

# Galatians

## Chapters 1:11 - 2:14

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### Galatians 1:11-2:14

*11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. 14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. 15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.*

- One of the accusations that the Judaizers had brought against Paul was that he was not a true Apostle. They claimed that he received the message of the Gospel from the other Disciples and not from God directly. In the first two verses, Paul refutes these charges.
- After Paul's claim of revelation from Christ, he goes on to give a chronology of events which led up to his conversion and thereafter to prove that he didn't even have the opportunity to get his Gospel from the other disciples.
- Paul recalls his zeal for Judaism and then reveals that at the proper time, when God was pleased, he was converted. Note that he was set apart from birth but he also obeyed the heavenly vision (Acts 26:19)

*18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. 20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.) 21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. 23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy." 24 And they glorified God in me.*

- Paul had been a Christian for over three years before he even met Peter, and then only for fifteen days.
- Paul mentions that he also saw James the brother of Jesus. There are a number of different views on who this James really is:

1) He is not the James of the original twelve but he is the natural brother of Christ and he became a Christian after the Lord's resurrection. His is also a leader at the Jerusalem church and he is the author of the book of James.

2) The Greek word *ajdelfoVn*, *adelphos* (translated brother) can also be taken to mean cousin, and that perhaps this James was really the son of Mary's sister Alpheus.

*1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4 And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), 5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. 6 But from those who seemed to be something -- whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man -- for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.*

- In order to get the full chronology of events, we must reconcile these verses with the same account in Acts 9:1-30 & 11:19-30.
  1. Saul had gotten permission to go to Damascus to arrest Christians - vs. 2

2. Saul is converted by the Lord - vs. 3-9
3. Went to Damascus and met Ananias who revived Saul's sight - vs. 10-19
4. Saul goes from Damascus to Arabia and back to Damascus within the first three years of being a Christian.
5. After three years, Saul goes to Jerusalem where he is introduced to Peter and James by Barnabas - vs. 26-28.
6. After causing a stir in Jerusalem (within fifteen days), the brethren send him to Tarsus which is his hometown in the region of Cilicia.
7. Saul disappears in Tarsus for thirteen years until Barnabas seeks him out and takes him to Antioch for a year. Acts 11:25.
8. After fourteen years Saul returns to Jerusalem to conduct his famine relief visit - vs. 27-30
  1. This visit is as a result of revelation from Agabus. Act 11:28
  2. Why would Saul neglect to mention to the Galatians his trip to Jerusalem for the council and undermine the completeness or accuracy of his chronology?
  3. Why would Saul neglect to mention the outcome of the Jerusalem Council?
  4. It is hard to believe that Peter would commit his heresy after the Jerusalem Council where he stood up to the Judaizers.
  5. Paul records that the Apostles requested that he remember to feed the poor which he was already inclined to do.
  6. This famine relief meeting was a private meeting unlike the public Jerusalem Council meeting.
9. Paul returns a third time for the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)

- Why is this account necessary? Because Paul used it to defend his rights to Apostleship and much of our theology is written by Paul.

*11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?" (NKJV)*

- In the ceremonial law of the Old Testament, Jews were instructed not to partake in the Passover with foreigners. Later, this was expanded to mean a prohibition against having table fellowship with Gentiles and ultimately led to a racist hatred of gentiles. But the prohibition during the Passover was to be a picture of Holy and Unholy which the Jews were to observe. However, in Christ this ceremonial picture was satisfied although Christians are also told not to have table fellowship with brethren living in unrepentant sin.
- Peter could have had in his head that he was "being all things to all people" (which certainly Paul could appreciate) but not likely. Rather, Peter was afraid of the Judaizers and what they would think about his eating with gentiles. Peter knew the truth but didn't stand up for the truth. Paul saw through this "trifle" for what it really was; an overturning of the true Gospel. Thankfully, Peter receives the instruction and was restored and became an able spokesman for Paul.
- We should tie Paul's account of Peter's behavior with the instruction given earlier that if an Angel or an Apostle were to preach some other gospel he should be damned by God.
- Public sin deserves public rebuke and requires public confession. When a Christian sins, he has no right to demand his right to privacy about his sin. Some think that this will shame the name of Christ. However, God would rather endure some shame than to allow this sin to persist. It would be better for the world to think the church is dirty when in actuality it is clean than having the world think it is clean when it is really dirty.
- True unity in the church cannot be found on doctrinal relativism. There are some disputes that the church must enter into because of the importance of truth. There are also many disputes that aren't worth having - we should pray that God would teach us the difference.