

Gal 2:1-21 NIV Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with **Barnabas**. I took **Titus** along also.

## He took Barnabas

### **A Jew, and well-known among the apostles in Jerusalem**

- Act 9:27 NIV But **Barnabas took him [Saul/Paul] and brought him to the apostles...**
- Act 11:22 NIV News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and **they sent Barnabas to Antioch.**

## He took Titus

### **A Gentile, and an uncircumcised believer**

- Probably wanting to find out how the apostles would respond to an uncircumcised Gentile Christian...What if anything would they require of him? Would they stand by Paul's teaching regarding circumcision?

(2) **I went in response to a revelation** and, meeting privately with those **esteemed as leaders**, I presented to them **the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles**. I wanted **to be sure I was not running and had not been running my race in vain**.

## A Revelation

This could have been his response to Agabus' prophecy of the coming famine, [see Act 11:27-30] or it could have simply been a personal word from the LORD to go at th is time

## He met privately with those esteemed as leaders

He specifically mentions **James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars**, [see Gal 2:9]

**It is a good practice to bring doctrinal disputes to leaders in the church rather than spread confusion or discord among the flock. Remember it is the leaders that must give an account to the LORD.**

- Jas 3:1 NIV Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.
- Heb 13:17 NIV Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.
- Tit 3:9-11 NIV But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless. 10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them. 11 You may be sure that such people are warped and sinful; they are self-condemned.

## He presented the gospel he preaches among the Gentiles

What is that gospel? We covered it in last chapter to some degree in the section called, “**What is the gospel Paul preached?**”

## Not running my race in vain

**What did he mean? ... Did he lack confidence in his message?**

### **No, he was confident his gospel came from Jesus Christ**

- Gal 1:11-12 NIV I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. 12 I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, **I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.**

### **And he was strong to defend it**

- Gal 2:5 **We did not give in to them for a moment**, so that **the truth of the gospel** might be preserved for you
- Gal 2:11 NIV When Cephas came to Antioch, **I opposed him to his face**, because he stood condemned.

### **He expressed similar concerns in other churches as well -**

- 1Th 3:5 NIV For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that **our labors might have been in vain.**
- Php 2:16 NIV as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ **that I did not run or labor in vain.**

You can see how hard Satan tried to stamp out the church early on. His comment about running in vain had to do with his concern that Galatian churches would be undermined by the Judaizers...Paul wanted the Christians in the churches at Galatia to be assured that the apostles in Jerusalem were on board with the gospel he is preaching.

(3) **Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised**, even though he was a Greek.

## Compelled - the word is also used here and means - to constrain

- Gal 2:14 NIV When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you **force** Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"
- Gal 6:12 NIV Those who want to impress people by means of the flesh are trying to **compel** you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.

Paul is showing the Galatians, that the apostles in Jerusalem - though they were Jews - did not constrain Titus to be circumcised. His point is that the Jerusalem apostles are on the same page as Paul concerning this issue of circumcision for the Gentiles.

(4) This matter arose because some **false believers** had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the **freedom** we have in Christ Jesus and to make us **slaves**. (5) We did not give in to them for a moment, so that **the truth of the gospel** might be preserved for you.

### False believers

- Not believers at all, or those who had at one time received Christ, but were teaching false doctrine

### Infiltrated

**They snuck in - It seems like people who are trying to undermine the church doctrinally will sneak in**

### **The same word is used here**

- 2Pe 2:1 NIV But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. **They will secretly introduce** destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them--bringing swift destruction on themselves.

### To spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus & to make us slaves

From Barnes Notes: Their object in spying out the liberty which Paul and others had, was, undoubtedly, to be witnesses of the fact that they did not observe the special rites of the Mosaic system; to make report of it; to insist upon their complying with those customs, and thus to secure the imposition of those rites on the Gentile converts. Their first object was to satisfy themselves of the fact that Paul did not insist on the observance of their customs; and then to secure, by the authority of the apostles, an injunction or order that Titus should be circumcised, and that Paul and the converts made under his ministry should be required to comply with those laws.

### Freedom and slaves

**The truth of the gospel presents to us a freedom FROM something as well as a RESPONSIBILITY TO something.**

- **Freedom in Christ is freedom from the yoke of slavery (i.e. coming under the law)**
  - Gal 5:1 NIV It is for **freedom** that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and **do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.**
- **The freedom in Christ is NOT a license to sin - rather a calling to serve one another**
  - Gal 5:13 NIV You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your **freedom** to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

### The Yoke

At the council in Jerusalem where they discussed the need for Gentiles to keep the law - they contrasted salvation through the bearing of a YOKE with salvation through the GRACE of our LORD Jesus

- Act 15:10-11 NIV Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles **a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? 11 No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.**

"Different rabbis had different sets of rules, which were really different lists of what they forbade and what they permitted. A rabbi's set of rules and lists, which was really that rabbi's interpretation of how to live the Torah, was called that rabbi's yoke. When you followed a certain rabbi, you were following him

because you believed that rabbi's set of interpretations were closest to what God intended through the Scriptures. And when you followed that rabbi, you were taking up that rabbi's yoke."<sup>1</sup>

