

Title: "Hypocrisy, Gentiles, and the Gospel" (Part 1)

Passage: Galatians 2:11-13

Theme: Part four of Paul's defense of his 1:11-12 thesis

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{{Read Passage}}

### [i] Difficulty of Galatians

Going into this study I had no idea how difficult the first chapt. ½ would be to preach. Rem. back when we went thru Ruth – that was a challeng – I'm not near as adept at OT exegesis as I am at NT - & preaching through historical narr. is also something I'm not used to (didactic). Here in Gal. we've been faced w/a rather lengthy intro. to t/epistle consisting of TAP's personal biography. We don't have direct teaching; we don't have poetic or proverbial or prophetic material – & it's not even so much historical narrative as it is biographical.

TAP defending his apostleship / right to defend t/gospel against all oppos. by means of what happened in his life.

“Some people who read [this] will no doubt be tempted to be impatient. It seems to them no more than a complicated regmarole. A visit of Paul to Jerusalem in the first century AD, the question of whether Titus was circumcised or not, a consultation between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles—it all appears very remote and quite unrelated to [our modern-day] problems. But this is not so.” [John Stott, 46]

### [ii] I was 30 years old when I first started preaching (2 decades ago)

I rem. thinking, “when I'm well into my 40s I'll have this down.” Was I deceivd! 1 thing I've tried to improve on as I've grown older – I try to be as clear as poss. Think often of t/younger/less mature mems of my audience, as well as those who may be new to in-depth expos. preach.

[iii] I'm sensitive to the fact that there are parts of Scripture that just aren't going to preach with equal power and application

All Script. is equally inspired/author. but it's not all equally applicable to our lives. There's a place for everything in t/66 books of t/B. But not everything there has immed. applic. to our lives.

This is 1 reason why teachers of t/past as well as today fall prey to spiritualizing & allegorizing t/Bible. You can always sound profound & powerful by uncovering hidden meanings. That's not how God intended His Word to be handled. Bible is obj. truth that doesn't change, not subjective opinion driven by personal exper.

More common – at least today – is to gloss over t/tedious parts to get to sections that are more stirring. Sometimes that's like rushing through dinner just to get to t/dessert. I just can't do that.

[iv] My perspective is that preaching is about the big picture

It's not a snapshot (I have to hit a home run each week w/a sermon that's going to motivate & inspire everyone – they'll be on edge of seats – bad marriages will be rejuvenated; lives will be transformed; sinners converted). It's about building t/big picture into lives so that they know & understand every part of God's Word.

Why t/local CH is t/primary sphere of preaching & teaching. Nobody's going to preach through Gal. 1:18-24 at a conference / retreat. If ur speaking at a conf. you have 1 or 2 shots at ur audience. You preach a relevant topic or text that's germane to a specific occasion.

[v] All this to say – if you've found our study through Galatians to be a little plodding at some times and difficult at others – I feel your pain

We're in this for t/long-term & I guarantee you that if you hang in

there by t/time we're done w/this book you will have a very good understanding of not just some parts – but all of it. That is essential. I'm going to try to make this as relevant as I can, but hang on. We're going to up t/ante before long – justification; role of t/Law; freedom in X; what it means to live our lives by t/Spirit & not t/flesh – more in t/coming weeks.

[vi] Speaking of difficult: It's been a challenge to keep bringing you back to 1:11-12

After all, we're in chap. 2:11. Why do we keep going back to chap. 1 week after week. Because chap 1 is where we find t/context of what Paul writes. Specifically, 1:11-12 are found. to understanding all that follows from 1:13 thru chap. 2. Good news is that this should be t/last week that we plow again thru old soil.

