

# Galatians 2

Paul and the Apostles in Jerusalem; Paul Confronts Peter at Antioch

Galatians 2 key words: “gospel, truth, Gentiles, circumcision, grace, justified, law, faith/believed”

## Day 1

### Read Galatians 2:1-6

#### Paul submits the gospel to the Apostles

1. Answer the 5 “W” and “H” questions in 2:1,2:
  - When did this event occur? 2:1
  - Where did it occur? 2:1
  - Who went with Paul? 2:1
  - Why did Paul go to Jerusalem? 2:2a (Compare Acts 18:9-11)
  - What did Paul present and how? 2:2b
  - What was Paul’s concern? 2:2c

#### ***Digging Deeper***

What do you learn about Barnabas from the following?

Acts 4:36-37

Acts 9:26-27

Acts 11:22-26

Acts 13:1-3

**FYI:** “Chapter 2 begins a significantly different section of Paul's argument. There is a connection, of course. Paul is still speaking of his apostolic authority. But now he wants to demonstrate the essential unity existing between himself and the Twelve, whereas in chapter 1 his focus was on his independence from them.” - Expositor's Bible Commentary

“The purpose of this meeting was not to verify the truth of his gospel message...Rather, Paul journeyed to Jerusalem to get the highest stamp of human approval for his gospel of grace and ministry to the Gentiles. Why? So the church could be unified and his critics defanged...After all, if the apostles gave Paul their support, no one could challenge him by claiming they also had the backing of the church's leadership.” - Charles Swindoll (29)

2. If this trip to Jerusalem is referred to in Acts 11:30, according to whose revelation and for what reason was he sent to Jerusalem” Acts 11:28-30
  - If this trip is referred to in Acts 15:1,2, what reason is given for Paul’s visit?
3. In Jerusalem, what judgment was made about whether Titus, a Gentile convert, should be circumcised? Gal. 2:3
  - Why was circumcision an issue? Compare Acts 15:5

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4. How did Paul describe the goal of the “false brethren?” 2:4 (Cf. Gal. 4:9; 5:1-4) (What do you think he means by “*bondage/make us slaves?*”)

**FYI:** “Some Christians from a Jewish background said that Gentiles could indeed be saved, *if* they made themselves Jews first, and brought themselves under the law of Moses. Their idea was that salvation in Jesus was only for the Jewish people, and Gentiles had to become Jews before they could become Christians.”  
- David Guzik

“The word *‘infiltrated’* (*‘secretly brought in’* NASU) is used of traitors who pretend to be part of a group so that they can spy on it and weaken it...The false brothers would be people who had joined the church and probably attached themselves to the mission to the Gentiles...While these people pretended to be genuinely concerned about maintaining the unity of the church as its outreach broadened, their real goal was to insist on the principle that the Gentiles must be circumcised in obedience to the law...”

**Freedom/liberty we have in Christ Jesus** is a freedom from having to obey the law in order to earn our salvation. This freedom comes by way of Christ and is enjoyed in Christ on the basis that he took care of all the demands of justice and obeyed the law perfectly on our behalf.”  
- Africa Bible Commentary

5. What did circumcision mean to a Jew? Genesis 17:9-11

- Why would being uncircumcised seem so terrible to some? Genesis 17:14

**FYI: Circumcision** “Every Jewish male and every foreign male who became part of the nation was circumcised as a sign of God’s covenant with Israel...The rite signified an invitation for God to cut the man off from his life and his people if he ever broke the covenant.”  
- Galatians Life Change Series (40)

6. Contrast the decision made about Titus with what happened to Timothy in Acts 16:1-3.

- Why do you think Timothy’s case was different? (See 1 Corinthians 9:20)

7. What did Paul say was at stake if he had not stood his ground on circumcision? 2:5

**Food for Thought:** “If they had asked for it on the plea of brotherly love, Paul would not have denied them. But because they demanded it on the ground that it was necessary for salvation, Paul defied them, and prevailed. Titus was not circumcised. (Luther)”  
- David Guzik

**Applying the Word:** *Have you ever had to go against the flow of popular opinion? How did it make you feel? How did you handle it?*

**Day 2****Read Galatians 2:6-10****The Apostles' support of the gospel**

8. What did the apostles do to Paul's message? 2:6

- Although Paul recognized the apostles' authority, in what sense was it of no consequence to him? (Compare Deuteronomy 10:17)

**FYI:** "Paul seems dismissive when he says, *those men added nothing to my message* (2:6d), but what he means is that they taught him nothing new and did not demand that he add anything to what he was preaching."  
- Africa Bible Commentary (1417)

