

Exegetical Notes for Galatians 2:1-10

KEY

- ATR** = Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933.
- BAG** = Bauer Arndt and Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*.
- Bruce** = F.F. Bruce. *The Epistle to the Galatians: a Commentary on the Greek Text. New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982.
- Calvin** = John Calvin. *Calvin's Commentaries: Galatians*.
- Carson, Moo, Morris** = D.A. Carson, Douglas Moo, Leon Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*.
- CNTOT** = Beale and Carson, Eds. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.
- Cole** = R. Alan Cole. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Galatians*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1988.
- Comfort** = Philip W. Comfort. *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*.
- Dunn** = James D. G. Dunn. *The Epistle to the Galatians: Black's New Testament Commentary*. London: Continuum, 1993.
- Erdman** = Charles R. Erdman. *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966.
- George** = Timothy George. *Galatians. Vol. 30. The New American Commentary*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.
- Gill** = John Gill. *Gill's Commentary on the Bible*.
- Jerome** = Raymond Edward Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland Edmund Murphy. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1996.
- Keener** = Craig S. Keener. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*.
- Lexham** = Douglas Mangum, and Derek R. Brown. *Galatians: Lexham Bible Guide*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012.
- Lightfoot** = J.B. Lightfoot. *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes, and Dissertations*. 4th ed. Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament. London: Macmillan and Co., 1874.
- Luther** = Martin Luther. *Commentary on Galatians*.
- MacArthur** = John MacArthur. *MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Galatians*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1987.
- Metzger** = Bruce M. Metzger. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*.
- Ryken** = Philip Graham Ryken. *Galatians: Reformed Expository Commentary*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005.
- Schaff** = Philip Schaff. *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Vol. 13. A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series*. New York: Christian Literature Company, 1889.
- Schreiner** = Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.
- Simeon** = Charles Simeon. *Horae Homileticae: Galatians-Ephesians. Vol. 17*. London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1833.
- Spence-Jones** = H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed. *Galatians. The Pulpit Commentary*. London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909.
- Stott** = John Stott. *The Message of Galatians*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1971.
- Strauss** = Lehman Strauss. *Devotional Studies in Galatians and Ephesians*. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1957.
- Spurgeon** = C.H. Spurgeon. *Galatians: Spurgeon Commentary – Spurgeon Commentary Series*. (Elliot Ritzema, Ed.). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013.
- UBS** = Arichea, Daniel C., and Eugene Albert Nida. *A Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Galatians*. UBS Handbook Series. New York: United Bible Societies, 1976.
- Utey** = Robert James Utey. *Paul's First Letters: Galatians and I & II Thessalonians*. Vol. Volume 11. Study Guide Commentary Series. Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997.
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Wright1 = Wright, N.T. *Paul for Everyone: Galatians and Ephesians*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.

Wright2 = Wright, Tom. *Paul for Everyone: Galatians and Thessalonians*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004.

Vincent = Vincent, Marvin Richardson. *Word Studies in the New Testament*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887.

Wuest = Wuest, Kenneth S. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

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Parsing Verbs and Declining Nouns

Verbs:

ποιμανατε (ποιμαινω = to tend, shepherd || Verb: Aorist Active Imperative, Second Person Plural).

ἀποκαλυπτεσθαι (ἀποκαλύπω = to reveal, disclose || Verb: Present Passive Infinitive).

Nouns (gender before case):

πατηματων (παθημα = suffering || Noun: Neuter Genitive Plural).

Participles (gender before case):

μελλουσης (μελλω = to be about to || Participle: Feminine Genitive Singular Present Active).

Adjectives (gender before case):

(ἐπιεικης = gentle, kind || Adjective: Masculine Dative Plural).

Independent Personal Pronouns:

ἡμιν (ἐγω = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).

ὑμιν (συ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).

αὐτῷ (αὐτος = He, Him || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Dative Singular).

Demonstrative Pronouns (gender before case):

(τουτο = this || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

Reflexive Pronouns (only masculine and feminine - the genitive is the lexical form as there is no nominative case):

(ἐμαυτου = myself || First Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive).

(σεαυτου = yourself || Second Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive).

(ἐαυτου = himself, herself, oneself || Third Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive).

Relative Pronouns:

(ὅς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Singular)

Sentence Structure

Sentence

Segment Clause

1 Ἔπειτα
then

Prepositional Phrase

διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν
after fourteen years

[Segment Clause (continued)]

πάλιν ἀνέβην
again I went up

Prepositional Phrase

εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα
to Jerusalem

Prepositional Phrase

μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ
with Barnabas

Participial Clause

συμπαλαβὸν καὶ Τίτον·
taking along also Titus

Segment Clause

2 ἀνέβην
I went up

[Sentence]

δὲ
now

Prepositional Phrase

κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν·
because of a revelation

[Sentence (continued)]

καὶ
and

Segment Clause

ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον
laid out to them the gospel

Relative Clause

ὃ
that

Segment Clause

κηρύσσω
I preach

Prepositional Phrase

ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν,
among the Gentiles

Prepositional Phrase

κατ' ἰδίαν
in private

[Relative Clause (continued)]

δὲ
but

[Prepositional Phrase (continued)]

τοῖς δοκοῦσιν,
to the influential people

Predicate

μή πως
lest somehow

Prepositional Phrase

εἰς κενὸν
in vain

[Predicate (continued)]

τρέχω
I was running

Subordinate Clause

ἢ
or

Predicate

ἔδραμον.
had run

Sentence

[Sentence]

3 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Τίτος
but not even Titus

Relative Clause

ὁ

Prepositional Phrase

σὺν ἐμοί,
with me

Participial Clause

Ἕλληγ ὢν,
a Greek was

[Sentence (continued)]

ἠναγκάσθη
was compelled

Infinitival Clause

περιτμηθῆναι·
to be circumcised

Prepositional Phrase

4 διὰ
because of

[Sentence (continued)]

δὲ
now

[Prepositional Phrase (continued)]

τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους,
the secretly brought in false brothers

Relative Clause

οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον
who slipped in

Infinitival Clause

κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν
to spy out - freedom our

Relative Clause

ἣν ἔχομεν
that we have

Prepositional Phrase

ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,
in Christ Jesus

[Relative Clause (continued)]

ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν,
in order that us they might enslave

Relative Clause

5 οἷς οὐδὲ
to whom not even

Prepositional Phrase

πρὸς ὥραν
for an hour

[Relative Clause (continued)]

εἴξαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ,
did we yield in subjection

Subordinate Clause

ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαμείνη
in order that the truth of the gospel might remain continually

Prepositional Phrase

πρὸς ὑμᾶς.
with you

Sentence

Prepositional Phrase

6 Ἀπὸ
from

[Sentence]

δὲ
but

Relative Clause

τῶν δοκούντων
those who were thought

Infinitival Clause

εἶναι τι, -
to be something

Relative Clause

ὅποιοί ποτε ἦσαν
what ever they were

Appositional Clause

οὐδέν μοι διαφέρει·
no to me difference

Appositional Clause

πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει -
to face God of man not receive

Subordinate Clause

ἐμοὶ γὰρ
to me for

Relative Clause

οἱ δοκοῦντες
those who were influential

[Subordinate Clause (continued)]

οὐδέν προσανέθεντο,
nothing added

[Sentence (continued)]

7 ἀλλὰ

but

Participial Clause

τοὺναντίον ἰδόντες

these saw

Subordinate Clause

ὅτι πεπιστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας
that I had been entrusted the gospel to the uncircumcision

Subordinate Clause

καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς,
just as Peter to the circumcision

Relative Clause

8 ὁ

the

Subordinate Clause

γὰρ
for

[Relative Clause (continued)]

ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ
one who was at work through Peter

Prepositional Phrase

εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς
for apostleship to the circumcision

[Subordinate Clause (continued)]

ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ
was at work also through me

Prepositional Phrase

εἰς τὰ ἔθνη,
for the Gentiles

[Sentence (continued)]

9 καὶ

and

Participial Clause

γνόντες τὴν χάριν
acknowledged the grace

Relative Clause

τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι,
- given to me

[Sentence (continued)]

Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης,
James and Cephas and John

Appositional Clause

οἱ δοκοῦντες
those thought

Infinitival Clause

στῦλοι εἶναι,
pillars to be

[Sentence (continued)]

δεξιὰς ἔδωκαν ἐμοὶ καὶ Βαρναβᾶ κοινωνίας,
the right they gave to me and Barnabas fellowship

Subordinate Clause

ἵνα
in order that

Segment Clause

ἡμεῖς
we

Prepositional Phrase

εἰς τὰ ἔθνη,
to the Gentiles

Segment Clause

αὐτοὶ
they

[Subordinate Clause (continued)]

δὲ
and

Prepositional Phrase

εἰς τὴν περιτομήν·
to the circumcision

Subordinate Clause

10 μόνον τῶν πτωχῶν ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν,
only the poor that we should remember

Appositional Clause

ὃ καὶ ἐσπούδασα
which also I was eager

Infinitival Clause

αὐτὸ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι
very this to do

Albert L. Lukaszewski and Mark Dubis, The Lexham Syntactic Greek New Testament (Logos Bible Software, 2009), Ga 2.

Galatians 2:1–10 Translation

Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 115–117.

1a sequence (from 1:21)

Then

after fourteen years

I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas,

b simultaneous (to 1a)

taking along Titus also.

2a explanation (of 1a)

And **I went up according to revelation,**

b sequence (to 2a)

and **I communicated before them the gospel**

that I preach among
the Gentiles,

c specific from general

that is, **I communicated it privately**

(of 2b)

before those of reputation,

d basis (of 2b–c)

lest somehow I am running or had run in vain.

had run in vain.

3a resolution to problem

But **not even Titus ...**

(in 1–2)

who was with me

... was compelled to be circumcised,

b concessive (to 3a)

even though he was a Greek.

4a explanation (from 3)

It was because of the false brothers

who sneaked in,

b restatement (of 4a)

who had slipped in

c purpose (of 4a–b)

to spy out our
freedom

d expansion (of 4c) that we have in Christ Jesus,

e purpose (of 4c) in order to enslave us.

5a contrast (to 4a) But **we did not yield in subjection to them for an hour,**

b purpose (of 5a) in order that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

6a source From those thought to be of reputation

b explanation (of 6a) (indeed, of what sort they were formerly makes no difference to me;

c basis (of 6b) God does not pay attention to human stature),

d6a–d restates 1–5 that is, **those of reputation contributed nothing to me.**

7a basis (of 9d) But on the contrary,

because they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcision,

b comparison (to 7a) just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcision

8 basis (of 7b) (for the one who worked in Peter for the apostleship for the circumcision also worked in me for the Gentiles),

9a basis (of 9d) and

because they recognized the grace given to me,

blist

James and Cephas and John,

capposition *(to 9b)*

those reputed to be pillars,

diference

**gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of
fellowship,**

(from 7a and 9a)

e purpose *(of 9d)*

in order that we should go to the Gentiles, and

f series *(to 9e)*

they to the circumcision.

10aseries *(to 9d)*

And **(they asked) that we should remember the poor,**

b explanation *(of 10a)*

which indeed was
the very thing I had
been eager to do.

- 1 Then,
fourteen years later,
I went up again
to Jerusalem
with Barnabas,
taking Titus along also.
- 2 But it was because of a revelation that I went up.
And I declared to them
the gospel that I preach
among the Gentiles,
but I did so in private
to those who were of reputation,
lest somehow I might be running,
or had run,
in vain.
- 3 But not even Titus
who was with me,
being a Greek,
was compelled to be circumcised.
- 4 But it was because of the false brethren,
secretly brought in,
who had sneaked in
to spy out our freedom
which we have in Christ Jesus
in order to enslave us.
- 5 We did not yield to them in submission for even an hour,
so that the truth of the gospel
might remain with you.
- 6 But from those who were of reputation--
what they were makes no difference to me
(God is not a respecter of men)--
for those of reputation
contributed nothing to me.

TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

GREEK TEXT (NA27):

1 Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ συμπαραλαβὼν καὶ Τίτον· 2 ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν, μὴ πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον. 3 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἕλλην ὢν, ἠναγκάσθη περιτμηθῆναι· 4 διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους, οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν, 5 οἷς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν εἵξαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ, ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαμείνῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς. 6 Ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι, - ὅποιοί ποτε ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει - ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἱ δοκοῦντες οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο, 7 ἀλλὰ τὸναντίον ἰδόντες ὅτι πεπίστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς, 8 ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, 9 καὶ γνόντες τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι, Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης, οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι, δεξιὰς ἔδωκαν ἐμοὶ καὶ Βαρναβᾶ κοινωνίας, ἵνα ἡμεῖς εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, αὐτοὶ δὲ εἰς τὴν περιτομὴν· 10 μόνον τῶν πτωχῶν ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν, ὃ καὶ ἐσπούδασα αὐτὸ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

1 Then, fourteen years later, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. 2 But it was because of a revelation that I went up. And I declared to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, lest somehow I might be running, or had run, in vain. 3 But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4 But it was because of the false brethren, secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus in order to enslave us. 5 We did not yield to them in submission for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. 6 But from those who were of reputation--what they were makes no difference to me (God is not a respecter of men)--for those of reputation contributed nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, even as Peter to the circumcised, 8 (for He who worked for Peter in respect to [his] apostleship to the circumcised worked also for me in respect to the Gentiles), 9 and knowing the grace given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are considered to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we [should go] to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 [They] only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do.

PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what's t/passage talking about): The pillars of Jerusalem

PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what's the passage saying about what it's talking about): recognize Paul's ministry

PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text): Paul's second trip to Jerusalem proves that there's harmony between Jerusalem and Antioch.

CENTRAL PROPOSITION OF THE SERMON: The Pillars and Paul sing in unison.

SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE: "The Litmus Test in Jerusalem" (Parts 1 - 3)

SERMON OUTLINE:

I. Paul's Third Defense: A Litmus Test in Jerusalem (2:1-10)

A. The Consequent Journey to Jerusalem: Paul's Second Trip (vv. 1-2)

1. Company of Five Faithful Friends

- a. When was the trip? (v. 1a)
- b. Who went? (v. 1b)
- c. Why did they go? (v. 2a)
- d. What happened? (v. 2b)
- e. Where did it happen? (v. 2b)
- f. What was Paul's concern? (v. 2c)

B. The Confrontation in Jerusalem: Titus and the Test Case (vv. 3-5)

1. Circumcision and Titus (v. 3)
2. Christians In Name Only (v. 4)
3. Celebrating the Freedom of the Gospel (vv. 4-5)

C. The Confirmation in Jerusalem: Gospel of Grace Affirmed (vv. 6-9)

1. Contributing Nothing to Paul (v. 6)
2. Contrary Notions (vv. 7-8)
3. Cooperation Among Brothers (v. 9)

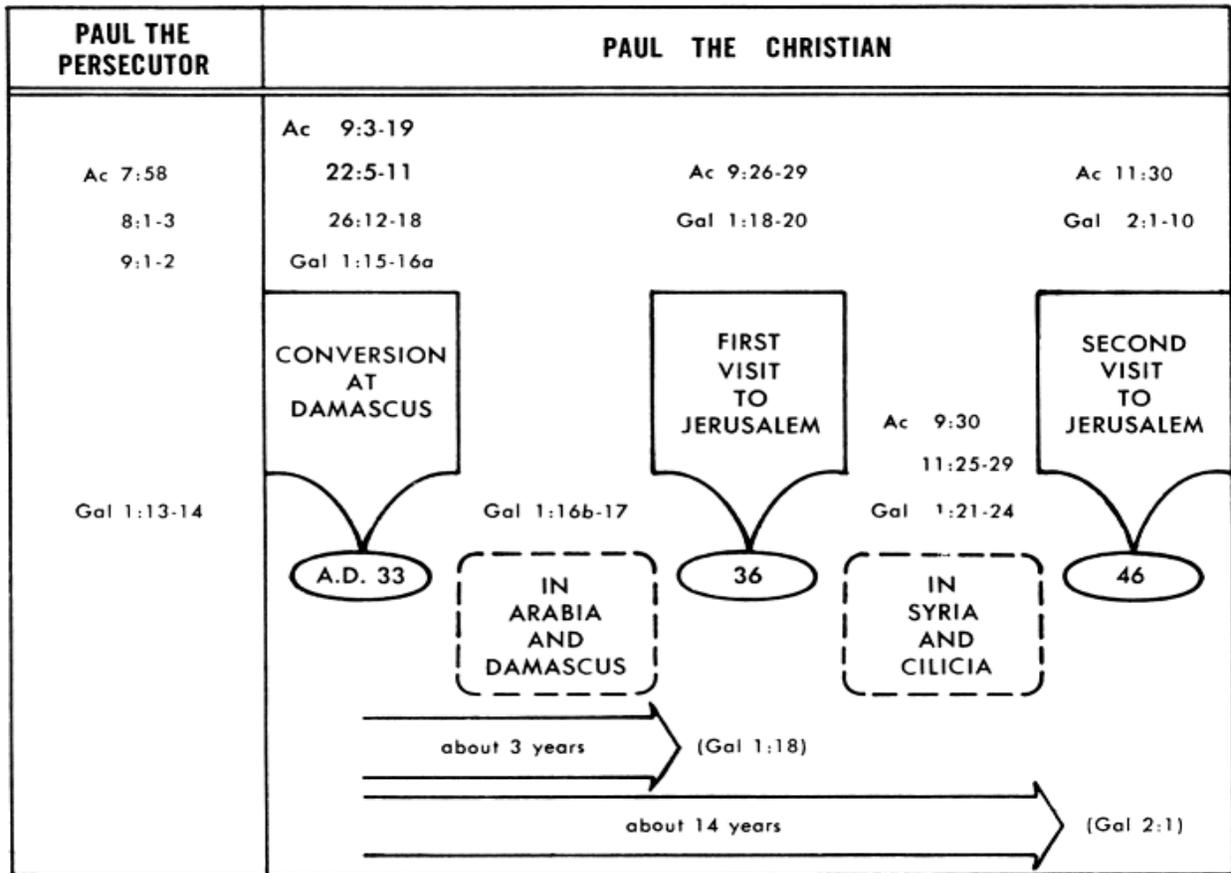
D. The Contribution to Jerusalem: Remembering the Needy (v. 10)

II. Observations

- A. False Teachers are Nothing New
- B. The Central Issue of False Teaching is a False Gospel
- C. There is Such a Thing as a False Christian
- D. Sanctified Stubbornness is a Good Thing
- E. It All Comes Back to the Cross . . .

HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/GRAMMATICAL CONTEXT

Timetable comparing Galatians 1:13-2:10 and Acts 9-11



The next visit to Jerusalem was fourteen years later (probably fourteen years after Paul's conversion (ca. AD 44–46),¹ showing again his independence from the apostles (2:1–10). On this occasion he communicated his gospel to the pillars of the Jerusalem church (Peter, James, and John). Some false brothers in the church raised the issue of whether Titus as a Gentile should be circumcised. The leaders of the Jerusalem church, however, ratified the Pauline gospel. Paul insisted that he did not need their ratification, for his gospel stood apart from the view of the Jerusalem leaders. Nevertheless, when hearing Paul's gospel, they validated it as true. [Schreiner, 114]

The third major section of the narratio runs from 2:1–10 and recounts the second trip of Paul up to Jerusalem. This section is difficult to interpret not least because of the grammar. There appears to be a significant anacoluthon at the beginning of vs. 4, and in any case vss. 3–5 appear to be parenthetical, with the main subject being raised in vss. 1–2, and then being

resumed in vss. 6–10. In addition vss. 6–10 are apparently one long convoluted sentence in the Greek. [Witherington, 126]

Main Idea

When Paul traveled to Jerusalem fourteen years after his conversion, the Jerusalem leaders did not require Titus to be circumcised, even though some false brothers tried to insist on it. Indeed, the Jerusalem pillars added nothing to Paul's gospel. On the contrary, they ratified it and gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas as missionaries to the Gentiles.² [Schreiner, 243]

² Wiarda says that the main point here is "that Paul and his gospel are approved by the Jerusalem apostles" ("Plot and Character," 243).

Schreiner's outline of 2:-1-10:

- d. Recognition of Paul's Authority by Pillars (2:1–10)
 - i. Gospel Explained to Pillars (2:1–2)
 - ii. Circumcision Not Required (2:3–5)
 - iii. Nothing Added to Paul's Gospel (2:6–9)
 - iv. Request to Remember the Poor (2:10)

It seems likely that the Judaizers claimed that Paul's gospel was derived from Jerusalem and was later distorted by him. Paul counters in 1:11–2:10 that his gospel was independent from Jerusalem and later ratified by Jerusalem. [Schreiner, 118]

Having set forth the issues and alternatives that would dominate his Letter to the Galatians, Paul now began in earnest to develop the first major section of the epistle, a historical overview of his conversion, call, and ministry prior to his evangelistic work in Galatia. This long autobiographical account runs from 1:11 through 2:21 and is itself divided into three discrete subsections: Paul's early Christian experience and his first encounter with church leaders in Jerusalem (1:11–24), the summit meeting between Paul and the Jerusalem leaders over the scope and sphere of his missionary work (2:1–10), and the confrontation with Peter at Antioch leading to the central pronouncement of justification by faith (2:11–21).

These verses contain the longest and richest autobiographical material we have from the pen of Paul. They supplement in significant ways what Luke said about Paul's background, conversion, and early missionary activity. This entire section and the prominence it holds in the structure of Galatians, occupying as it does nearly one-fourth of the book, underscore the fact that Christianity is a historical faith. It is based upon certain specific, irreversible, and irreducible historical events. Jesus was born during the imperial reign of Caesar Augustus. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he rose again on the third day, and was taken up into heaven forty days later. Christianity is not a philosophy of life, or yet a set of moral precepts, or a secret code for mystical union with the divine. At its core Christianity is the record of what God has once and for all done in the person and work of his Son, Jesus Christ. Among these mighty acts

of God, we must include the calling of the apostle Paul, for it too belongs among the foundational events of salvation history.

What this means and why it was such a hot issue in Galatia we will seek to uncover in our study of the verses that follow. Suffice it to say here that nowhere in this long historical section does Paul tell us how he felt about the events that happened to him. We can certainly speculate about this matter, imagining, for example, that he must have been greatly surprised at the appearance of the risen Christ near Damascus, or greatly angered by the false brothers who were trying to subvert the principle of Christian freedom, or deeply hurt and betrayed by Peter, who in a tense situation compromised what Paul knew were his real convictions. But the point of the narrative is not to focus on Paul's personal experience or subjective feelings, however interesting such a disclosure would be to us. Rather it is to set forth the objectively given revelation of God in and through Paul, the expressed purpose of which was to serve the furtherance of the gospel (Gal 1:16).

Galatians 1–2, then, establishes a historical context for the expressly theological content of Gal 3–4, which issues in turn in the ethical outcome of Gal 5–6. From the beginning, however, the theological issue is paramount, as we have seen already in the introductory verses. In the historical narrative also Paul was concerned not merely to recount the story of his life but to relate how “the truth of the gospel” (2:14) had manifested itself in his life story.

Paul was not quoting in these verses from his personal spiritual diary; unlike Augustine, he was not given to reminiscence and left behind no “Confessions of St. Paul.” Rather he surveyed his life and selectively recounted certain incidents in order to make a theological point. The theological thrust of his presentation is seen in the fact that the historical narrative flows almost imperceptibly into his theological exposition. Thus it is unclear whether 2:15–21 constitutes the conclusion of his declaration to Peter (as the NIV has it with quotation marks around the entire passage) or the commencement of his special address to the Galatians on the theme of justification.

In any event, the entire historical narrative is evidently intended as a prolegomenon to the central thesis that “a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ” (2:16). The polemical tone we have encountered in the early verses of chap. 1 continues to dominate Paul's rehearsal of his life and ministry here. Clearly he was responding to a certain representation of his career that his opponents had disseminated among the Galatian churches. If, as seems likely, these agitators had close ties to Jerusalem Christianity, they may well have represented themselves as the true ambassadors of the mother church there while depicting Paul as a renegade evangelist, one whose authority was wholly derived and subordinate to the Jerusalem apostles. Paul, they perhaps claimed, had totally distorted the message of these great church leaders while they, on the other hand, offered a pure replication of it.

Thus Paul was concerned to clarify his relationship to the church at Jerusalem, and especially to Peter and James. Each of these leaders is mentioned three times in the first two chapters. First, just a few years after his conversion Paul paid a “get acquainted” visit to Peter and James in

Jerusalem (1:18–19). Then, well over a decade later, he encountered them again at Jerusalem in a strategic conference related to his missionary work among the Gentiles. And, finally, he confronted Peter at Antioch in a crisis over table fellowship prompted by certain individuals affiliated with James. We will have to examine more closely what these verses tell us about Paul’s relationship to the church at Jerusalem and its leaders. It is clear, however, that Paul wanted to assert his apostolic independence over against Peter, James, and all other human intermediaries. [Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 105–107.]

The two key themes in this passage are the truth of the gospel and the unity of the church. In a moment of crisis Paul found it necessary to stand adamantly, stubbornly, uncompromisingly against the heretical doctrine and illicit demands of the false brothers. It would have been easy for Paul to say: “Oh, come now; circumcision is no big deal. Let’s compromise on this issue in order to save face and win friends here in Jerusalem.” By such an approach he might well have spared himself a confrontation, but he would thereby have forfeited the cause of Christian freedom. At the same time, Paul greatly valued the unity of the church and sought to strengthen it in every way possible. We have much to learn from this episode in the life of the early church as we seek to be faithful stewards of the missionary challenge confronting us today. First, we can develop a pattern of cooperation around the truth of the gospel. This is not an ecumenism of convenience; Paul could not work together with the false brothers, even though they claimed to be fellow Christians, because their theological position was antithetical to the gospel message itself. However, Paul was eager to work closely together with other Christian leaders who shared with him a common commitment to the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Second, the apostles found it necessary to distribute the work of evangelization by a practical division of labor. Today 1.3 billion persons in the world have never heard the name of Jesus for the first time. Evangelical, Bible-believing Christians cannot afford to fight turf wars over comity agreements and missionary zones. No one person, ministry, missions agency, or denomination can cover all the necessary bases. We must be ready to stand together and work collaboratively with Great Commission Christians everywhere in the unfilled task of world evangelization.

Finally, the word about caring for the poor points to the dual necessity of both a propositional and an incarnational dimension to the life and mission of the church. Paul steadfastly refused to divorce conversion from discipleship. His mission included both a social and an evangelistic responsibility. If he gave priority to the latter over the former, it was because he sensed so keenly the eternal destiny of every person he met and shuddered to think of the dire consequences of spurning Christ’s invitation to eternal life. Still, he knew, as we must, that the gospel he preached was addressed to living persons, soul and body, in all of their broken humanity and need for wholeness. [Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 166–167.]

It has been suggested that the criticisms of Paul's gospel, to which he makes reference in vv 11–12, have controlled the structure of most of the letter. In v 11 his gospel is accused of being *κατὰ ἄνθρωπου*, while in v 12 it is said to be derived *παρὰ ἀνθρώπου*. Both these criticisms, it is suggested, are now to receive detailed rebuttal, but in reverse order: in 1:13–2:21 Paul shows that his gospel was not derived *παρὰ ἀνθρώπου*, and in 3:1–6:10 he argues that it is not *κατὰ ἄνθρωπον*. The bulk of the letter could then be viewed as an elaborate chiasmus (see BDF 477 [2] summarizing J. Jeremias, 'Chiasmus in den Paulusbriefen', ZNW 49 [1958], 145–156, especially 152f.). [F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: a Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982), 89.]

Paul's thesis statement for this entire section is found in 1:11-12:

11 For I would have you know, 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 I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Of course, that ties into v. 10 as well:

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

What follows is Paul's defense of his thesis:

Verse 13 – Paul's life as an unregenerate Jew

Verse 14 – His accomplishments as a Pharisee

Verses 15-16 – His conversion to Christ and his calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles

All of that by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ (Damascus Rd. and following).