[vii] 1:11-12 – Paul's Thesis

In these 2 vv. TAP gives main point he goes on to defend in chaps 1&2 **For I would have you to know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but [I received it] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Paul had evangelized these Galatians. They came to faith & CH's were est. as a result of Paul's preaching. False teachers arrived & began to contradict what Paul taught – namely by saying that he wasn't a top-tier A. These false prophets misrepresented what t/Jer. Ap's. taught by saying that they upheld both law & grace. And then they claimed that Paul once believed t/same thing, but had changed. Paul was under t/authority of Jerusalem, but went rogue. All of that wasn't true. But it was essential for Paul to est. that he didn't get his message from men; he got it directly from JC when he was converted in Damascus.

**[viii] Paul takes up the mantle of a defense attorney**

He announces his thesis [^] and then unfolds a 4-part defense of his ministry and message.

**[ix] 1:13-17 ==> Paul's First Defense "Jesus Not Jerusalem"**

He reminds his readers of his past: A Pharisee who quickly outranked his contemporaries in t/Law & zeal (1:13-14).

But he was utterly transformed. The God who elected him from eternity was pleased to reveal His Son, JC in him, calling him to be t/apostle to t/Gentiles.

When that happened, Paul didn't run off to Jer. to join t/fraternity of t/Apsls. He went off to t/Nabatean desert. Spent some time there before returning to Damascus.

Paul wasn't under t/authority of t/Jerusalem Apostles. He wasn't converted there // taught by t/likes of Peter/John/James.

When he was converted in Dam., he went to Arabia & back to Dam.

**[x] 1:18-24 ==> Paul's Second Defense "Only a Fortnight in Jerus"**

It wasn't until 3 years later (v. 18) that he went to Jerusalem – and that was to become acquainted with Peter and he only stayed 15 days (fortnight +1).

Paul's first trip to Jerusalem following his conversion was to be introduced to Peter – not to the gospel!

**[xi] Then we come to chapter 2:1-10 – Paul's Third Defense**

Paul's second trip to Jerusalem proves that there's harmony between Jerusalem and Antioch.

Up to this point, you might get t/impression that there was a rift between Paul and t/Jer. Apsles. That perhaps what they taught as to how a sinner can have peace w/God wasn't t/same. No ==>

The Pillars and Paul sing in unison.

### [xii] Paul's Third Defense: A Litmus Test in Jerusalem (2:1-10)

LT = Titus who becomes a test case as to whether a Gentile convert must be circumcised to be saved. 2:1-10 {review}

### I. Paul's Fourth Defense: Correcting Cephas in Syria (2:11-14)

Paul's apostolic authority is proven in the reproof of Peter in Antioch.

~Paul Reproves Peter the Pillar~

In 2:11-14 Paul gives (but likely doesn't complete – issue of where his quotation should end) his 4th defense of his 1:11-12 thesis. The main point is that he rebuffed Peter over the latter's hypocrisy in regard to the gospel.

Details leave many questions (“there is a lot that is unclear about his narrative” writes Moo [p. 141]).

John Calvin in his comment on Gal. 2:11 writes that Paul is replying to a false charge that he ==>

. . . was but an ordinary disciple, far below the rank of an apostle: for the reproof which he administered [to Peter] was an evidence that the parties were on an equal footing. . . . But the nature of the reproof deserves notice. Paul did not simply reprove Peter, as a Christian might reprove a Christian, but he did it officially, as the phrase is; that

is, in the exercise of the apostolic character which he sustained. [John Calvin, comment on Galatians 2:11]

IOW . . . .

## I. Paul's Fourth Defense: Correcting Cephas in Syria (2:11-14)

(Context; Circumstance; Consequence; Crux; Comment)

### A. The Context (11a)

Where does this passage outlining events in Antioch fit as far as Paul's argument is concerned?

**But when . . .**

#### 1. Ὅτε δὲ - same time marker we see in 1:15

There it marks t/time of Paul's conversion to X.

a. Paul's entire biography unfolds with these “time markers” (there's four of them)

1:15–16 15 But when He who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, was pleased 16 to reveal His Son in me . . .

this part of t/narrative ends in v. 17.

