, that's fine too as long as you're not placing your righteousness in these things. Some people receive in a casual atmosphere, and dig the balance that lies between the emotions and the solemn, that's where we fit in. Someone from a real solemn atmosphere would think we were Pentecostal, Pentecostals think we're solemn, so we hit the balance there and God uses us effectively to the ministry that He's called us to. and That's what's being acknowledged here, we love the same God, have a primary calling to share the gospel, but God has refined the specific calling on your life to this style or group of people and mine to this group of people.

## Vs10

Translation; they asked us for help, they wanted to make sure that we wouldn't forget them, the church in Jerusalem was very poor and Paul many times took up collections for the church in Jerusalem.

## Vs11

Now Antioch was Paul's home base, it was his home church and Peter came to visit and to check out the work of God in that area. It's important to recognize that because Paul didn't go down to Jerusalem and say hey guys you're doing it all wrong and you need to do it my way. and So when I'm at a church that's not my home base and they worship in a little different manner than me, even if I don't agree with it, if it's not a salvational issue, I don't rock the boat. But if someone comes here and starts doing some off the wall thing, then I'll see to it that that's corrected because this is home base.

We're called to guard the work that God is doing in our midst and preserve the purity of it. and Notice that Paul with stood him to his face, in other words in front of everyone because he was blowing it, Peter was a bit notorious for acting impulsively anyway but this just goes to show you that apostle or not, no one is above reproach. and The best of people make mistakes, but how you deal with that mistake is critical Prov 12:1 *"Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid."*

Now we know that when it's possible that God desires one on one counsel 1<sup>st</sup> God likes to get sin done away with with as few as people possible brought into the knowledge of it. But when that sin begins to make a public impact as this did, then it needs to be dealt with in a public manner. 1 Tim 5:20 "*Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.*" Paul was speaking from experience, now he expounds on the issue.

### Vs 12-13

You see eating with someone in the Jewish culture was a huge deal, because you were in essence becoming one with that person. Because you partook of the common meal, there would be a big loaf of bread in the center of the table, and maybe a rack of lamb. and You would all be eating of the same meal and by the same thing nourishing you that's nourishing me and sustaining me we become one in that process.

That's why Jews would never eat with gentiles, because they didn't want to become one with some heathen, but when Jesus Christ came and clarified the issue, teaching them that it's not what goes into the mouth that makes you unclean but rather what comes out that defiles you. Because what comes from your mouth stems from your heart, and being under grace and not law on top of that, it wasn't an issue of cleanliness and uncleanness to eat with whoever or whatever because we know God's looking to the heart.

But Peter being an influential person in the church began to vacillate here. Because many Jews were still hung up on this whole eating with gentiles thing, and when Peter was with the gentiles he ate with the gentiles, probably enjoyed some good pork chops. But when some of the boys came down from Jerusalem, he got a bit skittish because he'd already been called "on the carpet" once before on this issue. Acts ch 10-11 look it up later, and so notice that it was fear of what they might think that caused Peter to fail. Peter's fear caused him to fail, what's the scripture that's been coming up lately, Prov 29:25 "*The fear of man brings a snare*"

When you act a certain way in one group of people and another way around another, what's that called? Hypocrisy, what's the #1 complaint that people have with the "church" today? Hypocrisy, acting all godly on the outside in the right setting, but inside being full of extortion and self indulgence, read Matt 23 sometime and see what Jesus thought of hypocrisy. But here Peter is playing the hypocrite and because of the sway of influence that he has the rest the guys went with him, even Barnabas.

Vs14

So the hypocrisy was played out by all of them but Peter is the initiator and so Paul heads straight for the source. His whole issue is listen if you teach grace and not law, and that's the way you live, then what are you doing showing these gentiles that well in reality I guess it is necessary to follow law. Is it grace mixed with law Peter, is that what you're saying? and He's basically saying Peter you're doing the same thing these Judaizers are doing, now we need to observe the law or not? Because the signal you're sending right now is that we do.

Vs15

In other words we're educated in the word of God, have been entrusted with the oracles of God as a nation and aren't pagan in our origin and have followed the law for our whole lives.

Vs16

Listen Peter, even we who have kept the law know and understand that in the law there is no justification for sin or righteousness before God, we're justified only by faith in Jesus Christ What's the only thing that causes God to see you justified, just as if I'd never sinned at all? Is it my dogmatic obedience to the law, my discipline in adhering to every minor detail? No, it's faith in Jesus Christ that's the only way that God will justify you, not by eating this or not eating that, not by sitting with these people or not, but only by faith in Jesus Christ because by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Vs17

What in the world does that mean? I have no idea, no listen, by seeking to be justified by Christ you're admitting the fact that you're a sinner and that the law is insufficient to justify you in the sight of God. But if after you come to Jesus Christ you seek again to return to the law, you're in essence saying that Christ didn't quite do it for you. and The law was where it was at, and so Christ has caused you to sin by pulling you from the law in the 1<sup>st</sup> place. Peter is it sin to eat with the gentiles, if Christ says it's ok and yet in reality it's sin, is Christ a minister of sin? You see where he's going with that. Because in Christ you're under grace, so has Christ given you the grace to sin, certainly not! Actually there's a few different takes on this particular scripture and I'd encourage you to research it but we just don't have time to delve too deeply into it. But that's why he follows with the reasoning in vs 18

Vs18

In other words if I've been set free from rules and regulations and a legal relationship into a loving relationship. Then by returning into the mind set of I've got to where my hair like this, or wear clothes that look like this, you're bringing yourself back into the bondage of law and legalism. Or even if it's you have to read 5 ch a day and listen to Christian radio every night and do devotions every morning, you have to be careful, are those things good, absolutely. Do they make you righteous, no way, you don't *have* to do those things, you *get to do them* and there's a big difference. It's a privelege to spend time with Jesus every morning, day and evening, I don't do anything because I have to, I do them because I get to, it's out of love not legalism, not seek favor in Gods sight, there's a big difference. I already have God's favor through Jesus Christ I don't need to earn it, listen, to trust in self-effort to obtain divine favor is to undermine the entire meaning of grace. Paul says...

Vs20-21

We'll comment on this next week