Paul is establishing his apostolic credentials.

16b I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

Paul's defends his thesis (13-17) by first est. that his conversion was dramatic and miraculous. It was independent of the Jerusalem Apostles; it came by direct revelation from Christ. After he was converted, he didn't rush to Jerusalem to consult with the Apostles there.

He's addressing the Judaizers' contention that he was 2d rate to those in Jerusalem or was under their authority. Cf. 2:1-2.

Review . . .

Vv. 11-12 – Thesis

Vv. 13-17 – First Defense of His Thesis

Vv. 18-24 – Second Defense (“then”).

2:1-10 (“then”) - marks Paul's 3d defense.

2:11 “but” - here begins Paul's 4th defense.

This section ends either at v. 14 or it continues to the end of the chapter.

Paul's overall purpose in 1:13-2:14 is to assure the Galatians that they have indeed "received" (see 1:9) the true gospel. "Gospel" language is, of course, central in the rebuke passage of verses 6-9; but it is also central in verses 11-12, which set forth the thesis that Paul argues in 1:13-2:14, and it crops up repeatedly in the subsequent argument (1:16,23; 2:2,5,7,14). "The truth of the gospel" (2:5,14) is Paul's focus in this section. But the Galatians received this gospel from Paul; and so, to have confidence in the gospel, they must also have confidence in the messenger who proclaimed that gospel to them. The truth of the gospel and Paul's credentials as an authoritative messenger of that gospel are therefore woven together in this part of the letter. [Moo]

It can be shown that the thesis stated in vss. 11–12 is the main one underlying the narratio, as Matera does with the following outline: (1) 1:11–12 the theme announced—the Gospel is not of human origin; (2) 1:13–17—first proof that Paul received the Gospel through a revelation of Christ; (3) 1:18–20—second proof—that the Jerusalem church didn't commission Paul; (4) 1:21–24—third proof—that those in Judea glorified God because of Paul; (5) 2:1–10—fourth proof—Paul defended his Gospel at Jerusalem; (6) 2:11–14—Paul defended his Gospel at Antioch. All this is meant to show Paul's consistency and the divine character and origin of his message. His life has been a public demonstration of the Gospel of grace. [Witherington, 90–91]

T. George writes:

Having set forth his thesis of the nonhuman origin of the gospel in the two preceding verses, Paul began a demonstration of its truth in terms of five historical proofs derived from his own life and ministry: (1) Nothing in Paul's religious background could account for his acceptance of the gospel (1:13–17). (2) Paul was not commissioned by the Jerusalem church (1:18–20). (3) Those Paul formerly persecuted glorified God because of the change wrought in him (1:21–24). (4) Paul's apostolic work was recognized by church leaders at Jerusalem (2:1–10). (5) Paul defended the gospel against Peter's vacillation at Antioch (2:11–14). Following this extensive historical excursus, Paul summarized the central theme of his letter (2:15–21) and then reminded the Galatians of how God had worked among them at his first preaching of the gospel in their midst (3:1–5). Thus the entire historical section of the letter moves from Paul the persecutor to Paul the preacher; it is the record of “the way of the gospel from Damascus to Galatia.”

Paul's main point in vv. 13–14 was to show that there was nothing in his religious background and pre-conversion life that could have in any way prepared him for a positive response to the gospel. Quite the contrary. His early career and lifestyle were shaped by a confident attachment to the strictest traditions of Judaism, which in turn had led him to take up arms against the believers in Jesus. Paul assumed that the Galatians already knew something about his past life as a persecutor; he was reminding them of something they already had heard about. Doubtless they had heard this from Paul's own lips, for, unlike many public figures, he was never one to conceal the shameful deeds that marred his past life.

Paul spoke frequently and graphically of his campaign of persecution against the Christians. He told of how he had pursued them, like a bloodhound, from city to city, arresting both men and women, throwing them into prison, voting for their execution, and further harassing them even to the point of death (Acts 22:4; 26:9). Paul gave this witness not to brag on the misdeeds of his pre-Christian life, as some converts are wont to magnify their sinful past more than their rescue from it, but in order to hold high the sovereign initiative of God in reversing the murderous track of his career. Paul always spoke of this part of his life with great sorrow and shame, considering himself the “least of the apostles” (1 Cor 15:9) because he had “persecuted the church of God” (Gal 1:13). [Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 113–114]

2:1 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ συμπαραλαβὼν καὶ Τίτον·

Ἐπειτα (ἐπειτα = then || Adverb).

διὰ δεκατεσσάρων (δεκατεσσάρες = fourteen || Adjective: Neuter Genitive Plural). Adverbial Genitive of Time.

ἐτῶν (ἔτος = year || Neuter Genitive Plural).

πάλιν (πάλιν = again || Adverb).

ἀνέβην (ἀναβαίνω || Verb: First Person Singular Aorist Active Indicative).

εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα (Ἱεροσόλυμα || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ (Βαρναβᾶς || Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

συμπαραλαβὼν (συμπαραλαμβάνω = to take along || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular Aorist Active).

καὶ Τίτον· (Τίτος || Noun: Masculine Accusative Singular).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Then, fourteen years later, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Summation of 2:1-5:

Paul arrived in Jerusalem by revelation and brought Titus with him. While in Jerusalem he communicated the gospel with those of reputation (Peter, James, and John). Verse 3 represents the main point of 2:1–5. The men of repute did not think Titus should be circumcised, even though he was a Gentile. Verses 4–5 represent an anacoluthon, which as a sort of aside explains why the issue of Titus’s circumcision even arose. False brothers had infiltrated the church with the demand for circumcision, which would bring believers into bondage. Paul explains in 2:5, however, that these false brothers did not win the day, and hence the integrity of the gospel was preserved. [Schreiner, 118]

Issues related to chronology:

[H]owever, different matters of interpretation remain concerning the conference in Jerusalem and where it should be placed in Paul’s life. C. K. Barrett has referred to this issue as “the most celebrated and complicated historical problem in the whole epistle—perhaps in the whole of the New Testament.”⁸⁸ We cannot here refer to all of the dimensions of this problem; let us briefly mention two issues that bear on our reconstruction of this event.

First, what did Paul mean by the expression “fourteen years later”? In considering the similar expression “after three years” (1:18), we noted that in the New Testament era an inclusive method of reckoning periods of time was often used. By this method any portion of a given year could be counted as a whole year. Thus 1995 would be “three years” after 1993, even though conceivably by this method no more than thirteen months might have elapsed between the two dates. This means that in Gal 1:18 the “three years” could have been slightly more than one, and the “fourteen years” of Gal 2:1 possibly could have covered only twelve.

Another chronological issue concerns the benchmark from which Paul was gauging the time of his second visit to Jerusalem. Fourteen years after what? His first visit to Jerusalem (1:18) or, as seems more likely, his conversion encounter with Christ? If we assume the latter, and factor in the inclusive reckoning of years, we can place the date for Paul’s second visit to Jerusalem around A.D. 44–46, with the terminus a quo of his conversion occurring in A.D. 32 or 33. This would mean that the events of Gal 2:1–10 parallel the “famine visit” Paul and Barnabas made to Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 11:25–30.

This view has been convincingly argued by F. F. Bruce although it remains a minority opinion among commentators on the epistle.⁸⁹ The prevailing view equates Gal 2:1–10 with Acts 15:1–21, the famous council at Jerusalem that produced an agreement endorsed by Paul and the Jerusalem leaders alike concerning the admission of Gentile converts into the Christian community. On the surface this is a plausible hypothesis since there are marked similarities between the two passages. Both involve Paul and Barnabas on the one side and Peter and James on the other. Both meetings deal with the issue of circumcision and reflect a similar outcome, one essentially favorable to Paul.

Upon closer examination, however, the differences between Acts 15 and Gal 2 are more striking than the similarities. In Acts 15 Paul and Barnabas are sent as part of an official delegation from the church at Antioch to resolve a dispute introduced into their congregation by intruders from Judea. In Gal 2, however, Paul himself, prompted by a divine revelation, takes the initiative for the meeting. The council of Acts 15 was clearly a public meeting involving lengthy discussions and presentations addressed to the whole assembly by Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and James. By contrast, the conference of Gal 2 was carried on in private conversation among the principal leaders.

Most telling of all, however, is the fact that nowhere in Galatians does Paul refer to the outcome of the Jerusalem Council or to the apostolic decree which, according to Acts, he and Barnabas later distributed among the churches of Syria, Cilicia, and also Galatia (Acts 16:4). As Bruce has observed, “After the publication of the apostolic decree of Acts 15:20–29, it would have been difficult for Judaizing preachers invoking the authority of the leaders of the Jerusalem church to impose circumcision on Gentile Christians.”⁹⁰ It is inconceivable that Paul would have refrained from any mention of this concordat with the Jerusalem church, especially when he had gone to such pains to delineate his relationship with that Christian community and when the mere disclosure of such an agreement would have silenced those who were seeking to

undermine his ministry in Galatia. On balance it is thus better to see the situation in Galatia as part of the Judaizing agitation that led up to the Jerusalem Council. That Paul nowhere alluded to this meeting or its outcome is best explained by the fact that it had not yet occurred. In fairness, however, other scholars, including some who hold to a high view of biblical authority, have interpreted Gal 2 and Acts 15 as parallel accounts of the same event.⁹¹ [George, 135–137]

Calvin has it right, I believe, in rejecting the view that chapter 2 = the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15:

1. Fourteen years after. This cannot with certainty be affirmed to be the same journey mentioned by Luke. (Acts 15:2.) The connection of the history leads us rather to an opposite conclusion. We find that Paul performed four journeys to Jerusalem. Of the first we have already spoken. The second took place when, in company with Barnabas, he brought the charitable contributions of the Greek and Asiatic Churches. (Acts 15:25.) My belief that this second journey is referred to in the present passage rests on various grounds. On any other supposition, the statements of Paul and Luke cannot be reconciled. Besides, there is ground for conjecturing that the rebuke was administered to Peter at Antioch while Paul was residing there. Now, this happened before he was sent to Jerusalem by the Churches to settle the dispute which had arisen about ceremonial observances. (Acts 15:2.) It is not reasonable to suppose that Peter would have used such dissimulation, if that controversy had been settled and the decree of the Apostles published. But Paul writes that he came to Jerusalem, and afterwards adds that he had rebuked Peter for an act of dissimulation, an act which Peter certainly would not have committed except in matters that were doubtful.

Besides, he would scarcely have alluded, at any time, to that journey undertaken with the consent of all the believers, without mentioning the occasion of it, and the memorable decision which was passed. It is not even certain at what time the Epistle was written, only that the Greeks conjecture that it was sent from Rome, and the Latins from Ephesus. For my own part, I think that it was written, not only before Paul had seen Rome, but before that consultation had been held, and the decision of the Apostles given about ceremonial observances. While his opponents were falsely pleading the name of the apostles, and earnestly striving to ruin the reputation of Paul, what carelessness would it have angered in him to pass by the decree universally circulated among them, which struck at those very persons! Undoubtedly, this one word would have shut their mouth: “You bring against me the authority of the apostles, but who does not know their decision? and therefore I hold you convicted of unblushing falsehood. In their name, you oblige the Gentiles to keep the law, but I appeal to their own writing, which sets the consciences of men at liberty.” [Calvin]

Then, fourteen years later, (Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν)

Cf. repetition of “then” (v. 1:18,21). The word indicates a careful record of unfolding events. This 14 year interval underscores Paul's independence from Jerusalem (cf. Jesus not Jerusalem). His visit with Peter was only 15 days, cf. 1:18.

Years by ancient reckoning included parts of years: the 14 years may include the beginning and ending year and thus only be 12 actual years.

Fourteen years later. Again, Paul leaves us guessing as to the beginning of what he mentions as a specific period of time. Do the fourteen years date from his conversion or from his last visit to Jerusalem? Either interpretation is possible, but most commentators favor the latter. The emphasis here is on how long Paul stayed away from the other apostles. [UBS, 28]

Chronology of the S. Galatian theory makes it more likely that Paul counts the 14 years from his conversion. Schreiner writes that this Jerusalem visit took place around AD 44–46.

I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. (πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ συμπαραλαβῶν καὶ Τίτον·)

Note my earlier chronology – Paul and Barnabas evangelized the south Galatian churches on the first missionary journey (Acts 13–14). The Galatians would have known Barnabas personally.

On Barnabas and Titus:

The Galatians' knowledge of Barnabas's character is hinted at as well in the words "even Barnabas" (2:13). Barnabas played a vital role in the early church. He was given the moniker "Son of Encouragement" (Acts 4:36) and sold a field and generously gave the proceeds to the church (4:37). He played a central role in encouraging Paul in his ministry, for he convinced the other apostles of Paul's legitimacy (9:27) and recruited Paul some years later for the work in Syrian Antioch (11:25–26). Paul and Barnabas traveled together on the first missionary journey (Acts 13–14), defending a law-free gospel at what is typically called the Jerusalem Council (15:1–29). They had a sharp and famous disagreement about whether they should take John Mark on the second mission (15:35–39), and the dispute led to a parting of the ways. In the final analysis, however, Barnabas's faith in Mark was vindicated, as Paul later acknowledged (Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24).