1:18 Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem . . .

this section of Paul's story runs to t/end of t/chap in v. 24.

2:1 Then after an interval of fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem. . .

marks of another historical event in Paul's life that ends in v. 10.

4<sup>th</sup> time marker here in v. 11 ==>

**But when . . .**

2. Here in particular it marks off a contrast with the events of 2:1-10

The Litmus Test in Jerusalem. Contrast here, as Paul might say it ==> “In Jerusalem Peter and I agreed as to the nature of the gospel, but he came to Antioch, well that was a different story.”

3. Scene shifts again: this time from Jerusalem to Antioch

a. Antioch in Paul's day was Syria's foremost city noted for its splendor and political importance

1<sup>st</sup> c. A. was capital city of t/Roman province of Syria. A series of Rom. emperors beg. w/Julius Caesar turned it into t/“Rome of t/East,” outfitting it w/theaters, aqueducts, a great basilica, public baths, & a main street adorned w/pavements of marble.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> c. a fire nearly destroyed t/city & it was also hit by 2 devastating earthquakes. In t/7<sup>th</sup> c. it fell to the invading forces of Islam (along with Jerusalem and Alexandria).

“Antioch” is know today as “Antakiya” - a town of some 200k (about ½ of what it was in t/1st c.).

(1) We've seen Antioch before

(a) Where Paul started his first missionary journey w/Barnabas

Acts 13:1–3 1 NOW there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers . . . and . . . the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Paul & Barnabas who made their way to Galatia est. CH's there.

(b) Antioch became home base for the expansion of Xnty outside of Jerusalem (name “Christian” was first used of X's followers in A.)

(c) Antioch represented Gentile Xnty in contrast to the Jewish church in Jerusalem (Antioch was about 200 mi directly N of Jerus)

Not to say there weren't Jews there. Tens of thousands of Jews made their home in/around Antioch at this time (in spite of t/persecution they regularly suffered at t/hands of their Roman overlords).

b. At some point Peter arrived there

**But when Cephas came to Antioch . . .**

(1) Why did Peter go to Antioch?

We don't know. Perhaps to get a 1<sup>st</sup> hand look at what was going on there (reports of revival among t/Gentiles and a CH there). Maybe related to t/persecution of Herod Agrippa I who had t/Apostle James beheaded & Peter arrested (Acts 12). After Peter is miraculously delivered from t/prison and reports to t/disciples who had been praying for him, Luke adds this cryptic note in v. 17 that Peter then “went to another place.” Did he go to Antioch? Maybe.

At some point after t/events of 2:1-10 (Paul's visit to Jerusalem w/Barn. and Titus) and before t/Great Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 Peter made a visit to Antioch.

Brings us to our second point ==>

**B. The Circumstance (11b-12)**

**But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.**

1. Here we have Paul rebuking Peter for what we'll later see was his hypocrisy as it related to the Gentiles and the Gospel

Paul's apostolic authority is proven in the reproof of Peter in Antioch.

~Paul Reproves Peter the Pillar~

a. Could Peter whom the early church revered as the great Apostle have been wrong?

Could Peter whom t/RCC claims as t/first Bishop of Rome have been in error? – so much so that he was corrected by Paul? Yes!

(1) BUT some ECFs found that to be too difficult a pill to swallow

They went to great lengths to explain away what's happening here.

Some such as Clement of Alexandria claimed that this wasn't Peter t/Apostle, but another Peter.

Others such as Origen, St. Jerome & Chrysostom said that this was all an act. Peter and Paul were faking it. Peter pretended to be doing wrong so that Paul could correct him and t/CH instructed. Very first use of Drama in t/CH! This view was also championed by Erasmus in t/16<sup>th</sup> c.

Augustine rejected Jerome's interpretation (they were contemporaries whose lives overlapped). Augustine noted that Paul had put himself under an oath (1:20) that what he was saying was true.

16<sup>th</sup> c. reformers followed Augustine who rejected this idea.

