

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

Date: March 29, 2020

Spring Quarter: "Faith and Freedom" (Galatians)

Today's Lesson: "Confronting Performance Christianity"

PERSONAL: A Defense of Paul's Authority (1:13-2:21)

1. HE WAS **Independent** OF THE APOSTLES (1:13-24)
2. HE WAS **Recognized** BY THE APOSTLES (2:1-10)
3. HE **Rebuked** THE CHIEF OF THE APOSTLES (2:11-21)
Here Paul related how he opposed Peter, one of the "pillars" among the apostles, for conduct which threatened to compromise the gospel. The contrast with the previous section (2:1-10) is dramatic!

A. The need for Paul's rebuke (2:11-14)

- 1) Peter's practice (2:11-12)
Refusing to fellowship with saved, but uncircumcised Gentiles
- 2) Peter's poor example (2:13)
- 3) Peter's hypocrisy (2:14). Origin of the word "Judaizer."
"How is it that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs." The underlined phrase translates one Greek verb (*ἰουδαίζω ioudaizō*).

Question: How far did the rebuke extend? Are Paul's direct remarks to Peter limited to ver. 14, or do they continue to end of chapter (ver. 21)? *Some translators hold that the quotation ends with vs. 14 (ESV, NCSB, CSB, NRSV, GNB/TEV); others extend the quote thru vs. 16 (NLT); and still others thru to vs. 21 (NIV, NASB, NKJV).* While impossible to determine, it would seem Paul spoke more than 1 sentence in reproving Peter. The remaining ver. (15-21) of the chapter develop the inconsistency between Peter's behavior and his beliefs. At the same time, they form a superb transition and introduction to chaps. 3 & 4 in which Paul defended the key doctrine of justification by faith.

B. The nature of Paul's rebuke:

The apostle Paul explains justification by faith alone (2:15-21)

- 1) Paul explained this doctrine/teaching (2:15-16)
 - a) Justification by works of the law
 - b) Justification through faith
Three times in vs. 16 Paul tells us this way is God's way. And
NOTE: there is an ascending scale of emphasis.

- The first statement is general (16a)
He is deliberately vague; "a man" (any man, any woman)
- The second statement is personal (16b)
We have proved it personally in our own experience
- The third statement is universal (16c; "no one")
"Because by observing the law 'no one' will be justified"

2) Paul answered objections (2:17-20)

- a) The critics' argument against Paul (vv. 17a)
If God justifies (declares righteous) bad people, what is the point of being good? Can't we do as we like & live as we please?
- b) Paul's response to the critics' argument (vv. 17b-20)
 - Response #1 - He denies this with hot indignation
 - Response #2 - We are in union with Christ; united with Him in His death & resurrection.

3) Paul pointed to the cross (2:21)

"I do not (NEB: will not) set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness (lit. justification) could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing."

ARGUMENT: If anybody insists that justification is by works, & that he can earn his salvation by his own efforts, he's undermining the foundations of true, biblical Christianity.

- a) Such is nullifying (setting aside) the grace of God
If by works, it's not by grace (unmerited, undeserved favor)
- b) Such is making Christ's death unnecessary
If salvat. is our own work, then Christ's death was unneeded

Four Christian truths stand out from this paragraph:

1. Man's greatest need is justification, or acceptance with God.
2. Justification isn't by works of the law, but thru faith in Christ.
3. Not to trust in Christ, because of self-trust, is an insult both to the grace of God & to the cross of Christ; for both are not needed.
4. To trust in Christ, and so become united to Him, is to begin an altogether new life. If we're "in Christ", we're more than justified; we find that we have actually died and risen with Him. So, we are able to say with Paul the words of verse 20.