Titus was one of Paul's coworkers, and he played a major role in Corinth (cf. 2 Cor 2:13; 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18). Paul later wrote a letter to him (cf. also 2 Tim 4:10). We know from Gal 2:3 that he was a Gentile. Did Paul bring Titus intentionally to Jerusalem as a test case regarding the requirement for circumcision? Or, does Gal 2:4 suggest that the issue came up at the prompting of the false brothers? Since Paul's purpose is not to detail the history of what occurred in Jerusalem, certainty eludes us. [Schreiner, 120–121]

... Titus, a spiritual child of Paul and his co-worker (Titus 1:4–5), went along also, being among the "certain others" mentioned by Luke. Titus, as an uncircumcised Gentile and a product of the very ministry the Judaizers were attacking . . . [MacArthur, 35]

πάλιν ἀνέβην {A}. Of the several variant readings, *πάλιν ἀνέβην* appears to be preferable, being supported by early and diversified witnesses (P46 ⋈ A B K P Ψ 81 614 1739 vg syr(p), h copsa arm), whereas *ἀνέβην πάλιν* is supported by predominantly Western witnesses (D G itd, g, 61 goth eth Pelagius Jerome) and *πάλιν ἀνῆλθον* has only meager support (C Paschal Chronicle). The absence of *πάλιν* in several versional and patristic witnesses (copbo Marcion Irenaeuslat Tertullian Ambrosiaster Chrysostom Augustine) is either accidental or the result of scribal uncertainty concerning its precise significance in the context. [Metzger, 522]

Paul, a former Pharisaic Jew and now Apostle to the Gentiles, took with him a Jewish Christian, Barnabas, and a Gentile convert, Titus. Later, in his Letter to Titus, Paul addresses him as “my true son in our common faith” (Titus 1:4). Titus was probably won to Christ through the witness of Paul himself and thus became one of his most trusted coworkers (2 Cor 8:23).⁹⁴ Titus is nowhere mentioned in Acts but he appears frequently in Paul’s letters serving as the apostle’s confidential agent especially in the gathering and administration of the love offering the Gentile churches were collecting for the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:20; 12:17). It has been well said that Titus “possessed considerable people skills ... and was a man of unquestioned integrity, especially with regard to financial resources.”⁹⁵

Why did Paul take Titus with him to Jerusalem? If, as we have argued, this visit was made for the purpose of delivering famine relief to the Christians of Judea, then it would be perfectly natural for a Gentile member of the church at Antioch to be sent along as an expression of solidarity between the predominantly Gentile church in Syria and the largely Jewish mother congregation at Jerusalem. However, there is also the possibility that Paul may deliberately have included Titus in the delegation to have a living example of a Gentile convert on hand when he “set forth” his gospel to the church leaders there. He surely knew that Titus was uncircumcised, and he may well have anticipated the controversy over this issue. [George, 141–142]

2:2 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν, μὴ πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον.

ἀνέβην δὲ (ἀναβαίνω || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 1S).

κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· (ἀποκάλυψις || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

καὶ ἀνεθέμην (ἀνατιθεμί = to lay before, declare, communicate [only middle] || Verb: Aorist Middle Indicative, 1S).

αὐτοῖς (αὐτός || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Dative Plural).

τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular).

ὃ (ὅς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative/Accusative Singular).

κηρύσσω (κηρύσσω || Verb: Present Active Indicative, 1S).

ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, (ἔθνος || Noun: Neuter Dative Plural). Dative/Locative of Sphere.

κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ (ιδίος = one's own / κατ' ἰδίαν = privately || Adjective: Feminine Accusative Singular).

τοῖς (ὁ || Definite Article: Masculine Dative Plural).

δοκοῦσιν, (δοκεῶ = to think, believe, suppose, consider || Participle: Masculine Dative Plural Present Active). Attributive Participle. Sense: “to be influential, to be/become considered worthy of high esteem.” The repetition of the phrase (vv. 6, 9) may point to a favorite expression of his opponents in commending these leaders to Paul as models for his preaching . . . [Vincent, 94]

μὴ πως (πως = somehow, in some way, perhaps / μὴ πως = lest somehow || Particle).

εἰς κενὸν (κενός = vain, empty || Adjective). Cf. Phil. 2:16.

τρέχω (τρέχω = to run || Verb: Present Active subjunctive, 1S). A favorite metaphor of Paul (cf. Rom. 9:16; 1 Cor. 9:24, 26; Gal. 5:7; Philip. 2:16; 3:13, 14).

ἢ (ἢ = or || Conjunction).

ἔδραμον. (τρέχω = to run [second aorist] || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But it was because of a revelation that I went up. And I declared to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, lest somehow I might be running, or had run, in vain.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

But it was because of a revelation that I went up. (ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν·)

It was not because he was being called on the carpet by those in Jerusalem. God sent him there.

2:2a And I went up according to revelation (ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν). Paul went up to Jerusalem, not because he felt he needed validation for his gospel from the Jerusalem apostles,

but because of a divine revelation directing him to do so. Such a revelation fits better with the Acts 11:27–30 visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem than the visit in Acts 15. According to Acts 15:2 Paul and Barnabas traveled to Jerusalem at the behest of the church in Syrian Antioch. But this directive for Paul and Barnabas does not necessarily preclude the giving of a divine revelation to Paul. It is possible, for instance, that Paul persuaded the church in Antioch to send him and Barnabas by appealing to a revelation that God had given him that instructed him to go to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, after the controversy over circumcision boiled over in Syrian Antioch, a visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem seems rather commonsensical. It seems more probable that a revelation was given to visit Jerusalem for the famine relief visit of Acts 11:27–30,10 for the funds could have been sent to Jerusalem apart from Paul and Barnabas, and it may have seemed wiser for them to continue in their fruitful ministry in Antioch. But we can understand why Paul and Barnabas would travel to Jerusalem if God divinely revealed that they should do so.

Was the revelation given to Paul directly, or did Agabus receive it and communicate it to Paul, since Agabus was the person who informed the church in Antioch about the famine through a prophetic revelation?¹¹ Such questions interest scholars today, but we must confess that we lack enough information to posit a certain answer. In any case, the revelation was given by God, and Paul made the trip to Jerusalem in accord with God's will. [Schreiner, 120–121]

And I declared to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles,
(καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν,)

This was a voluntarily meeting, not one that Paul was called to as if to check him out.

but I did so in private to those who were of reputation,
(κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν, μὴ πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον.)

4 times in this text Peter, James, and John are described as “those of reputation” (οἱ δοκοῦντες, 2:2,6,9).

How should we understand this appellation? It could be understood as a dismissive comment: the leaders in Jerusalem have a name that is unwarranted.¹⁶ Alternatively, the term can be read positively: Peter, James, and John deservedly enjoyed a high reputation.¹⁷ Perhaps an interpretation between these two options is best. Paul did not doubt the stature and position of these leaders. Nevertheless, he cautioned against overestimating their authority.¹⁸ Final authority does not reside in any person but only in the gospel (1:8).¹⁹ Leaders are to be respected but not venerated, honored but not exalted above the gospel.²⁰ [Schreiner, 121–122]

lest somehow I might be running, or had run, in vain.
(μὴ πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον.)

Why did Paul meet with the 'pillars' privately? Was he worried that he his gospel wasn't accurate? Did he have doubts? Was he preaching for 10 years wondering if he had it right? This sort of insecure interpretation does not fit the context and flow of Paul's argument thus far (cf. his dogmatism in 1:6-9 as one example).

The reason has to be related to the fallout that would occur if the Jerusalem leaders had disagreed with him or had rejected his call. This is exactly what the Judaizers were falsely claiming – What would happen if it were true! Even if Paul's gospel were true (and it was), rejection by Jerusalem would do great damage to the cause of Christ in the furtherance of it. There could be no rival factions in God's kingdom.

It seems better to interpret Paul's words as an expression of concern for the new believers he had led to Christ and the young churches he had founded. What would a major division in the church mean for these Christians? Beyond that, what would it mean for the furtherance of Paul's missionary work? Doubtless he himself would not be deterred from the path he had been traveling for more than a dozen years. Yet the world mission to which he had been divinely called could well be sidetracked, if not finally thwarted, by his failure to reach a base agreement on a shared gospel with the mother-church in Jerusalem.⁹² For these reasons Paul sought the unity of the church and close partnership with the Jerusalem leaders. [George, 140]

1 Thess. 3:5 has the same construction and the NAS consistently uses “for fear” in both cases.

But how are we to understand this fear on the part of the apostle? Paul most certainly does not mean that his past fruitful labors which resulted in the conversion of many sinners and the establishment of churches would be rendered null and void simply because they would not have the approbation of the Jerusalem church. It must be that Paul attached great importance to the estimation in which his preaching would be held by the Jerusalem church and the Twelve, and the reaction of the same upon the Roman world. When we think of the strong prejudices of that church situated in the stronghold of apostate Judaism, this feeling of anxiety lest his work be disowned, is certainly a natural thing. His fear was that those in authority in the Jerusalem church, by insisting on the Mosaic ritual, might thwart his past and present efforts at establishing a Church that would be free from all connections with the Mosaic economy which had been set aside at the Cross. Paul saw that in the existing situation, there was danger that his work would be rendered ineffectual by the opposition of the Jerusalem church; that the disapproval of the Twelve would have such repercussions in the Church that his work would be seriously handicapped. He was always careful lest the Jewish law be forced upon the Gentiles, and lest the unity of the Christian Church be broken by a division of the latter into a Jewish and a Gentile branch. [Wuest, Ga 2:2]

I did not want my work in the past or in the present to be a failure translates an idiom which expresses apprehension (literally “lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain,” RSV). What is the meaning of this idiom? It should not be understood to mean that Paul had any doubts about the truth of the gospel which he was preaching or of the course he was pursuing, an idea which seems to be implicit in some translations. Rather, Paul was presenting his message to the Jewish authorities at Jerusalem because he saw the danger of his work both past and present being rendered ineffectual if those authorities disapproved of it. Some translations therefore focus on the fear that the Jewish authorities might not see the validity of what Paul was doing (JB “I did so for fear the course I was adopting or had already adopted would not be allowed”; NAB “to make sure the course I was pursuing, or had pursued, was not useless”; Phps “to make sure that what I had done and proposed doing was acceptable to them”). Other translations (for example TEV) focus on the result of such disapproval. . . . It is possible that Paul was fearful that disapproval by the authorities in Jerusalem would result in people rejecting the truth that he had been proclaiming. [UBS, 30]

In Paul the phrase “lest somehow” indicates a real possibility (1 Cor. 8:9; 9:27; 2 Cor. 2:7; 9:4; 11:3 12:20; Gal. 4:11; 1 Thess. 3:5).

Paul's metaphor of a race (in the games) implies discipline toward a goal (1 Cor. 9:24–6; Gal. 5:7; Phil. 2:16). To “run in vain” is to fail to achieve that goal.

The unity of Jerusalem and Antioch (Jews and Gentiles) was at stake, not the ontological accuracy of the gospel.

2:3 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἕλλην ὄν, ἠναγκάσθη περιτμηθῆναι·

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ (οὐδὲ = not even || Adverb).

Τίτος (Τίτος || Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular).

ὁ (ὁ || Definite Article: Masculine Nominative Singular).

σὺν ἐμοί, (ἐγὼ || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun (emphatic): Masculine Dative Singular).

Ἕλλην (Ἕλλην = Greek || Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular).

ὄν, (ἔμι || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular Present Active).

ἠναγκάσθη (αναγκάζω = to compel || Verb: Aorist Passive Indicative, 3S).

περιτμηθῆναι· (περιτεμνω = to circumcise || Verb: Aorist Passive Infinitive).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. (ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἕλλην ὄν, ἠναγκάσθη περιτμηθῆναι·)

Ἕλλην does not necessarily mean “Greek” as an ethnicity. The word stands for any non-Jew (Gentile). Hellenization under Alexander the Great brought Greek culture and language t/o the western world. (cf. the Greek/Jew distinction in passages such as Rom. 1:16; 2:9,10; 3:9;10:12; 1 Cor 1:22,24; 10:32; 12:13; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).

This was no little matter to a Jew in light of recent history:

Here again it was the Maccabean crisis which had brought this distinctiveness of Jew from Greek to the fore (1 Macc. 1:15, 48, 60–61; 2:46; 2 Macc. 6:9–10; Josephus, Ant. xii.241 —‘they concealed the circumcision of their private parts in order to be Greeks even when unclothed’). Circumcision was also widely regarded by Greco-Roman writers as a distinguishing mark of Jews, and since other peoples were known to practise circumcision (Herodotus II.104.2–3; Strabo XVII.2.5), such close identification between circumcision and Jewishness must be a reflection of sustained Jewish insistence on circumcision as marking out Jew from Greek—as Tacitus confirms: ‘They adopted circumcision to distinguish themselves from other peoples by this difference’ (Hist. V.5.2). Similarly Josephus, Ant. i.192: God commanded Abraham to practise circumcision ‘to the intent that his posterity should be kept from mixing with others’. [Dunn, 95]

1 Maccabees 1:15 They also submitted themselves to uncircumcision, and repudiated the holy covenant; yea, they joined themselves to the Gentiles, and sold themselves to do evil.

1 Maccabees 1:48–61 48 and that they should leave their sons uncircumcized, and make themselves abominable by means of (practising) everything that was unclean and profane, 49 so that they might forget the Law, and change all the (traditional) ordinances. 50 And whosoever should not act according to the word of the king, should die. 51 In this manner did he write unto the whole of his kingdom; and he appointed overseers over all the people; and he commanded the cities of Judah to sacrifice, every one of them. 52 And many of the people joined themselves unto them, all those [namely] who had forsaken the Law; 53 these did evil in the land, and caused Israel to hide in all manner of hiding-places. 54 And on the fifteenth day of Chislew in the one hundred and forty-fifth year they set up upon the altar an ‘abomination of desolation’, and in the cities of Judah on every side they established high-places; 55 and they offered sacrifice at the doors of the houses and in the streets. 56 And the books of the Law which they found they rent in pieces, and burned them in the fire. 57 And with whomsoever was found a book of the covenant, and if he was (found) consenting unto the Law, such an one was, according to the king’s sentence, condemned to death. 58 Thus did they in their might to the Israelites who were found month by month in their cities. 59 And on the twenty-fifth day of the month they sacrificed upon the altar which was upon the altar of burnt-offering. 60 And, according to the decree, 61 they put to death the women who had circumcised their children, hanging their babes round their (mothers’) necks, and they put to death their (entire) families, together with those who had circumcised them.

1 Maccabees 2:46 and pulled down altars, and they circumcised by force the children that were uncircumcised, as many as they found within the borders of Israel.

2 Maccabees 6:9–10 9 slaying any who refused to adopt Greek ways. 10 Thus any one could see the distressful state of affairs. Two women, for example, were brought up for having circumcised their children; they were paraded round the city, with their babies hanging at their breasts, and then flung from the top of the wall.