John Calvin speaks of: . . . the absurdity of the interpretation given by Jerome and Chrysostom, who represent the whole transaction as a feigned debate, which the apostles had previously arranged to take

place in presence of the people. . . . Augustine is therefore right in asserting, that this was no previously arranged plan, but that Paul, out of Christian zeal, opposed the sinful and unseasonable [hypocrisy] of Peter, because he saw that it would be injurious to the Church. [Calvin, comment on Galatians 2:11]

If it were all a ruse Paul's argument here becomes meaningless.  
Paul's apostolic authority is proven in the reproof of Peter in Antioch.

Such interpretations are desperate attempts to salvage Peter's reputation. It is better to acknowledge that even apostles sinned and fell short of God's glory. [Schreiner, 139]

**But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.**

Word "condemned" isn't being used here in the sense of 1:8-9. Peter wasn't guilty of preaching a false gospel, he was guilty of hypocrisy.

### ***B. The Circumstance (11b-12)***

**For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they came, he began to withdraw and separate himself, fearing those of the circumcision.**

#### **1. What is that all about?**

Peter changed tables at dinner. What's the big deal?

##### **a. It was a big deal (you have to understand the cultural background)**

Ancients didn't have nearly as many social events as we do today. Eating together was a big part of community life. To eat a meal w/someone = you were willing to accept them as family.

### (1) For the Jews . . .

How you ate, what you ate, w/whom you ate all served as a way to separate t/covt. people of God from t/pagan nations around them.

Mark of fellowship / solidarity.

Passover in the OT was a meal.

Lord's Table in the NT was associated w/a Love Feast – a meal.

### (2) God's people looked to t/future KD as an eschatological banquet

Isaiah 25:6 **And the LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.**

Joel 2:24,26 **24 And the threshing floors will be full of grain, And the vats will overflow with the new wine and oil. 26 “And you shall have plenty to eat and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you**

Revelation 19:9 . . . **‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb’ . . .**

### (3) Beyond that as far as Jews and Gentiles were concerned stood the dietary laws of the OT

- (1) Laws of ‘unclean’ foods (animals that could not be eaten)
- (2) Laws of “ritual slaughter” that the blood be properly drained from the animal's body
- (3) Laws requiring that food sacrificed in pagan temples not be eaten
- (4) Laws of personal hygiene such as ritual hand washing.

Add to that t/myriad of rules later added by the Jews under their own traditions. All of this made the entire subject of food, eating and drinking a matter of purity and Jewishness.

#### (4) 2d c. BC Maccabean crisis

Jews revolted against t/madman Antiochus Ephiaphanes.

At this time food laws became a test of national loyalty and religious faithfulness. They looked to the Prophet Daniel in that regard ==>

Daniel 1:8/12 **8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. {12 "Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink.}**

2d c. BC Letter of Aristeas 142: "To prevent our being perverted by contact with others or by mixing with bad influences, [Moses] hedged us in on all sides with strict observances connected with meat and drink and touch and hearing and sight, after the manner of the Law."

Book of Jubilees (part of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha: "Eat not with them . . . for their works are unclean." [22:16])

4 Macc 4:26 equates eating unclean food with renouncing Judaism (ἐξόμσθαι τὸν Ἰουδαϊσμόν).

#### 2. Peter the Jew "used to eat with the Gentiles"

Not only in fellowship with them, but also partaking of foods that were considered unclean under the OT law.

#### 3. What changed? – Here's where it gets real tricky

**For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they came, he began to withdraw and separate himself, fearing those of the circumcision.**

**a. What changed? – Certain men from James came to Antioch**

Here we understand James to be the same James of 1:19 / 2:9 – James t/Lord's brother.

Some men from James traveled to Antioch from Jerus.

Why were they there? We don't know. Did they truly represent James? Hard to say. Paul doesn't tell us.

No reason to throw James under the bus here. Paul doesn't indicate that James was in error, only Peter.

