

Churches of Galatia: Chapter 2 (Slide 1)

If you Say it and Believe it, Live it!!

Reading: Galatians 2:11-21

"Lead by example, put your money where your mouth is, actions speak louder than words, Practice What You Preach!!" These phrases are similar to our lesson title!!

It's not so much sometimes what we say that reveals how we truly feel about something, because they could just be words and not convictions. It is often what we do that reveals how we really feel about something and it is expressed in full view of either man and/ or God.

*We are ultimately dealing with a subject that is quite sensitive, at least to some in our country. But Brethren, **"This ought not to be"** in Christ's church!*

James 3:10 (Slide 2)

Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

"Suit your actions with your words" and bridle the tongue whether in secret or public!

I believe one of the most profound statements that the *Apostle Paul* makes in **Galatians 2** is found in **VS 21** and can be described in this way:

"If I believe that I can be saved by my works, I don't need Jesus, nor did I need Him to die for me!"

Sadly, I believe some inwardly believe that when they perform some basic task for the church or base their faith on their church attendance itself or even if they preach or teach, that their works justify their salvation.

I want to remind us of what I believe is one of the most sobering passages of scripture in the Bible and spoken by Jesus:

Matthew 7:21-23 (Slide 3)

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, (Slide 4) cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

“But Lord, I was in attendance every Sunday?!!”

One of the most humble statements that Brother Wayne Polk made is in showing his regards at the end of an email or some form of communication:

“Your Servant and His” We are to serve God by serving each other.

Pay close attention to what **Peter** says in the following and in particular **VS 9**.

Acts 15:6-12 (Slide 5)

6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. This gathering together was to consider the necessity of circumcision in order to be a Christian. **7 And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago (Acts 10) God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the (Slide 6) gospel and believe. 8 So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, 9 and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore, (Slide 7) why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? No one, not even the jews could keep the Law of Moses perfectly. Why make the gentiles experience the same failures? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”**

I guess he forgot what he said later on!!

Galatians 2:11-13 (Slide 8)

11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, (I'm not sure when Peter came to Antioch but it must have been after Paul and Barnabas. They were already there, Acts 15:30) I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, (Slide 9) fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

Some believe that this incident where **Peter** showed favoritism to the Jews over the Gentiles occurred before **Acts 15**.

However, Bible scholars point out that no historical records in regards to a particular timeline exist to verify that this happened beforehand.

To the contrary in fact. I believe it points to the fact that **Apostle Paul's** rebuke shows that **Apostle Peter** should have known better. His actions caused others to respond in kind.....**Barnabas** also engaged in this hypocrisy.

Apostle Paul applied the same principle in which he instructed Timothy to use in a similar circumstance:

1 Timothy 5:20 (Slide 10)

Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

The sin was publicly viewed, so call them out publicly.

I do not believe **Apostle Peter** and **Barnabas** are inherently racist, they simply made a mistake without due consideration.

Apostle Paul makes a statement by his rebuke of **Apostle Peter** and one for us to consider together with what he said to the *Corinthian Brethren*:

1 Corinthians 9:27 (Slide 11)

But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

We may think this has no bearing on what we are discussing but it is relevant.

If it could happen to **Paul** it could happen to us. It takes constant spiritual discipline to enable us to “*practice what we preach.*” **Peter** was an **Apostle**, chosen by **Jesus** as one of the **original 12** and he failed to practice what he preached.

In **Acts 15** we see that **Barnabas** worked alongside **Apostle Paul**. Though they had a falling out toward the end of the chapter, he certainly should have known full well that ***there is neither Jew nor Greek!!***

Apostle Paul, one born out of due time, knew to a greater degree how to put into practice true Christianity.

Apostle Peter stated in:

Acts 10:28 (Slide 12)

“You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.”

It was a difficult transition even for **Peter** to fully follow what true Christianity dictated in the face of his Jewish brethren. It’s possible that he felt intimidated by those who came from **James** since they would likely carry a report back to him.

This wasn’t the only time that **Apostle Peter** was confronted about who he ate with. As we learned in previous lessons, his Jewish counterparts called him out regarding eating with Gentiles:

Acts 11:3 (Slide 13)

"You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!"

But the Apostle Peter explained why! Acts 11:4ff

We must consider the fact that the Jews considered Gentiles to be the "Nation of sinners!" They were even referred to them as dogs as you can see from the interchange between **Jesus** and a Gentile woman in:

Matthew 15:21-28 (Slide 14)

21 Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

(Slide 15) ***23 But He answered her not a word.***

And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

(Slide 16) ***25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"***

26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." (Slide 17)

28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

*I am convinced that **Jesus** knew from the very beginning that he would heal the woman's daughter and remove the demon. He used this situation to teach about faith and unity in spirit for all who would call on His name.*

The value of this gentile woman expressing her faith is later seen in the hearts and minds of the Apostles and all who have the opportunity to carry the Gospel to people who were and are different that is; from another race another culture, so that they would be saved. The plan all along is to give all mankind the opportunity.