Flavius Josephus, Antiquities:

CHAPTER 5 - HOW, UPON THE QUARRELS OF THE JEWS ONE AGAINST ANOTHER ABOUT THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD, ANTIOCHUS MADE AN EXPEDITION AGAINST JERUSALEM, TOOK THE CITY, AND PILLAGED THE TEMPLE, AND DISTRESSED THE JEWS: AS ALSO, HOW MANY OF THE JEWS FORSOOK THE LAWS OF THEIR COUNTRY; AND HOW THE SAMARITANS FOLLOWED THE CUSTOMS OF THE GREEKS, AND NAMED THEIR TEMPLE AT MOUNT GERIZZIM, THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER HELLENIUS

1. (237) About this time, upon the death of Onias the high priest, they gave the high priesthood to Jesus his brother; for that son which Onias left [or Onias 4] was yet but an infant; and, in its proper place, we will inform the reader of all the circumstances that befell this child. (238) But this Jesus, who was the brother of Onias, was deprived of the high priesthood by the king, who was angry with him and gave it to his younger brother, whose name also was Onias; for Simon had these three sons, each of whom the priesthood came, as we have already informed the reader. (239) This Jesus changed his

name to Jason; but Onias was called Menelaus. Now as the former high priest, Jesus, raised a sedition against Menelaus, who was ordained after him, the multitude were divided between them both. And the sons of Tobias took the part of Menelaus, (240) but the greater part of the people assisted Jason; and by that means Menelaus and the sons of Tobias were distressed, and retired to Antiochus and informed him, that they were desirous to leave the laws of their country, and the Jewish way of living according to them, and to follow the king's laws, and the Grecian way of living: (241) wherefore they desired his permission to build them a Gymnasium at Jerusalem. And when he had given them leave they also hid the circumcision of their genitals, that even when they were naked they might appear to be Greeks. Accordingly, they left off all the customs that belonged to their own country, and imitated the practices of the other nations.

The Maccabean crisis simply reinforced the teaching of Genesis that circumcision was a 'make or break' issue for Jews; insistence on circumcision was integral to the emergence of 'Judaism' (see on 1:13). Hence the forced circumcision of all uncircumcised Jews during the Maccabean revolt (1 Macc. 2:46) and of the males in the surrounding territories when they were incorporated into Judea by the Hasmoneans (Josephus, Ant. xiii.257–8, 318; see also xx. 139, 145). The position, then, was simple for most Jews: only the circumcised were Jews; only the circumcised were members of the covenant; only the circumcised belonged to the people chosen by God to be his own (see also Schürer iii.169; J. Nolland, 'Uncircumcised Proselytes?', JSJ 12 [1981] 173–94; McKnight 79–82). [Dunn, 96]

The argument used by Eleazar to Izates, king of Adiabene, who round about this very time became a proselyte without being circumcised, may well be like the arguments used by the 'false brothers': 'In your ignorance, O king, you are guilty of the greatest offence against the law and thereby against God. For you ought not merely to read the law but also, and even more, to do what is commanded in it. How long will you continue to be uncircumcised? If you have not yet read the law concerning this matter, read it now, so that you may know what an impiety it is that you commit' (Josephus, Ant. xx.44–5). [Dunn, 99–100]

Would they receive Titus as a brother or demand that he be circumcised? Test case. Titus was an object lesson.

A test of the truth of the gospel is that it is timeless . . .

Here is the 1st mention of 'circumcision.' Question is, should Titus, a Gentile, be circumcised now that he's in Jerusalem (a Jewish church)? This issue dovetails into the situation in Galatia (5:2–6; 6:12–13).

On the issues related to chronology:

The first question concerns when the incident with Titus took place. It could refer to an event that happened either before or after this trip to Jerusalem, say, in the church at Antioch or some other Gentile mission setting. We know from the incident over table fellowship at Antioch and also from the disturbance that prompted the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 that members of "the circumcision party" were pursuing a policy of disruption on several fronts. That their ploys had penetrated as far as Galatia was the occasion of this letter. Clearly the demand for Titus to be circumcised was not unique: this was one instance of a widespread Judaizing effort based in

Jerusalem but obviously carried to strategic mission stations throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus many commentators believe that Paul was here thinking of an event that happened elsewhere, most likely at Antioch, rather than during his meeting with the Jerusalem church leaders. Paul's reason for interjecting the matter into his narration of the Jerusalem meeting, however, is that it likely occurred on that very occasion. [George, 146]

One outcome of the private meeting was that "Titus was not compelled to be circumcised." Some have argued that Titus agreed to be circumcised voluntarily - he was not forced to receive circumcision. A cf. is made to Timothy in Acts 16:3. However, the settings are different. True, Timothy agreed to be circumcised. But this was not for salvation, but to put aside stumbling blocks in the effort to reach the Jews (and to enter the synagogues with Paul for the preaching of the gospel). Timothy was also ½ Jew. Titus was 100% Gentile. If Titus was circumcised as a Gentile, then the act agrees with the view of the pseudo-brethren of v. 5. There are times when one accepts cultural practice for the sake of the Gospel and there are times when one rejects certain practices for that same Gospel. The issue is the context. If Titus were circumcised, then all the Gentile Galatians should be as well, which is contrary to the entire argument of the letter.

Controversy over circumcision dogged Paul wherever he went (cf. Romans 2:25–29; 3:1, 20; 4:9–12; 15:8; Philippians 3:3–5; 1 Corinthians 7:18–20; Colossians 2:9–15; 3:10–11. Cf. Gal 2:12 where Paul IDs the troublemakers in Antioch as "those who belonged to the circumcision group." Same expression used in Titus 1:10.

On circumcision:

What is the import of circumcision here? According to the OT circumcision was required to be part of God's people. Those who refused circumcision did not belong to God's covenant people (Gen 17:9–14). Was circumcision still required for Gentile converts to Judaism in Paul's day? Apparently there was some debate in Second Temple Judaism over whether circumcision was mandatory, but the majority view subscribed to the clear teaching of the OT and required it.²⁴ Even some Jews who believed Jesus was the Messiah insisted that Gentiles were required to receive circumcision and to observe the law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:1, 5). Since Titus was a Gentile, some contended that he could not belong to the people of God apart from circumcision. [Schreiner, 123]

The Greek here is awkward, and Paul violates normal grammatical rules.³⁰ Perhaps Paul's emotional revulsion to the false brothers accounts for the sudden disruption in the text. We wish we had more information about what occurred at the meeting, and we must acknowledge that our information about what took place in Jerusalem is sketchy. Some have interpreted the text to say that the issue of Titus's circumcision did not come up in his private meeting with the Jerusalem leaders and that it arose on a later occasion when the false brothers arrived.³¹ It is more likely, however, that the events took place at the same time. The issue of Titus's circumcision had come to the forefront because of the influence of the false brothers. [Schreiner, 124]

George:

Circumcision is the act of removing the foreskin of the male genital, a rite practiced among various peoples of the ancient world as a sign of initiation at puberty or marriage.⁹⁷ Among the Jewish people, however, circumcision originated in the special covenant God made with

Abraham (Gen 17:1–27) whereby every male child, whether freeborn Israelite or household slave, would be circumcised on the eighth day after birth as a sign of participation in the chosen people of God. In the tradition of the great prophets of Israel circumcision is extended metaphorically to refer to the act of repentance and total consecration demanded by the Lord. Thus Jeremiah could deliver this word from the Lord for the people of his day, “Circumcise yourselves, and take away the foreskins of your heart” (Jer 4:4, KJV). Obviously the children of Israel were guilty of overreliance on the external rite of circumcision and the sacrificial system of the temple to the neglect of what Jesus would call “the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faithfulness” (Matt 23:23). There may well be, as some scholars have claimed, a line of continuity between Jeremiah’s spiritualizing of circumcision in terms of a genuine response of the heart and Paul’s use of the term as a metaphor for the Christian life.⁹⁸

In the Hellenistic Roman period, circumcision became more and more prominent as a distinguishing mark of Jewish identity as the people of Israel found themselves in a political environment that grew increasingly hostile. According to the Maccabean literature, the reign of terror unleashed by Antiochus IV (175–163 B.C.), included a prohibition of circumcision and a policy by which babies who had been circumcised were put to death along with the mothers who had submitted them to this sign of the covenant. In reaction to this brutal assault on Jewish identity, circumcision was raised to an even higher status as a sign of the election and purity of the nation Israel. Thus, “as a basic Jewish law, circumcision was in the Hellenistic Roman period one of the presuppositions without which intimate dealings with the Jews were not conceivable.”⁹⁹

Within the crosscurrents of political messianism and apocalyptic speculation, the idea grew that the Messiah would only come when the Holy Land had been purified of all uncircumcised Gentiles. Prior to the conquest of Pompey and the beginning of Roman rule, the Hasmonean king, John Hyrcanus I, had mandated the mass circumcision of the Idumeans whom he had subjugated by force. Thus, during the period of the New Testament, circumcision was regarded by devout Jews as an indispensable precondition and seal of participation in God’s covenant community. The strictest Jews insisted that even proselytes be circumcised as a rite of initiation into the special people of God. When Paul listed among his preconversion bragging points the fact that he had been “circumcised on the eighth day” (Phil 3:5), he was giving witness to the powerful emotional and ideological force this ancient rite conveyed to Jewish people everywhere.¹⁰⁰

With this background in mind we can understand more clearly some of the fears and suspicions the Pauline mission provoked among what might be called the ultra-right wing of Jewish Christianity. For them Paul represented a serious threat to the character of the Christian faith, which they interpreted in terms of continuity with the Old Testament law, worship in the temple, and faithful observance of such sacred Jewish rites as circumcision. We get a glimpse of the harsh feelings these Jewish believers had for Paul from an incident that occurred during one of the apostle’s later visits to Jerusalem. While Paul was received warmly by many of the Christians there, including James, they were quick to warn him of the negative press he had received among many others. “You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What shall we do?” (Acts 21:20–22). In order to show his solidarity with these scrupulous Jewish believers, Paul willingly submitted himself to the purification ritual of the temple and also paid the stipulated fee for four of the strict brothers

who had taken a Nazirite vow. In this way Paul reassured the believers in Jerusalem of his personal compatibility with Jewish traditions so long as no compromise of the gospel was involved.

In fact, the rumor that Paul had instructed Jewish Christians of the diaspora to forego the circumcision of their children was patently false. As he wrote to the Corinthians: “This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God’s commands is what counts” (1 Cor 7:17–19). He explained the same principle somewhat differently in Gal 6:15: “Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.”

The phrase about “becoming uncircumcised” in the Corinthian text refers to a practice called *epispasmos*, a surgical procedure designed to conceal cosmetically the physical effects of circumcision. This procedure was sought by certain Jewish men in order to avoid embarrassment when they visited the public baths or participated in athletic games (cf. 1 Macc 1:15).¹⁰¹ Paul had no sympathy for this kind of radical Hellenizing of Jewish culture and spoke against it. He honored circumcision as a sign of Jewish identity and encouraged Jewish Christians to continue to circumcise their male offspring.

Then why all the fuss over Titus? If circumcision is after all a matter of indifference, then why not submit Titus, a Gentile believer, to this harmless ritual in order to keep peace with the more scrupulous element of the Jerusalem church? The answer relates to the claims for circumcision advanced by the Judaizing party, “Unless you are circumcised . . . you cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1). To accept this verdict is to renounce the truth of the gospel, that salvation is by divine grace manifested in Jesus’ completed work on the cross, the benefit of which is received through personal faith in the Redeemer, and that alone. In this case, for a Gentile believer to submit to circumcision is to “make Christ of no value to you” (Gal 5:2). Those to whom Christ is of no value are still under the curse of the law, without God and without hope in this world and the next.

Thus the dispute over Titus set the parameters for the crisis in Galatia. It brought into focus an issue that could not be avoided, a matter that would again come to the fore at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), the outcome of which was crucial both for the integrity of the gospel and the unity of the church. As G. Ebeling has aptly put it: “The treatment of circumcision had become a test of the Christian faith. In historical terms, it must be decided whether Christianity is something other than a new Jewish sect. In theological terms, the decision is whether one’s relationship with Christ is dependent on being under the law, or the relationship to the law is dependent on being in Christ.”¹⁰² [George, 142–145]

2:4 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους, οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν,

διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους (παρεισάκτος = secretly brought or smuggled in || Adjective: Masculine Accusative Plural).

ψευδαδέλφους (ψευδαδέλφος || Noun: Masculine Accusative Plural).

οἵτινες (ὅςτις = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Plural). Double Relative Pronoun.

παρεισῆλθον (παρεισερχομαι = to slip in, sneak in || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 3P). Only here and Romans 5:20.

κατασκοπῆσαι (κατασκοπεω = to spy out || Verb: Aorist Active Infinitive). Infinitive of Purpose. “In LXX, of spying out a territory, 2 Sam. 10:8; 1 Chron. 19:3.” [Vincent, 96]

τὴν ἐλευθερίαν (ἐλευθερία = freedom, liberty || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

ἡμῶν (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Genitive Plural).

ἣν (ὅς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Feminine Accusative Plural).

ἔχομεν (Verb: Present Active Indicative, 1P).

ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, –

ἵνα ἡμᾶς (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Accusative Plural).

καταδουλώσουσιν, (καταδουλοώ = to enslave, bring into bondage || Verb: Future Active Indicative, 3P). Only here and 2 Cor. 11:20.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But it was because of the false brethren, secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus in order to enslave us.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Verses 4–5 represent an anacoluthon. Lightfoot overstates the case when he calls these two verses “a shipwreck of language.”