9. To what different groups of people were Paul and Peter called to minister? 2:7

- What was true about both Paul and Peter's ministries? 2:8 (See Peter: Acts 5:12-16; Paul: 14:3; 19:11-12)

**FYI:** "Paul's main ministry was to Gentiles, and Peter's main ministry was to Jews. These distinctions were not absolute; each did minister to the other groups."  
- David Guzik [See Acts 14:1; 17:2; 18:4]

10. What did the leaders recognize about Paul's message to the Gentiles? 2:9 (Note: How did Paul refer to the church leaders in 2:6,9)

- Who gave Paul their approval? 2:9b (*Since the Galatians were being swayed by Judaizers from Judea, what kind of weight do you think this support carried?*)

**FYI:** "When he says that they seemed to be pillars he is not speaking contemptuously but quoting the general opinion and arguing from this that their acts ought not to be lightly set aside." (Calvin)  
- David Guzik

"The right hands of fellowship' was a common sign of acceptance and friendship. It indicated full recognition of Paul by the representatives of the Jerusalem church."  
- The Nelson Study Bible (1971)

11. What did Peter say about Paul's stand in Acts 15:7-11?

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12. How did Paul feel about the request the men made of him? 2:10

***Digging Deeper***

What kind of instructions did Paul give to churches concerning giving? 1 Cor. 16:1-4

13. Underline the attitudes and actions we should have in giving:

- Deuteronomy 15:7-11 If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. 8 Rather be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs...10 Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. 11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land. NIV
- Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." NASU
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. NIV
- Ephesians 4:28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. NIV
- 1 Timothy 6:17-19 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. NIV
- 1 John 3:16-18 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. NIV

How careful was Paul with these offerings? 2 Corinthians 8:19-21

***Applying the Word:*** What have you found to be some of the most fruitful ways to support and encourage the ministry of others inside or outside of your local church? Who has affirmed and encouraged you in your walk with the Lord?

**Day 3****Read Galatians 2:11-16****Paul confronts Peter**

14. When Peter first came to Antioch, with whom did he eat? 2:12a

- Why did he change his behavior when the “party of the circumcision” came? 2:12b

**For Your Information:** “The Old Testament instituted the ‘clean laws,’ a complicated series of regulations for worshippers to follow in order to be ‘ceremonially clean’ and acceptable for the presence of God in worship. Persons could not draw near to God if they ate certain ‘unclean’ foods, if they had touched dead things, if they had a disease or touched someone who did, and so on (see Leviticus 11, 15, 20)...Under this code, the Gentiles as a whole were ‘unclean’ and unfit for the presence of God unless they were circumcised and adopted the entire Mosaic code for daily living.”

- Timothy Keller (51,52)

15. What had God taught Peter about the ceremonial laws regarding food? Acts 10:9-16; 28:34-35

16. According to Acts 11:2,3, what criticism had Peter received from the leaders in Jerusalem?

- Read through his response in Acts 11:4-18. What conclusion did Peter come to? 11:17

17. What adjectives did Paul use to describe Peter’s actions? 2:12b,13a

**IT’S GREEK TO ME:** “**Hypocrisy**” Strong’s NT:5272 *hupokrisis* acting under a feigned part, deceit - Strong’s Concordance  
 “Hypocrisy means ‘playacting, pretending, wearing a disguise.’ Peter and those who followed his example knew they were wrong. But they pretended they were right, putting on self-righteous masks that Paul exposed and ripped away when he saw ‘they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel.’”  
 - Charles Swindoll (36)

18. Who was affected by Peter’s behavior? 2:13 (Consider what Barnabas would have meant to the people of Antioch. See Acts 11:25,26)

- What reasons do you see for Paul publically confronting Peter? 2:14 (Compare 1 Timothy 5:19-20)

**FYI:** “By refusing fellowship with Gentile Christians, Peter said in his actions tht we are - in part - considered right before God by the works of the law. Paul couldn’t stand for this, because it wasn’t the truth.” ...This shows what a heavy responsibility it is to be a leader. When we go astray, others will often follow.”  
 - David Guzik

“One does not settle a court case by messenger...Peter’s act of withdrawal had sent a public message, and so Paul’s counter-message had to be equally public.” - Africa Bible Commentary (1418)

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19. What inconsistency did Paul point out in Peter's behavior? 2:14b (Cf. Peter's statement in Acts 15:10-11)

20. What did Paul acknowledge first? 2:15 (Compare Romans 5:1,2; 9:4,5)

**FYI:** "Paul is not denying that those who are Jews by birth are sinners, as are all Gentiles (see Rom 3:23). Rather, he is implying that Jews enjoy spiritual privileges...that should make them more knowledgeable about how to be justified before God."  
- The Nelson Study Bible (1972)

21. What would have made this a hard confrontation for Paul? (Consider Peter's standing and Paul's background.)

- How do you picture this scene? (i.e.. How were people feeling/responding? How do you think Peter looked? What tone do you hear in Paul's voice?)