### **Understanding the yoke give deeper meaning to these words of Jesus**

- Mat 11:28-30 NIV "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 **Take my yoke** upon you and **learn from me**, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For **my yoke is easy and my burden is light.**"

### **We are not called to bear the yoke of the law, instead we are called to live in the grace of Christ**

A major theme of this book is **"Living in the grace of Christ"**

- Gal 1:6 NIV I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who **called you to live in the grace of Christ** and are turning to a different gospel--
- What Paul describes as the FREEDOM is just that - learning to live in the grace of Christ...vs surrendering to live our lives as SLAVES under the law
- Further chapters in the book of Galatians will give more detail about what it means to **"Live in the Grace of Christ"**

### **That the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you**

**Paul took a strong stand against the Judaizers so that the truth could stand for the Galatians - the motive was not to prove himself right...the motive was to preserve truth for the next generation**

### **But he also stood up against Peter's hypocrisy**

- Gal 2:14 NIV When I saw that **they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel**, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

### **Paul urged Timothy to watch his LIFE and DOCTRINE - because they have an effect on others**

- 1Ti 4:13-16 NIV Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. (14) Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. (15) Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. (16) **Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.**

(6) **As for those who were held in high esteem**--whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not show favoritism--they added nothing to my message. (7) On the contrary, they recognized that **I had been entrusted** with the task of preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised. (8) **For God, who was at work in Peter** as an apostle to the circumcised, **was also at work in me** as an apostle to the Gentiles. (9) **James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars**, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they **recognized the grace given to me**. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.

### **Those held in high esteem added nothing to Paul's message**

- (Gal 2:6 and 2:9) - the leaders at Jerusalem - and the pillars James, Cephas and John

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.holdenvillage.org/stay-connected/blog/chuck-carpenter-heavy-yoke-rules/>

Whatever they were makes no difference to me - God does not show favoritism - What matters is what the LORD thinks

- Act 10:34 NIV Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that **God does not show favoritism**
- Rom 2:9-11 NIV There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; (10) but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. (11) **For God does not show favoritism.**

### They recognized Paul was entrusted with a task

**Entrusted is the same word [believes in John 3:16] that is used to describe our faith in Christ**

- Joh 3:16 NIV For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever **believes** in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

It is the notion that **God believes in us** [or has confidence in us] and therefore entrusts to us this task - **to preach the gospel**

- Paul was entrusted with reaching the gospel to the uncircumcised
- Just as Peter was entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised

### God was at work in Paul for his task - just as he was at work in Peter for his task

- Col 1:28-29 NIV He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. 29 To this end I strenuously contend **with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.**
- Php 2:12-13 NIV Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for **it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.**

**Before we knew Christ - there was a different spirit working in us - Now it is Christ**

- Eph 2:2 NIV in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit **who is now at work in those who are disobedient.**

### They recognized a grace given to Paul

This use of the word grace is different from - called to live in grace, or saved by grace - it defines grace as a spiritual gift from the LORD. What they recognized was a gift from the LORD given to Paul specifically to preach the gospel to the uncircumcised. This led them to extend the hand of fellowship.

- Eph 3:1-7 NIV For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--  
2 Surely you have heard about **the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you,** 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. 6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are

heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. 7 I became a servant of this gospel **by the gift of God's grace** given me through the working of his power.

- 1Co 3:10 NIV **By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder**, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care.
- 1Co 15:9-10 NIV For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But **by the grace of God I am what I am**, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

### They recognized the calling of Paul

- That he should go to the Gentiles

The point of all this is - "Look guys, even though the Judaizers are trying to pit us against the apostles in Jerusalem, we have had a meeting with them, they have heard our message, they added nothing to the message, they recognize the unique grace of God given to me to preach to gospel to the uncircumcised, so they gave us the right hand of fellowship...AND they did not require Titus to become circumcised..." So for those who had concerns that Paul was a renegade and was teaching something contrary to Christianity, he set out in the beginning of the book to remove the basis of their arguments.

(10) All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.

### Remember the poor

There is a lot the bible says about the poor. I want to provide just a few thoughts here...not comprehensive. We must be careful to not become cynical about giving to the poor. Our world has many scoundrels, people who will not work, people with undisciplined spending habits etc, and while many of them are personally responsible for their poverty, there are others who are genuinely poor. We must not allow a cynical or calloused heart keep us from generosity to the genuinely poor, and grace to teach a better way to those who are poor through bad choices. Better to err on the side of grace. (I have included an addendum about the poor at the end of the chapter)

(11) When Cephas came to Antioch, **I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.**  
(12) For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because **he was afraid** of those who belonged to the circumcision group. (13) **The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy**, so that by their **hypocrisy** even **Barnabas was led astray.**

### I stood against him - because he was at fault

Again we see that Paul is zealous for the truth. There is no respecter of persons here...even though it was the great apostle Peter,

## Barnabas was led astray

- Integrity and truth should guide us - This is where Paul stood (see Prov 11:3)
- Peter was moved by the fear of man - (see Prov 29:25) Fear of man is a snare to the soul
- Peter was acting in hypocrisy - it incited others to follow his hypocrisy
- Peter's hypocrisy affected others...even Barnabas who was a strong brother...**STRONG BROTHERS** can be affected

(14) When I saw that they were **not acting in line with the truth of the gospel**, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "**You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?**"

## Not in line with the truth of the gospel

This is another reminder to the Galatians that Paul has always been consistent in his message about the truth of the gospel, even opposing the apostle Peter when acted differently toward the uncircumcised Gentiles when the circumcised believers from Jerusalem showed up.