Speaking of the language in this verse, George writes:

They are all words derived from the world of political and military espionage but applied to the conflict raging in the early church. We can paraphrase Paul’s assessment of the situation thus: “Now all this came about because certain false brothers, having been secretly smuggled into our ranks, disrupted our fellowship in order to spy on us and thereby subvert our freedom in Christ.” [George, 147]

Dunn writes:

Paul here begins a sentence which he fails properly to complete (anacoluthon)—a not uncommon Pauline trait (BDF §467). This may have been by design: allusions to unsavoury activities, dark hints of skullduggery, implication of dishonourable motives and things left unsaid (leaving the readership to fill out the unfinished sentence) would serve Paul's polemic better than explicit details which could be the more directly challenged and refuted; Paul shows himself at this point to be the master of political propaganda. But equally it could have been simply a case of Paul's thought running ahead of his dictation, or of his strength of feeling overcoming his ability to express himself clearly (Ebeling 84 cites Luther appositely: 'Anyone who is inflamed while speaking cannot at the same time observe the grammatical rules'). [Dunn, 97]

But it was because of the false brethren, secretly brought in,
(διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους,)

The false brethren (τοὺς ψευδαδέλφους). Only here and 2 Cor. 11:26. Christians in name only; Judaizers; anti-Paulinists. The article marks them as a well-known class. [Vincent, 96]

“sham Christians” [NEB] “pseudo-Christians” [Phillips]

These ψευδαδέλφους were those who were contending that Titus must be circumcised. Pressure to do so. The Judaizers also fall under this pejorative. Cf. 1:8-9. Cf. also Jude 4 and my notes there.

Herein we see a class of “pseudo-Christians” which has been endemic in the church in one form or another. (“I believe in Jesus; I also believe in abortion rights and gay marriage.”)

Members of the Judean church who were, no doubt, baptized. But they looked upon the growing mission field of Gentile converts with suspicion. Luke identifies them as belonging to the sect of the Pharisees (Acts 15:5).

Interestingly, they were both “secretly brought in” and “had sneaked in:”

The ‘smuggled in’ does not add much clarification. It is a rare word, meaning ‘secretly brought in’ (see Betz 90, n. 305). It probably indicates an action initiated by some other(s), but its time reference is uncertain. It could refer to their being brought into the Jesus movement itself, or to their introduction to the private meeting. Either way it suggests that among the established members of the Jerusalem church were some (James?) who acted as sponsor for these more traditionalist Jewish believers and who saw them as a means of maintaining a more traditional Jewish identity for the new movement in the face of Gentile incomers. All this still leaves us unclear as to whether Paul deliberately engineered the confrontation by bringing Titus with him; or whether the presence of the uncircumcised Titus among the Antioch delegation was seized upon by the ‘false brothers’ and their sponsor(s) as a test case. [Dunn, 98–99]

I find it hard to believe that any of the three pillars would have “sneaked them in” (contra Dunn above). Perhaps an outsider or a reference to the wiles of the devil.

Paul does not encourage us to ask who smuggled them in; his language suggests that the initiative and the responsibility were their own, when he goes on to say that ‘they infiltrated

(παρεισῆλθον) into our company to spy out the freedom (ἐλευθερία) which we have in Christ Jesus'. This freedom characterizes the life which springs from the gospel of free grace; in this atmosphere of freedom a Gentile believer can associate with Jewish believers, even in Jerusalem, without any one's raising the question of circumcision: Jewish and Gentile believers can enjoy table-fellowship together without any mention of restrictive food-laws. The freedom which we have 'in Christ Jesus'—'in the fellowship of Christ Jesus' (NEB); see notes on 3:26–28—is the freedom with which 'Christ has set us free' (5:1). [Bruce, 112]

who had sneaked in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus (οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπήσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,)

οLXX. Strabo (xvii. 1) uses it as an epithet of Ptolemy, "the sneak." Comp. παρεισάξουσιν shall privily bring in, 2 Pet. 2:1; and παρεισεδύσαν crept in privily, Jude 4. [Vincent, 96]

Freedom/Liberty = from the law / justification by faith alone.

This word has the negative sense of spying in the two instances in which it is found in the LXX (2 Sam 10:3; 1 Chr 19:3). Betz points out that we have "military language turned into political metaphors," so that the false brothers are "like undercover agents and conspirators." [Schreiner, 125]

Believers enjoy freedom (ἐλευθερία) - a major theme in Galatians (cf. 4:22,23,26,31; 5:1,13). It stands in contrast to slavery (4:1,7,22,23,24,25,31; 5:1). Schreiner writes that "In every context, including here, freedom means freedom from the law."

Freedom is a much-repeated theme of the New Testament. In Christ believers "have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6), because "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). "If therefore the Son shall make you free," Jesus said, "you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Christian freedom is not license. When we become free in Christ we lose our freedom to sin, of which we were once a slave. In Christ, "having been freed from sin, [we] become slaves of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). "For you were called to freedom, brethren," Paul explains: "only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh" (Gal. 5:13). Peter expresses the same truth in these words: "Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond-slaves of God" (1 Pet. 2:16). MacArthur, 39]

in order to enslave us. (ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν,)

Hence we have a service which is not a matter of choice for the one who renders it, which he has to perform whether he likes or not, because he is subject as a slave to an alien will, to the will of his owner. [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 261]

Note the slavery of law-oriented false gospels, such as Rome / baptismal regeneration
Difference between salvation by works and works being an evidence of salvation.

In Galatians 3–4 Paul argues that subjection to the law does not bring freedom but enslaves. Requiring the law for salvation does not free people from sin but places them under the reign of sin. Reverting to the law is a yoke of slavery because human beings cannot keep the demands of the law. Hence, they groan under the law's demands, which they cannot fulfill. The freedom and liberty of the gospel were at stake when the opponents in Jerusalem tried to insist that Titus be circumcised. [Schreiner, 125]

Connection to the later Jewish sect, the Ebionites?

Some have argued for a direct line of continuity between the legalistic opponents Paul confronted in his day and the later Ebionites, a group of Jewish Christian heretics in the next century who denied the pre-existence of Christ and his virgin birth.¹⁰⁹ Eusebius said that the Ebionites “insisted on the complete observation of the law, and did not think that they would be saved by faith in Christ alone.”¹¹⁰ Not surprisingly, they disparaged Paul's writings and rejected him as an apostate from the law. The Ebionite movement represents a later stage of the Jewish Christian heresy Paul confronted in his day. However, there is clearly a line of progression from the former to the latter. Having abandoned a high doctrine of salvation by grace, a low Christology inevitably followed. A low view of sin invariably implied an attenuated doctrine of atonement. Once the work of Christ has been diminished, there is little reason to insist on the full deity of his person. [George, 150–151]

110 Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926), 261–63.

The sharpness of Paul's polemic and the crucial nature of the issues involved are evident in Paul's contrast between ‘our freedom in Christ Jesus’ and the motive he imputed to the ‘false brothers’ (‘that they might enslave us’). For a Greek readership this was a most emotive chord to strike, since the distinction between slave and free was fundamental in Greek thought and the idealization of freedom was axiomatic in Hellenistic self-perception (TDNT ii.261–4; see also on 1:10). So too for most Jews, the idealization of the golden age of independence under David and the memory of the success of the Maccabean freedom fighters must have given Paul's language a similar resonance. Paul himself clearly experienced his new faith in Christ as a ‘liberation’; this is one of the most consistent notes in his major letters, often with a similar depth of feeling expressed (Rom. 6:17–22; 7:3; 8:2, 21; 1 Cor. 7:22; 9:1, 19; 10:29; 2 Cor. 3:17), and is a central emphasis of this letter in particular (Gal. 4:7, 26, 30–1; 5:1, 13). [Dunn, 100]

Titus was a test case. It is true that he was an uncircumcised Gentile, but he was a converted Christian. Having believed in Jesus, he had been accepted by God in Christ, and that, Paul said, was enough. Nothing further was necessary for his salvation, as the Council of Jerusalem was later to confirm (see Acts 15). [Stott, 43]

Luther suggested that Paul regarded Titus as a test case: ‘he took him along then, in order to prove that grace was equally sufficient for Gentiles and Jews, whether in circumcision or without circumcision’ *Vorlesung, ad loc.*, quoted by H. Schlier, *Galater*, 65 n. 5). [Bruce, 107–108]

2:5 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

οἷς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν εἴξαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ, ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαμείνη πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

οἷς (ὅς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Masculine Dative Plural).
οὐδὲ (οὐδὲ = not even || Adverb).

πρὸς ὥραν (ῥα = hour || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

εἴξαμεν (εἶχω = to yield || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 1P). Hapax.

τῇ ὑποταγῇ, (ὑποταγή = subjection || Noun: Feminine Dative Singular).

ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια (ἀλήθεια || Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular).

τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (Noun: Neuter Genitive Singular).

διαμείνη (διαμενω = to remain || Verb: Aorist Active Subjunctive, 3S). Sense: to persist, persevere.

πρὸς ὑμᾶς. (συ || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Accusative Plural).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

We did not yield to them in submission for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

We did not yield to them in submission for even an hour, (οἷς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν εἴξαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ.)

To be subject to preachers of a false gospel is to be in subjection to a false gospel itself. There's no dichotomy between accepting the teachers and accepting the teaching. Danger of ecumenical partnerships based on anything but the truth of the gospel.

2:5 οἷς οὐδέ {A}. The omission of οἷς in several witnesses (symp Marcion Greek mssacc. to Ambrosiaster Ephraem) was probably deliberate, in order to rectify the anacoluthon. Omission of οὐδέ, whether with or without omission of οἷς, is confined chiefly to Western witnesses (D* itd Marius Victorinus Latin mssacc. to Jerome Augustine Primasius Latin mssacc. to Cassiodorus, acc. to Claudius), and seems to have occurred when certain scribes thought it necessary—in view of the apostle's principle of accommodation (1 Cor 9:20–23)—to find here an analogue to the circumcision of Timothy (Ac 16:3). Since, however, the resulting meaning (“Because of the false brethren ... I yielded for a brief time”) seems to be distinctly contrary both to the drift of the apostle's argument and to his temperament, the Committee had little hesitation in adopting the reading οἷς οὐδέ, which is decisively supported by all known Greek manuscripts except D* and by the preponderant weight of versional and patristic witnesses. [Metzger, 522–523]

so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. (ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαμείνη πρὸς ὑμᾶς.)

“truth of the gospel” used again in 2:14. Later (2:15–21) Paul would spell out the implications of this in terms of justification by faith.

How did that decision re: Titus affect the truth as it related to the Galatians? Note Paul's pastoral care here (cf. 2 Cor 11:28–29).

At the time of the Reformation the doctrine of justification was again at stake in the confessional struggles of that age. Like Paul, Luther and the other Reformers refused to “budge the least little bit”¹¹² on such an essential point of the Christian faith. Against those who urged concessions in the interest of an outward peace, Luther explained the reasons for what we might call his sanctified stubbornness: “For the issue before us is grave and vital; it involves the death of the Son of God, who, by the will and command of the Father, became flesh, was crucified, and died for the sins of the world. If faith yields on this point, the death of the Son of God will be in vain. Then it is only a fable that Christ is the Savior of the world. Then God is a liar, for he has not lived up to his promises. Therefore our stubbornness on this issue is pious and holy; for by it we are striving to preserve the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to keep the truth of the gospel. If we lose this, we lose God, Christ, all the promises, faith, righteousness, and eternal life.”¹¹³ [George, 152–153] Both footnotes point to *LW* 26.90–91.

Looking back from the perspective of two thousand years of church history, it is hard for us to see what was so decisively at stake in the whole debate over circumcision. It appears more like a tempest in the teapot of late antiquity, an obscure issue no longer relevant to our present concerns. For one thing, Paul's position seems clearly to have won the day, not only with reference to the noncircumcision of Titus but also in the church at large. By the early second century, the Epistle of Barnabas could say that “the circumcision in which they [i.e., the Jews] trusted has been abolished.”¹¹⁴ With the spiritualization of circumcision and the growing Gentile majority in the church, the intensity of the circumcision debate in Paul's day became more and more remote.

Today it would seem ridiculous for anyone to insist that all non-Jewish males be circumcised before they could become Christians or unite with the church. However, this historical development should not blind us to the fact that while the terms of the debate have changed, Paul's struggle for Christian liberty and the truth of the gospel is far from being a dead issue. As Luther's comments show, human beings are forever trying to add something to God's completed work of salvation. It may be Jesus Christ and the mass, or Jesus Christ and water baptism, or Jesus Christ and good works, or Jesus Christ and a charismatic experience. Paul's argument is that nothing, absolutely nothing, can be mingled with Christ as a ground of our acceptance with God. Our hope is built on nothing less—and nothing more—than Jesus' blood and righteousness. [George, 153]

2:6 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

Ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι, - ὅποιοι ποτε ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει - ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἱ δοκοῦντες οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο,

Ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων (δοκεω = to think, believe, suppose, consider || Participle: Masculine Genitive Plural Present Active). Attributive Participle. Sense: “to be influential, to be/become considered worthy of high esteem.” Cf. repetition of the phrase in vv. 2,6,9). Most translations render this in the past-tense to maintain the flow of the narrative.

εἶναι (εἶμι || Verb: Present Active Infinitive). Substantival Infinitive.

τι, - (τις || Indefinite Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

ὅποιοι (ὅποιος = of what sort, as || Adjective: Masculine Nominative Plural).

ποτε (ποτε = once, formerly, ever || Adverb).

ἦσαν (εἶμι || Verb: Imperfect Active Indicative, 3P).

οὐδὲν (οὐδέις = no || Neuter Accusative Singular).

μοι (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Singular).

διαφέρει· (διαφέρω = to differ / with μοι = makes no difference to me || Verb: Present Active Indicative, 3S).

πρόσωπον (πρόσωπον || Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular).

[ὁ] θεοῦ ---

ἀνθρώπου (Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

οὐ (οὐ = not || Adverb).

λαμβάνει – (λαμβάνω || Verb: Present Active Indicative, 3S).

ἐμοὶ γὰρ (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Singular). Emphatic.

οἱ δοκοῦντες (δοκεω = to think, believe, suppose, consider || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural Present Active). Attributive Participle. Sense: “to be influential, to be/become considered worthy of high esteem.” Cf. repetition of the phrase in vv. 2,6,9).

οὐδὲν (οὐδέις = nothing, no one, nobody, no || Adjective: Neuter Accusative Singular).

