

Galatians Unit 4- Chapter 2:11-21

Memory Verse: Galatians 2:16

Paul continues in this section with the opposition he led against Peter and those of the Judaizer group. Paul uses the lifestyle of freedom that Peter (Cephas) enjoyed having been set free from the Law as evidence to condemn him in his hypocrisy requiring Gentile converts to live like Jews with the requirement of circumcision. In verses 2:15-21 Paul transitions to his argument for justification by faith. Christ alone is the Messiah, the Lamb of God without blemish of sin who takes away the sin of the world. He is the justifier who declares us righteous the moment we turn from our works and put our full weight of trust in him.

In verse 2:11-14 Paul states that Peter stood condemned. The context indicates this was due to his hypocrisy regarding the responsibility of keeping the law. How do you view this?

Was Paul judging Peter? In what sense was this true? What was his basis for doing so?

Our postmodern culture seems to know very few Bible verses. Because truth is rejected in any universal sense, tolerance or acceptance of all views and lifestyles is a virtue to be protected above all else. One verse that is often quoted from Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount to endorse this belief, "Do not judge or you too will be judged" would seem to apply here. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Paul's conflict with Peter sought to restore him. I believe Galatians 5:6 and 6:1 gives a clear picture of how in humility we should approach a brother in sin. How are we to restore a brother according to these verses?

Why is speaking the truth in love important for healthy relationships?

C.J. Mahaney defines legalism this way. "Legalism is seeking to achieve forgiveness (or acceptance) from God and justification before God through obedience to God." How is this in opposition to grace?

Legalism will always lead us to become hypocrites. Agree or disagree? Give a personal example.

In 2:15-21 Paul transitions to the great doctrine of justification by faith. It is great not because of the Reformation. Not because of Luther or Calvin. Not because of Paul's keen legal mind to present it so sharply for us in Romans and Galatians. It is great because of the vastness of God's love, his mercy to us in Christ whose blood was poured out freely for our sin and given as a gift received by faith alone. Much of our error regarding interpreting the Bible's teaching on salvation stems from the confusion over 2 key biblical terms, justification and sanctification. Justification is the act whereby God the holy judge hands down the verdict to us as sinners deserving hell and judgment that we are righteous. The perfect, sinless record of Jesus Christ is credited to us (3:6, 11, 27). Sanctification is the process whereby God changes us into the image of Christ through the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It is a work of grace but it requires our obedience. We co-labor with the Holy Spirit in this lifetime work of transformation.

Galatians 2:16 describes what justification is in contrast to works righteousness. What does it mean in your personal experience?

Romans 3:24 states that we "are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." What does this verse emphasize?

Grace is the free gift of God to us (Rom. 6:23) in Christ. Have you ever received a costly gift? Relate your feelings.

Did you believe that you earned the gift? If you did it was more of a thank you for services rendered and not a true gift. Our salvation purchased for us in Christ's atoning death was not given in recognition for our goodness or our obedience (Rom. 5:8).

Galatians 2:20 has been described by many bible teachers and theologians as the deepest theology expressing the work of the gospel in us. What does this passage say to you?

It has been said that the Christian life is impossible for us to live in our strength. Does this verse support that notion? How so?