- You don't live like a Jew, yet you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs

(15) "We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles (16) **know that a person is not justified by the works of the law**, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

## We who are Jews KNOW that a person is NOT justified by the works of the law

### **Peter preached this to the Gentile family of Cornelius**

- Act 10:43-44 NIV All the prophets testify about him that **everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.**" 44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.

### **Peter said this at the Jerusalem council**

- Act 15:10-11 NIV Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? 11 No! **We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.**"

## We too have put our faith in Christ Jesus - that we may be justified

- This word "justified" is a legal term which means to declare a person righteous

## By the works of the law NO ONE will be justified

- Rom 5:8-9 KJV But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, **being now justified by his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him.
- Rom 3:20 KJV Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight**: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

(17) "But if, in seeking to be justified in Christ, **we Jews find ourselves also among the sinners, doesn't that mean that Christ promotes sin?** Absolutely not! (18) If I rebuild what I destroyed, then I really would be a lawbreaker.

### We Jews find ourselves among the sinners

Just because Peter was eating with Gentiles, does not make Jesus a promoter of sin

To the Jewish mind...If I am justified by faith in Christ, and in effect stop trying to fulfill the law, I am becoming a sinner like the Gentiles

- Paul just told Peter - *"we [Jews] know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law"*

### Does Christ promote sin?

So then, Christ must be the minister of sin, since to be justified by Him apart from the law makes me like a Gentile sinner - Paul states the answer is, "Absolutely Not".

- When a law-abiding Jew seeks to be justified by faith in Christ, and no longer justified in trying to keep the law, he becomes no different than a **Gentile sinner**...(see Gal 2:15) and in need of a Savior.

Many thought that to have faith in Jesus only led to licentiousness - and no restraint concerning sin...They thought there must be some law that could restrain the sinfulness of man...or at minimum there was a fear that to teach faith in Christ alone would promote lawlessness.

### If I rebuild what I destroyed, then I really would be a lawbreaker

Peter was living like a Gentile, - yet when the circumcised believers came from James - he withdrew from them and was in effect "**rebuilding the law**"

Peter has become the lawbreaker (living in relationship to the law as if dead to it by the body of Christ [see Rom 7:4] - yet building it up to enforce upon others - by enforcing it upon others, yet not living according to the thing he teaches - he is a transgressor)

- Rom 2:17-25 NIV Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God; 18 if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; 19 if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth-- 21 you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 **You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?** 24 As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." 25 Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised.

(19) "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God.



## Through the law...I died

- Rom 7:1-4 NIV Do you not know, brothers and sisters--for I am speaking to those who know the law--**that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives?** 2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. 3 So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man. 4 So, my brothers and sisters, **you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.**
- Rom 7:9-13 NIV Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. 10 I found that **the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.** 11 For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. 12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. 13 Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, **it used what is good to bring about my death,** so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

(20) I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but **Christ lives in me.** The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

## I have been crucified with Christ - Christ lives in me

- I no longer live
- The life I now live (grace of Christ) I live by faith in the son of God...who loved me and gave himself (This is the 2nd time it tells us he gave himself for us)
- He gave Himself for me to take away my sin (Gal 1:4)
- He gave Himself for me so that He may live in me (Gal 2:20)

(21) **I do not set aside the grace of God,** for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

## I do not set aside the grace of God

### **We set aside the grace of God:**

- When we do not let Christ live through us
  - (his grace is not license - instead it teaches us to deny ungodliness and to live righteously in this present age)
- If we try to gain righteousness through the law - in this sense Christ died for nothing
- When we set aside the grace of God - we are rebuilding what we destroyed (i.e. the law)

"If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

# Addendum Regarding The Poor

## **We must give to the poor saints**

- Rom 15:26 NIV For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem.

## **Along with giving - we MUST share the gospel with the poor**

- Mat 11:5 NIV The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, **and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.**

## **The poor are not exempt from giving**

- Mar 12:43 NIV Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

## **We must include the poor in our fellowship**

- Luk 14:13 NIV But when you give a banquet, **invite the poor**, the crippled, the lame, the blind,

## **We cannot eradicate poverty**

- Mat 26:11 NIV **The poor you will always have with you**, but you will not always have me.

## **We cannot out-give God**

- Pro 28:27 NIV Those who give to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses.

## **This is amazing to consider**

- Pro 19:17 NIV Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.

## **Giving is NOT a substitute for agape**

- 1Co 13:3 NIV If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

## **The poor should be involved in ministry**

- 2Co 6:10 NIV sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; **poor, yet making many rich**; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## **The poor must be treated with respect and dignity**

- Jas 2:2-5 NIV Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?