**b. Note the 2 verbs**

**But when they came, he began to withdraw and separate himself...**

**(1) “withdraw” = a military term - “retreat”**

Imperfect tense ind. that this was a gradual slide. “began to w.”

**(2) “separate” also in the imperfect tense**

Here we have Peter's guilt by disassociation.

**c. The reason? Fear**

**... fearing those of the circumcision.**

**(1) Phrase οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς is used a variety of ways**

Can refer to Jews in general – Jews who weren't believers (Rom 4:12); Jewish Christians (Col 4:11).

May refer to Jewish false teachers (Titus 1:10).

**(2) We tend to read this like the men from James are the same men as “those of the circumcision”**

I don't think that's the case.

May be that “those of the circumcision” refers to t/same Judaizing group desc.by Luke in Acts 15:1 ... men ... from Judea ... teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised . . . you cannot be saved.”

Or it might be that “those of the circumcision” refers to unbelieving Jews – those who outright rejected JC as Messiah.

Perhaps t/men from James came to warn those in Antioch that there was a growing persecution of Xns at t/hands of unbelieving Jews.

We just don't know for sure.

**d. Whatever the case – Peter wrongly broke fellowship w/his Gentile brothers and sisters**

**(1) He did so out of rank hypocrisy**

It was hypocritical because Peter was acting out what he didn't truly believe (whole context of 2:1-10 – Titus; Peter/James/John & right hand of fell.).

Peter heard the words of his Master recorded in Mark 7 ==>

Mark 7:18–19 18 . . . “Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him;19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?” (Thus He declared all foods clean.)

Peter saw Jesus share meals with Gentiles.

Luke 15:2 And both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”

This all happened after the events of Acts 10-11.

Acts 10 we read about a Gentile named Cornelius, a god-fearer. Angel visits him saying, “Cornelius! Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God. Send for a man named Simon Peter.”

Meanwhile Peter's praying. He's hungry. Then has a vision of a great sheet coming down out of t/sky, lowered by four corners to the ground. One it were all sorts of animals that were unclean under t/Law. And a voice came to him, “Arise, Peter, kill and eat!” Peter says, “By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean.” And again a voice came to him a second time, “What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.”

Peter's puzzled as to t/meaning & what happens? Men from Cornelius arrive. And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you.”

Next day he travels to Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. Peter says ==>

“You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation t/man who fears Him & does what is right, is welcome to Him.

Very next chapter (11) we read:

1 . . . the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.<sup>2</sup> And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who were circumcised took issue with him,<sup>3</sup> saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

Peter relates his story and concludes:

17 “If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?”

This is why Peter's actions were so hypocritical. Even cowardly.

He was standing in God's way!

Our sin has consequences that impact others.

### C. The Consequence (13)

**And the rest of the Jews [the Christian Jews] joined him in hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.**

#### 1. Barnabas? Not Barnabas!

Was B. who had introduced Paul to the Jer. Xns who feared him, refusing to believe that he was truly a follower of X.

Was B. who sought out Paul in Tarsus and persuaded him to become a part of the ministry team at Antioch.

Was B. who stood with Paul in Jerusalem to defend t/liberty of the gospel against t/sham Xns.

Was B. who had accompanied Paul on t/1st MJ – who witnessed t/conversion of many Gentile believers to X.

Was B. who worked in Galatia. They knew him.

Not B!

We think that our sin only impacts ourselves. No, not only is our sin treason against heaven, it's poison for those around us.

Romans 2:24 For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.

Good news – repentance. Typical of Peter.

P. who took his eyes off Jesus and began to look at the circumstances of the storm, he started to sink into the lake

P. who Jesus rebuked for his earthly persp. in Matthew 16:23

You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

P. who took his eyes off Jesus for fear denied Him.

Peter who was forgiven and restored.

Peter goes on to stand firm for t/gospel in Acts 15 and who even dies a martyr's death.

He's an example of feet of clay grounded in a cross of God.

You?