προσανέθεντο, (προσανατιθημι = to add, contribute || Verb: Aorist Middle Indicative, 3P).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But from those who were of reputation--what they were makes no difference to me (God is not a respecter of men)--for those of reputation contributed nothing to me.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Verses 6–10 return to the thoughts of vv. 1-2. These verses are one long sentence.

Summation:

The main point in 2:6–10 is that the men of repute added nothing to Paul’s gospel (2:6). This truth restates the main point of 2:1–5, where it was decided that Titus would not be circumcised.

In other words, the pillars of the church did not add to Paul's gospel by requiring circumcision. Not only did the pillars refuse to add anything to Paul's gospel, they also (2:7–9) specifically gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. In other words, they ratified the validity of Paul's gospel—for two reasons (marked by causal participles). (1) They recognized that he had been entrusted by God with the gospel for the Gentiles (2:7). Indeed, Paul's calling to the Gentiles was on the same plane as Peter's calling to preach the gospel to the Jews (2:8). (2) They recognized Paul had been endowed by God with grace for ministry (2:9). [Schreiner, 118]

Something in the grammar and words used that would indicate that this was a highlight in Paul's argument. This was an important experience. Cf. George, 153.

But from those who were of reputation

(Ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι, -)

Not demeaning. The context demonstrates that there is a marked difference between Paul's view of the pseudo-brethren and the pillars. May mean, as the Jerusalem Bible renders it, “these people who are acknowledged leaders.” Illustration of today's “men of reputation” confirming something I have been teaching. Or, perhaps this was the estimation of the Judaizers who were saying that the “pillars” were (past tense) of reputation because they had personally been with Jesus. Cf. “what they were makes no difference to me...”

--what they were makes no difference to me; God is not a respecter of men--

(ὅποιοί ποτε ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει)

Λαμβάνειν πρόσωπον to receive or accept the face is a Hebraism. See on Jas. 2:1. In O.T. both in a good and a bad sense; to be gracious, and to show favour from personal or partisan motives. In N.T. only here and L. 20:21, both in a bad sense. Similar Hebraistic expressions are βλέπειν εἰς πρόσωπον to look at the face, Matt. 22:16: θαυμάζειν πρόσωπα to admire the countenances, Jude 16: καυχᾶσθαι ἐν προσώπῳ to glory in the face, 2 Cor. 5:12. [Vincent, 98]

1 Samuel 16:7 and parallels: “But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'”

Paul means no disrespect. He is merely asserting his own independence of them, thus by contrast setting off his apostolic authority in the light of theirs. [Wuest, Ga 2:6]

Paul enunciates a basic principle that affects how he views the whole matter of human honor rating systems at vs. 6b—literally ‘God does not accept the face of human beings’. This is clearly enough a Hebrew expression that comes out of a culture where giving and accepting of face is an important value. It was also a culture where God's people were reminded God has no regard for the status, ascribed or achieved, of human beings (cf. the LXX passages where ‘face’ is discussed—Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17; 16:19; 2 Chron. 19:7; Job 13:10; Ps. 81:2; Prov. 18:5; Mal. 2:9). The meaning of this key phrase is not so much that God shows no partiality as a

judge although that is a Biblical notion as well, but that he does not evaluate human beings on the basis of their ‘face’, their honor rating or credentials. It is interesting that in the NT ‘accepting face’ is seen as a bad thing. As Lightfoot says it signifies giving regard to the external features of a person’s life—wealth, status, rank, power, authority, gender, race and the like.¹⁵⁷ The opposite of this is considering a person’s real intrinsic character, or from a Christian point of view considering what they are by and through the grace of God. By placing the word Θεὸς in an emphatic position Paul is contrasting human ways of evaluating people with God’s way. [Witherington, 139–140]

for those of reputation contributed nothing to me.

(- ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἱ δοκοῦντες οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο,)

As it pertains to the gospel.

It was, therefore, a formidable weapon for shaking weak consciences, when the doctrine which Paul preached was falsely declared by impostors to be at variance with the doctrine of the apostles. Multitudes in this manner fell away. The certainty of faith, indeed, does not depend on the agreement of human opinions; but, on the contrary, it is our duty to rest in the naked truth of God, so that neither men nor all the angels together, could shake our faith. Yet ignorant persons, who have imperfectly understood, and never have cordially embraced, sound doctrine, feel the temptation to be almost irresistible, while teachers of acknowledged eminence are found to entertain opposite views. Nay, strong believers are sometimes powerfully affected by this stratagem of Satan, when he holds out to their view the “strife and divisions” (1 Corinthians 3:3) of those who ought to have been “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” (1 Corinthians 1:10.) It is hard to tell how many were driven from the gospel, how many had their faith shaken, by the mournful controversy about the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, because, on a question of the highest moment, very distinguished men were observed to take opposite sides. [Calvin]

2:7 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ἀλλὰ τὸναντίον ἰδόντες ὅτι πεπίστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς,

ἀλλὰ τὸναντίον (τὸναντίον = on the contrary, these || Adverb).
ἰδόντες (εἰδόν = to see || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural Aorist Active).
ὅτι πεπίστευμαι (πίστευω || Verb: Perfect Passive Indicative, 1S). Divine passive.
τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (εὐαγγέλιον || Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular).
τῆς ἀκροβυστίας (ἀκροβυστία = uncircumcision || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).
καθὼς Πέτρος ---
τῆς περιτομῆς, (περιτομή || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, even as Peter to the circumcised,

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised,
(ἀλλὰ τὸναντίον ἰδόντες ὅτι πεπίστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας)

On the contrary = the anxious moment turned to positive affirmation.

‘They saw’, presumably from other reports (cf. 1:23) as well as Paul’s (2:2; cf. Acts 15:12), and presumably with at least some reference to observable signs of the Spirit’s presence among Paul’s converts (2:8–9; 3:2, 5; Williams, ‘Justification’ 98); perhaps also in the presence of Titus himself. [Dunn, 105]

The word committed is from *pepisteumai* (πεπίστευμαι) which latter is in the perfect tense, implying a permanent commission. This word was also a technical word used in the imperial government of Rome. The imperial secretary used the technical expression *pepisteumai* (πεπίστευμαι), I have been entrusted, the qualifying word being added which would designate the matter with which he was entrusted.⁸ The apostles were the imperial secretaries of the King of kings, the Lord Jesus, to whom was entrusted the writing and propagation of the New Testament message. [Wuest, Ga 2:7]

Perfect tense = recognition of God's work:

Paul was not entrusted with this assignment by the twelve apostles or by the Jerusalem church. What they recognized and affirmed was something that had already occurred in Paul’s life, namely, the divine commissioning he had received from Christ himself. [George, 160]

even as Peter to the circumcised, (καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς,)

Some, such as *Bauer*, falsely maintain that there are two gospels here: 1) to the circumcised which maintained the necessity of circumcision, and 2) to the uncircumcised which did not require the practice.

Excellent summary by George:

In describing the content of this recognition, Paul used an expression found nowhere else in his writings. He had been entrusted with the “gospel of the uncircumcision” just as Peter had been assigned the “gospel of the circumcision.” But how can this claim be squared with Paul’s earlier insistence that there really is no “other” gospel except the distorted, counterfeit gospel of the false apostles that in reality is a “bad-news gospel” (dysangelion) because it can only lead to eternal condemnation in hell (1:8–9). What could Paul have meant when he spoke here of one gospel for the Gentiles and another gospel for the Jews? The misunderstanding of this expression has been the source of numerous errors in the history of biblical interpretation. Let us look briefly at three of these major misunderstandings.

1. The Gnostic interpretation. Many of the early Gnostic teachers latched on to Paul as their favorite apostle. In their view he had been entrusted with the “pneumatic” gospel of uncircumcision, while Peter was laden with the “psychic” gospel of the Jews. The radical dualism of Gnostic soteriology thus split the gospel into two irreconcilable parts, the true gospel being the secret gnosis conveyed by the secret writings and esoteric doctrines of the Gnostic teachers, the other gospel being the doctrine of Christ proclaimed by the orthodox Christian community and summarized in the Apostles’ Creed.

2. The Hegelian interpretation. In the nineteenth century F. C. Baur and his disciples interpreted the history of the early church in terms of the Hegelian dialectic. According to this view, Peter and the church at Jerusalem represented the traditionalist pole in early Christianity (thesis), while Paul and his circle stood at the opposite progressivist pole (antithesis), with the emergence of an orthodox Christian consensus in the second century seen as a kind of convergence between the two (synthesis). Galatians 2:7 is a key text for imposing this kind of bifurcated grid onto New Testament history.

3. The Ultradispensationalist interpretation. Dispensationalism, in its extreme forms, is a way of dividing the history of salvation into various epochs, each with its own distinct requirement of salvation. According to one dispensationalist line of argument, the gospel of circumcision that Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost was in fact a message of grace plus works (e.g., “Repent and be baptized ... for the forgiveness of your sins,” Acts 2:38). However, with the calling of Paul, this message was superseded by the gospel of sola gratia. On this reading, Gal 2:7 reflects a transitional period between the dispensation of law under the old covenant and the new dispensation of sheer grace that was inaugurated primarily through the preaching of Paul. [George, 160–161]

Lightfoot correctly notes that this “denotes a distinction of sphere, and not a difference of type.”

The gospel Paul preached was identical with that proclaimed by the primitive church at Jerusalem. Just as the leaders of that community recognized him and his unique role in the spread of the gospel, so too he elsewhere associated himself with them as a witness to the resurrection and gave thanks to God for how he had worked mightily through all of his

apostolic colleagues: “Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preached, and this is what you believed” (1 Cor 15:11). [George, 161]

The only way that one could have different gospels is if they are based on some sort of work, or merit. The issue with the law, however interpreted (Mosaic or moral). But a gospel based entirely on grace alone and a salvation received through faith alone is unitary regardless of culture or time.

One must bear in mind, however, that there were Jewish colonies all over the Roman Empire including in both Antioch and Galatia, and this meant that Peter’s missionary work would necessarily overlap with Paul’s in the Diaspora, with both of them going to some of the same cities such as Antioch or Corinth or Rome (cf. Gal. 2:11–14; 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22; Rom. 15:14–29). One must also recognize that since Paul says not only that he became the Jew to the Jew in order to win some Jews (1 Cor. 9:20) but also that he suffered punishment from synagogues (2 Cor. 11:24), he probably had preached in synagogues both to Jews and to Gentiles. There was probably considerably more overlap in these Petrine and Pauline spheres of ministry than one might suspect on a superficial inspection of the matter.¹⁶¹ In other words, Paul did not take this agreement to mean that he would never preach to Jews, or that Peter would never address Gentiles. We are speaking of the major focus and purpose of their respective ministries. [Witherington, 141]

2:8 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη,

ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας (ἐνεργεω || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular Aorist Active).

Πέτρῳ – Dative of advantage.

εἰς ἀποστολὴν (Noun: Masculine Accusative Plural). Adverbial Accusative of Reference/Respect.

τῆς περιτομῆς (περιτομη || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

ἐνήργησεν (ἐνεργεω || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 3S).

καὶ ἐμοὶ (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Singular). Emphatic. Dative of advantage.

εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, (ἔθνος || Noun: Neuter Accusative Plural). Adverbial Accusative of Reference/Respect.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

(for He who worked for Peter in respect to [his] apostleship to the circumcised worked also for me in respect to the Gentiles),

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

(for He who worked for Peter in respect to [his] apostleship to the circumcised worked also for me in respect to the Gentiles), (ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη,)

Two apostles, followed by three pillars...

This verse provides evidence for the fact that early on Peter and Paul were commonly recognized as the two leading figures in the primitive church. In the Roman Catholic calendar of saints the two apostles share a common feast day, June 29, reflecting an ancient tradition that they were executed on the same day during the Neronian persecution at Rome (A.D. 64). If this tradition be true, then the lives of these two great missionary-apostles converged in the common witness of martyrdom although they had been led by divine providence to labor in different places and among diverse constituencies.¹²⁸

After playing such a dominant role in the early chapters of Acts, Peter disappears from the stage after the Jerusalem Council in chap. 15 as the spotlight falls on Paul and his missionary journeys leading finally to Rome. We do know, of course, that Peter and Paul were together on another occasion at Antioch (2:11–14). We also know that Peter later referred to the writings of Paul, describing some of them as “hard to understand” (2 Pet 3:15–16). It seems likely that the two men crossed paths in other venues as well, including Corinth, where Paul acknowledged the existence of a fractious “Cephas party” (1 Cor 1:12; 9:4).

The decision to divide the missionary task of the church into two major thrusts, one led by Peter to the Jews and the other by Paul to the Gentiles, was a matter of practical necessity and wise stewardship. It would be a mistake to press the distinction too far, as though Peter and the

apostles with him would be allowed to witness to Jews only, while Paul and Barnabas could speak to Gentiles only. “It was not that the apostles said, ‘All right Paul, you preach the noncircumcision gospel to the Gentiles, but stay away from the Jews, that’s our territory.’ The language rather suggests that they said: ‘Right, Paul, you go to the Gentiles with the noncircumcision gospel, and we will go to the Jews with the circumcision gospel.’ ”¹²⁹ We know in fact that the gospel had first broken through to the Gentiles through the witness of Peter in his preaching to the household of Cornelius. Likewise, Paul continued to preach to the Jews, finding in their synagogues many God-fearers and proselytes who responded to his message and who frequently became the beachhead of a new Christian community in their city. Thus the missionary strategy worked out at this conference should not be taken as a “religio-political restriction on either side.”¹³⁰ It was a decision taken in the interest of the maximal fulfillment of the Great Commission that Jesus had given to the entire church.

While the strategic division of labor between the two apostles was the practical outcome of the conference, its theological basis was rooted in a more fundamental recognition: the same God who was at work in the ministry of Peter was also at work in the ministry of Paul. The two apostles proclaimed the same gospel because they worshiped the same God. While every Christian has an important role to play in missions and evangelism, we must never forget that Jesus himself is the great Missionary, the Son who has been sent from the Father; and the Holy Spirit is the true Evangelist, the divine One who convicts and converts. [George, 162–163]

Luther in his commentary on Galatians:

“The Apostle repeats: ‘I did not so confer with the apostles that they taught me anything. What could they possibly teach me since Christ by His revelation had taught me all things? It was but a conference, and no disputation. I learned nothing, neither did I defend my cause. I only stated what I had done, that I had preached to the Gentiles faith in Christ, without the Law, and that in response to my preaching the Holy Ghost came down upon the Gentiles. When the apostles heard this, they were glad that I had taught the truth.’”