**Food for Thought:** "This is the Christian way of 'opposing' someone. When you are trying to motivate people by urging them to see their riches and love in Christ, then you personally are pointing to their value and dignity as you appeal. But when you try to motivate people by threatening them, you will probably feel little respect for them as you do so, and they will (rightly) sense that you are not on their side. When we use God's grace as a motivator, we can criticize sharply and directly, but the other person will generally be able to perceive that we are nonetheless *for* him. No wonder Paul was winsome in this situation!"  
- Timothy Keller (56)

22. Underline the qualities of leadership that Paul and Peter emphasized:

- 1 Timothy 4:12b ...set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. NIV
- 1 Peter 4:8-10 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. NIV
- 1 Peter 5:2-3 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. NIV

**Applying the Word:** *Have you ever found your convictions being challenged and wanting to compromise when you were with different groups? How have you stood for the truth even when it was difficult?*

**Day 4****Read Galatians 2:16-21****Paul response**

23. What threefold reminder did Paul give about the change that had come through faith in Christ - even to Jews? 2:16 (Cf. Romans 3:20-24)

**FYI:** "Faith in Jesus Christ, then, is not intellectual conviction only, but personal commitment. The expression in the middle of Galatians 2:16 is (literally) 'we have believed into (eis) Christ Jesus.' It is an act of committal, not just assenting to the fact that Jesus lived and died, but running to Him for refuge and calling on Him for mercy." - John Stott (62)

24. How forcefully did Paul respond to the idea that justification by faith promotes sin? 2:17 (See also Romans 6:1,2; 3:5-6)

**FYI:** "The argument was that if believing in Christ results in our abandoning the law, we are then living a life of sin just like the Gentiles. In that case, Christ is encouraging sin, since he takes people away from the law. Paul's horrified response is Absolutely not..." - Africa Bible Commentary (1419)

25. Why does putting yourself under the law prove that you are a sinner? 2:18 (Consider 1 John 1:10 and James 2:10)

26. Rather than freeing us of sin, what does the law do? Romans 3:20; 7:7,8

**IT'S GREEK TO ME** "justified" Strong's NT:1344 dikaios; to render (i.e. show or regard as) just or innocent - Strong's Concordance

"The opposite of 'justified' is 'condemned.' Justification means that in Christ, though we are actually sinners, we are not under condemnation. God accepts us despite our sin. We are not acceptable to God because we actually become righteous: we become actually righteous because we are acceptable to God." - Timothy Keller (59)

27. Underline why the law is inadequate/unable to solve our problem with sin?
- Romans 8:3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature NIV
  - Hebrews 7:18-19 The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God. NIV
  - Hebrews 10:1-2 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. NIV

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28. What is man's condition apart from God? Psalm 143:2; Romans 3:23

**Digging Deeper**

What state we were in when Christ died for us?  
Romans 5:6,8

Ephesians 2:1

29. Underline what salvation by faith *is* and *is not* "according" to?

- 2 Timothy 1:9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, NASU
- Titus 3:5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. NASU

30. Since we have "*died to the law*," what is our source for life? 2:19-20 (See also Romans 7:6; 8:10-11)

**Digging Deeper**

How is eternal life defined in scripture?  
John 17:3

1 John 5:11-12

- What should motivate a person who has faith in Christ? 2:20c (See also 2 Corinthians 5:14,15)

**FYI:** "If we are justified by faith in what Christ has done, we are also not justified by what we do...Paul died to the law *as a way of being saved*. He died to the law's condemnation. If we are not justified by the law, but by Christ (2:16), then the law cannot condemn us."  
- Timothy Keller (59,60)

31. What is the extent of the resources we have because of Christ living in us.

- Ephesians 1:19-20; 3:16
- Colossians 1:11
- 2 Peter 1:3

32. If a person depends on the law for salvation, what is the value and significance of Christ's death? 2:21 (Cf 5:2,4)

**IT'S GREEK TO ME Righteousness** "*dikaiosune* NT:1343 is the character or quality of being right or just; it was formerly spelled 'rightwiseness,' which clearly expresses the meaning."  
- Vine's Expository Dictionary

**Applying the Word:** Read Romans 8:31-39. Since Christ "loves" us and "gave himself up" for us, what else can we depend on Him to do? Where are you holding back and not trusting Him to take care of you?