So fitting are the lyrics of this children's song:

Jesus loves the little children

All the children of the world

Red and yellow, black and white

They are precious in His sight

Jesus loves the little children of the world

So sad to see in our world any racial divide and it should never be because of the hypocrisy of any Christian. This is not a modern problem but one that has existed nearly from the beginning of time.

I am convinced that racial divide angers God and Christians should never be caught up in the hypocrisy of feeling superior over another.

Numbers 12:1-3 (Slide 18)

1 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 So they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? (Slide 19) Has He not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it. 3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)

What was Miriam and Aaron's complaint? Moses married an Ethiopian woman. A Cushite, which means someone from another race.

Though they never really say we are calling you out for marrying an **Ethiopian**, they are truly guilty of *racism*.

Racism is simply valuing one race above another and as we will see, God will not have such an attitude toward another human being. They also feel as

though this disqualifies Moses as a leader!! ***"Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?"***

Wouldn't it be great if we really believed that no matter what happens to us, that if we are a faithful believer, a lover of God that He will stand up for us in the end like He did Moses. Indeed not exactly like He did Moses but with His own method of retribution and salvation - He most certainly will!!!!

Numbers 12:4-13 (Slide 20)

4 Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out. 5 Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. 6 Then He said,

***(Slide 21) "Hear now My words:
If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision;
I speak to him in a dream.***

***(Slide 22) 7 Not so with My servant Moses;
He is faithful in all My house.***

***8 I speak with him face to face,
Even plainly, and not in dark sayings;
And he sees the form of the LORD.
Why then were you not afraid
To speak against My servant Moses?"***

God tells them, "I have a special relationship with Moses and you should fear interfering with our bond."

(Slide 23) 9 So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed. 10 And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. (Slide 24) 11 So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. 12 Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"

*Listen to the humility and forgiveness of **Moses**.....*

(Slide 25) **13 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!"**

After Miriam followed the Law of Moses, God granted healing.

The reconciliation of jews and gentiles is the primary reason for **Apostle Paul's** writings in **Galatians** and **Romans**, and even seen in **Ephesians** and **Colossians**.

In preparation of this letter as I often do, I read lessons from other ministers. A brother in *West Palm Beach* who writes concerning this circumstance in **Galatians 2** and the hypocrisy of **Peter** and **Barnabas** writes a great deal about modern racism that exists in the church.

Here is some of what he wrote:

He spoke of a Black preacher who he knew personally that was invited to be one of many speakers at a two week Gospel meeting.

This was at a church that is known in the brotherhood as a "*one cup church*." In other words, the *fruit of the vine* is passed around in a single cup for all who desire to observe the Lord's supper and to drink from it.

Not a typical practice in our area although there is a church not from us who I believe is a "*one cup church*."

Since this Brother was the speaker that Sunday morning, the church invited him to sit in the front row. Yet, they passed the cup in a way as to serve him last.

Not shaken by the incident but curious to know, the following Sunday he sat in the back row. Once again, they passed the cup in a way so that he would be the last to drink from the cup.

Think about it; that took pre-planning to make that happen.

I have heard that in times past, Black men were seldom allowed to be elders. In fact, in some of the Lord's churches, there were some white elders who refused to serve with a Black man.

This ought not to be.....one race should not be elevated above another because in the Lord's true church there exists no distinction:

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Apostle Paul says in:

Acts 17:26a

And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,

Let us guard our hearts and serve one another in Christ no matter who we are! God will not endure racial hypocrisy.

I am convinced that **Apostle Peter** was remorseful and repentant of his hypocrisy as was **Barnabas**. **Apostle Peter** went on to spread the Gospel and eventually became a martyr for the name of Christ by being crucified upside down.

Certainly there are differences in how we look. Some tall, some short, some black, some white, but we are equal in God's sight.....shouldn't we be equals in our own eyes?

Invitation

Today, we invite you to hear the invitation. If you believe, with an active faith, that Jesus is the Christ and died for your sins, won't you confess His name, repent and be baptized today into His precious blood for the remission of sin?

If you are a child of God but need encouragement through prayer, we are equipped to do that as well.....

Please let us know how we may help you today.....

Reading

Galatians 2:11-21

11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? 15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

17 "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

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