2:9 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

καὶ γνόντες τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι, Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης, οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι, δεξιᾶς ἔδωκαν ἐμοὶ καὶ Βαρναβᾶ κοινωνίας, ἵνα ἡμεῖς εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, αὐτοὶ δὲ εἰς τὴν περιτομήν·

καὶ γνόντες (γινωσκω || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural Aorist Active).
τὴν χάριν (Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).
τὴν δοθεῖσάν (διδωμι = to give || Participle: Feminine Accusative Singular Aorist Passive). Attributive.
μοι, (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Singular).
Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης, (Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular).
οἱ δοκοῦντες (δοκεω = to think, believe, suppose, consider || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural Present Active). Attributive.
στῦλοι (στῦλος = pillar, frame, pole || Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural). Predicate Nominative.
εἶναι, (εἶμι || Verb: Present Active Infinitive). Substantival Infinitive.
δεξιᾶς (δεξιᾶς = on the right hand or side || Adjective: Feminine Accusative Plural).
ἔδωκαν (διδωμι = to give || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 3P).
ἐμοὶ (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Singular). Emphatic.
καὶ Βαρναβᾶ (Noun: Masculine Dative Singular). Dative of Indirect Object.
κοινωνίας, (κοινωνία || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).
ἵνα ἡμεῖς (ἐγώ = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Nominative Plural).
εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, (ἔθνος || Noun: Neuter Accusative Plural).
αὐτοὶ δὲ (αὐτός || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Plural).
εἰς τὴν περιτομήν· (περιτομή || Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

and knowing the grace given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are considered to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we [should go] to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

and knowing the grace given to me, (καὶ γνόντες τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι,)

James and Cephas and John, (Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης,)

At least 3 men named “James” in t/NT:

1. An apostle of Jesus; James the son of Zebedee, the elder brother of John. Jesus referred to James and John as “sons of thunder”, probably an indication of their rather brash disposition. (They were t/ones who wanted to call fire down from heaven to consume a Samaritan village.) This James was the first of

the 12 to be martyred (about A.D. 44), by order of King Herod Agrippa I of Judea (Acts 12:2). Inner-circle of Peter, James, John.

2. Another apostle - James the son of Alphaeus, commonly called James the Less (or James the Younger). He's t/most obscure of t/3.

3. James, the brother of Jesus (Gal. 1:19). Early Xn writers refer to him as Jesus' brother (½). Later on, most of the ancient Church rejected this because of the belief in the perpetual virginity of Mary. This is t/James who wrote t/epistle bearing his name.

The leaders are finally identified as James, Peter, and John. James is probably the same as the one identified as the Lord's brother in 1:19. John is probably the Apostle of that name, the brother of another James (Acts 12:1–2), one of the sons of Zebedee. The order of their names probably suggests their position in the Jerusalem church. [UBS, 37]

Schreiner offers a different view:

The John mentioned here is almost certainly the son of Zebedee, who plays such a major role in the gospels. This is the only occasion in which he is mentioned in the Pauline letters, and he does not play a central role in Galatians. [Schreiner, 129]

Building on Barrett's argument and extending it further, R. D. Aus has argued that the three pillar apostles in this verse were deliberately selected by the Jerusalem church as an analog to the three patriarchs of the Old Testament, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. [George, 164]

If one takes chapter 2 to be the Acts 15 view, then James the brother of John would not be a possibility, as he had been killed by Herod (Acts 12:2; Herod reigned from 41–4). Viewing Galatians 2 = Acts 11 makes him a possibility here, however. Since Paul had already mentioned James as “the Lord's brother” (1:19) it is likely who he has in view here. The same James who gives a summation of the arguments and the conclusion of the matter with the Judaizers (Acts 15:13–21).

As to John:

John must be the son of Zebedee, brother of the martyred James. As well as being one of the inner circle of Jesus' disciples (Peter, James and John), he is recalled by Luke as a regular companion of Peter in the early days of the new movement (Acts 3:1, 3–4, 11; 4:13, 19; 8:14). He always appears in a secondary role, and though his presence in the list of ‘pillar’ apostles indicates his stature and influence, he has left much less impact on the earliest decades of Christianity than the other two. Later tradition placed him in Ephesus (Eusebius, EH III.i.1; xxiii) and linked him with the Johannine writings of the NT as author (III.xxiv). And while his influence on the earlier stages of the Johannine Gospel tradition is at least probable, theories regarding his specific connection with John's Gospel and the Johannine epistles have to depend more on guesswork than hard evidence. [Dunn, 109]

who are considered to be pillars, (οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι.)

These three men are described as those who seemed to be the leaders (literally, a figurative expression “who are reputed to be pillars”), a description which most commentaries interpret as synonymous with similar expressions in 2:2 and 2:6. “Pillars” is a designation of those upon whom responsibility rests; it was used by Jews in speaking of the great teachers of the Law. [UBS, 37]

Likely the same men Paul refers to in 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11.

What does Paul mean in saying that they were “reputed to be pillars”? Aus calls attention to traditions in Second Temple Judaism where the three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) are the three pillars for the nation and even the world.⁵¹ Therefore, it seems that the term “pillars” (στῦλοι) in a Jewish context suggests that these three were the foundation of God’s new temple, i.e., the new people of God.⁵² Such a sentiment fits with Eph 2:20, where the church is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” Further, there may also be a hint here that the new people of God, the true Israel, is established on a new foundation. Therefore, the true family of Abraham (Gal 3:6–9, 14), the true Israel of God (6:16), consists of those who belong to the new temple. [Schreiner, 129–130]

The term στῦλοι is interesting and would seem to suggest that this Jerusalem triumvirate were seen as the main supporting columns in the eschatological and ‘spiritual’ Temple of God currently under construction by God through the Gospel about Christ. As Barrett rightly points out, the word ‘pillars’ frequently appears in the LXX in reference to the supports of the tabernacle and later the columns of the Temple. Note especially the language about the Solomonic temple in 1 Kings. 7:15–22; 2 Chron. 3:15–17 (cf. 2 Kings. 23:3; 2 Chron. 34:31 on the names of the columns—Jachin and Boaz). This conclusion is supported by what we find in Rev. 3:12 (cf. 1 Clement 5:2).¹⁶⁸ It must be remembered that there was considerable speculation about the destruction and reconstitution of the Temple in the eschatological age (Ezek. 40–48; Jub. 1.17–28; 1 En. 90.28–29; 11QTemple; Test. Ben. 9.2), and Jesus himself seems to have had something to say on this very matter (Mk. 14:58; Jn. 2:19; Acts 6:14), as did Paul who saw the body of Christ as also the Temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16–17; 2 Cor. 6:16 cf. Heb. 3:6; 10:21; 1 Pet. 2:5).¹⁶⁹ In other words, calling these three men the pillars was no small honor rating. It meant they were holding up and holding together the people of God being now renewed and restored in Christ. It invested in these men an enormous importance and implied they had tremendous power and authority. [Witherington, 143]

gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, (δεξιὰς ἔδωκαν ἐμοὶ καὶ Βαρναβᾶ κοινωνίας,)

They gave the right hands of fellowship (δεξιὰς ἔδωκαν κοινωνίας). The phrase only here in N.T. A token of alliance in the apostolic office of preaching and teaching. The giving of the right hand in pledge was not a distinctively Jewish custom. It appears as early as Homer. Deissmann cites an inscription from Pergamum, 98 B.C., in which the Pergamenes offer to adjust the strife between Sardes and Ephesus, and send a mediator δοῦναι τὰς χεῖρας εἰς σύλλυσιν to give hands for a treaty. See δεξιὰν or δεξιὰς διδόναι, 1 Macc. 6:58; 11:50, 62; 13:50; 2 Macc. 11:26; 12:11; 13:22; and δεξ. λαμβάνειν to receive right hand or hands, 1 Macc. 11:66; 13:50; 2 Macc. 12:12; 14:19.* The custom prevailed among the Persians, from whom it may have passed to the Jews. See Joseph. Antiq. xviii. 9, 3. Images of right hands clasped were

sometimes exchanged in token of friendship (see Xen. Anab. ii. 4, 1). Tacitus (Hist. i. 54) says: “The state of the Lingones had sent, according to an ancient institution, right hands, as gifts to the legions, a signal token of good will.” On Roman coins often appear two hands joined, with various inscriptions, as Exercituum Fides; Concordia; Consensus. To give the hand in confirmation of a promise occurs Ez. 10:19. In Isa. 62:8, God swears by his right hand. [Vincent, 100]

On the other hand, the agreement of all who teach in the Church is a powerful aid for the confirmation of faith. Since, therefore, Satan was laboring so insidiously to hinder the progress of the gospel, Paul resolved to meet him. When he had succeeded in demonstrating that he held the same views with all the apostles, every hinderance was removed. Weak disciples were no longer perplexed by the inquiry, whom they ought to follow. His meaning may be thus summed up: “That my former labors might not be thrown away and rendered useless, I have set at rest the question which disturbed many minds, whether I or Peter deserved your confidence; for in all that I had ever taught we were perfectly at one.” If many teachers in our own day were as heartily desirous as Paul was to edify the Church, they would take more pains to be agreed among themselves. [Calvin]

With what effrontery then will the Papists boast that they possess the gospel, which is not only corrupted by many inventions, but more than adulterated by many wicked doctrines? Let us remember that it is not enough to retain the name of the gospel, and some kind of summary of its doctrines, if its solid purity do not remain untouched. Where are the men who, by pretended moderation, endeavor to bring about a reconciliation between us and the Papists? as if the doctrine of religion, like a matter affecting money or property, could be compromised. With what abhorrence would such a transaction have been regarded by Paul, who affirms that it is not the true gospel, if it is not pure! [John Calvin, Galatians, comment on 2:5]

The word “sinister” is a Latin word for “left-handed.”

so that we [should go] to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. (ἵνα ἡμεῖς εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, αὐτοὶ δὲ εἰς τὴν περιτομήν·)

The implications of a law-free gospel were grasped most clearly by Paul, though it is clear by Peter’s comments in Acts 15:7–11 that he shared the same view as Paul. [Schreiner, 124]

Common missionary strategy.

2:10 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

μόνον τῶν πτωχῶν ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν, ὃ καὶ ἐσπούδασα αὐτὸ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι.

μόνον (μόνος = only, alone || Adverb).

τῶν πτωχῶν (πτωχος = poor || Noun: Masculine Genitive Plural).

ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν, (μνημονεω = to remember || Verb: Present Active Subjunctive, 1P). “This is the only instance in the New Testament where this word means 'to remember' in the sense of 'benefit or care for.' The force of the tense and mode of the verb causes us to translate, 'that we should keep on remembering the poor.' Paul and Barnabas had done this before when they brought relief to the poor at Jerusalem on a previous occasion (Acts 11:27–30).” [Wuest, Ga 2:10]

ὃ (ὅς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative/Accusative Singular).

καὶ ἐσπούδασα (σπούδαζω = to be eager, zealous || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 1S). “The word forward is from spoudazo (σπουδαζο) which means not only 'to be willing, to do with eagerness,' but 'to make diligent effort.’” [Wuest, Ga 2:10]

αὐτὸ (αὐτος || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Neuter Accusative Singular).

τοῦτο (τουτο = this || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

ποιῆσαι. (ποιεω || Verb: Aorist Active Infinitive).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

[They] only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

[They] only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do. (μόνον τῶν πτωχῶν ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν, ὃ καὶ ἐσπούδασα αὐτὸ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι.)

(ὃ—αὐτο τουτο [ho—auto touto]). Repetition of relative and demonstrative, tautology, “which this very thing.” [ATR, Ga 2:10]

Paul had earlier demonstrated that he was more than willing to aid the poor in Judea (cf. Acts 11:19-30 and the prophecy of Agabus in connection to his “revelation” of v. 2).

There is only one condition appended to the agreement: that Paul and Barnabas should remember the poor and needy (see Acts 11:30 and 2 Cor 9:1). These are the poor Christians in Jerusalem, a fact made clear by TEV (compare NEB “their poor”). The needy in their group must be made somewhat more specific in some languages: “the poor people among the believers there in Jerusalem,” or “the poor people who belonged to their group of believers.” [UBS, 38]

Seeing this visit as the famine relief visit in Acts 11 implies that the present tense of the verb be emphasized (continue to remember the poor). Cf. Acts 11:27–30.

Paul and Barnabas were asked to remember “the poor,” a shorthand expression for “the poor among the saints in Jerusalem” (Rom 15:26). From its earliest days the Jerusalem church faced a condition of grinding poverty, as can be seen from the dispute over widows receiving sufficient food and the practice of sharing all things in common to care for the needy (Acts 4:32–35; 6:1–4). A land of soil deprivation and poor irrigation, Judea was also hard hit in this period of history by famine, war, and overpopulation. To all this must be added the ravishing of the church in the persecutions directed by Paul and other leaders of the Jewish religious community. So chronic was the economic deprivation of the Judean Christians that they became known collectively as “the Poor.”¹³⁶

Paul indicated that the request to remember the poor was not received as an onerous burden but rather as an activity he had already begun and was eager to carry forward. We know from his later writings that Paul devoted much time and energy to the collection of a special offering for the Jerusalem Christians (Rom 15:25–33; 1 Cor 16:1–4; 2 Cor 8:9). The churches of Galatia were among the Pauline congregations who contributed to this relief effort. For Paul this effort was an important witness for Christian unity, a tangible way for Gentile Christians to express materially their appreciation for the great blessing in which they had shared spiritually with their brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. Paul himself carried this love gift to Jerusalem on his last visit to that city, during the course of which he was arrested and began the long journey to Rome that ended with his execution.¹³⁷ [George, 165–166]