

STUDYING THE BOOK OF GALATIANS ***IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS***

Lesson 3 - Paul Accepted by the Apostles - [Galatians 2:1-10](#)

Read the following verses in the Last Days Bible or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

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Paul Accepted by the Other Apostles

2 Fourteen years later, I went up to Jerusalem again. This time I went with Barnabas, also taking Titus with us.*

***Gal. 2:1** – This is the second visit by Paul to Jerusalem. His first visit was 14 years earlier. His companions on this visit were Barnabas, a Jewish Christian brother that helped Paul establish Galatians churches on Paul’s first missionary journey (Acts 14-15), and Titus, a Gentile convert to Christ who has not submitted himself to the Jewish rites of circumcision.

2I went there because God had revealed that I should go. In a private meeting* with the church leaders I told them what I preach as I give the message of the Great News to the Gentiles, as I didn’t want all the work I had done, or would do in the future, to come to nothing.

***Gal. 2:2** – “In a private meeting”* Paul laid out in words the gospel he had been preaching. If the Jerusalem leaders are preaching a different gospel, then Paul’s work could be stopped and come to nothing. Three such leaders are mentioned (Gal. 2:9), Peter, James and John.

3Titus was there with me, and although he’s a Greek, they didn’t even demand that he be circumcised.*

***Gal. 2:3** – “They didn’t even demand that he be circumcised.”* Titus was brought on this trip as a test case. Will a converted Gentile to faith in Jesus Christ be compelled to be circumcised? Will the truth of the gospel be compromised? Titus was received by the apostles and the truth that man is justified through faith in Jesus Christ apart from the works of the law stood firm.

4The reason I went, was to confer with the church leaders, because false believers had infiltrated our churches in order to spy out the freedom from Jewish rules and regulations that we have in Christ Jesus, and to enslave us to those rules again.*

***Gal. 2:4** – “To enslave us to those rules again.”* Paul is later going to state, ‘If you are counting on circumcision and keeping the Jewish laws to make you right with God, then Christ cannot save you’ (Gal. 5:2, The Living Bible).

5But we didn’t surrender to them in any way, not even for one minute, so that the truth of the Great News would be preserved for you*.

***Gal. 2:5 – “So that the truth of the Great News would be preserved for you.”* It is clear from this epistle that a person may begin with true faith in Jesus and Him crucified and then return to self-effort or works of the law for acceptance before God. Paul would not submit for a moment to this mixture.**

⁶But the point is, none of those leaders who seemed to be so highly respected—whatever they were, it doesn’t make any difference to me, because God doesn’t have any personal favorites—none of them had anything to add to what I had received from the Lord.

⁷Instead, they saw that God had given me the task of bringing the Great News to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been given the task of preaching it to the Jews.

⁸They saw that God was working effectively through Peter as a messenger to the Jews, and through me as a messenger to the Gentiles.

⁹And when James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be the pillars of the church, clearly recognized how much God’s favor was upon me, they shook hands with Barnabas and me* as a token of their full agreement that we should go to the Gentiles, and they, to the Jews.

***Gal. 2:9 – “They shook hands with Barnabas and me,”* literally, “they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.” This implies a united missionary effort and partnership to work together in spreading the gospel to Jews and Gentiles.**

¹⁰All they asked was that we would continue to remember to help the poor, which was something I have always been eager to do.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 3 - Paul Accepted by the Apostles - [Galatians 2:1-10](#)

31. On a return trip to Jerusalem, whom did Paul take along? ([2:1](#))
32. Why did Paul go to Jerusalem? ([2:2](#))
33. Why did Paul seize the opportunity to meet with the other apostles? ([2:2](#))
34. What was Paul’s motive in bringing Titus along on the Jerusalem trip? ([2:3-5](#))
35. What did the "false brothers" do? ([2:4](#))
36. How did Paul and his partners respond to the Judaizers? ([2:5](#))
37. How did the Jerusalem leaders respond to Paul’s message? ([2:6](#))

38. How did James, Peter, and John respond to Paul's mission? ([2:7-9](#))
39. What was the "right hand of fellowship"? ([2:9](#))
40. What was the only thing that the Jewish leaders requested of Paul? ([2:10](#))
41. What does caring for the poor have to do with telling others about Christ?

Lesson 4 - Paul Opposes Peter - [Galatians 2:11-21](#)

Paul Corrects Peter at Antioch

¹¹But when Peter came to Antioch, I publicly told him face-to-face that he was wrong, because he needed to be reprimanded for what he was doing.

¹²Here's what happened: When Peter first came to Antioch, he ate openly with the Gentile believers. But when some friends of James* showed up, he stopped having anything to do with the Gentiles and separated himself from them, because of his fear of these men who believed that all Gentile believers must be circumcised.

Gal. 2:12 – “Some friends of James,” literally “certain came from James.” These men from Jerusalem (James' church), belonged to the circumcision party, but it is doubtful that they had James' endorsement.

¹³And the rest of the Jewish Christians joined him in his cowardly hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their double-dealing.*

Gal. 2:13 – “Barnabas was carried away by their double-dealing,” that is, even Barnabas was influenced by these men.

¹⁴But when I saw that they were not being open and honest in their loyalty to the truth God had given us in the Great News, I said to Peter in front of everyone there, “Peter, you are a Jew, but you live like the Gentiles rather than like the Jews. Why, then, are you now insisting that the Gentile believers live like Jews?”

¹⁵From birth we had the Jewish teachings instilled into us, and were not allowed to live in the sinful ways of the Gentiles.

¹⁶But we now know that no one can become right with God by obeying Jewish laws and ceremonies. Only faith in Jesus Christ can do that. So that's what we've done: we've put our faith in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God through Him, and not by the Law, because there's no way that anyone can become right with God by obeying Jewish laws.

17 Now if I claim right standing with God through faith in Christ, but then find myself sinning *against the laws of Moses*, does that mean that Christ promotes the interests of sin? Absolutely not!

18 I would find myself a sinner *indeed* if I rebuild what I have destroyed (justification by the Law).

**Gal. 2:17,18 – “¹⁷But what if we trust Christ to save us and then find that we are wrong and that we cannot be saved without being circumcised and obeying all the other Jewish laws? Wouldn’t we need to say that faith in Christ had ruined us? God forbid that anyone should dare to think such things about our Lord. ¹⁸Rather, we are sinners if we start rebuilding the old systems I have been destroying of trying to be saved by keeping Jewish laws” (The Living Bible). Most English translations of these verses reveal these basic facts: If a believer returns to the Law as a means of justification, the Law cannot save, it can only demonstrate that the person is a sinner (a transgressor) doomed to die.*

19 But when I considered all the endless requirements of the Law, I died to all hope that I could ever become alive to God by obeying the Law.

20 So now, in effect, I too have been put to death on the cross with Christ. But still, I’m alive! But it’s no longer I who am alive *and in control*. The fact that I’m now spiritually alive is due to the fact that Christ now lives in this body of mine. So now I live by the faith of (or *in*) the Son of God, who loved me and gave His very life for me.

21 I will do nothing to weaken or cancel God’s grace. Because if righteousness *with God* can be obtained by obeying Jewish laws and ceremonies, then Christ’s death was useless and in vain, He died for nothing.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 4 - Paul Opposes Peter - [Galatians 2:11-21](#)

42. When Peter visited Antioch, what did Paul do? ([2:11](#))
43. Why did Paul rebuke Peter? ([2:11-13](#))
44. Why did Peter feel free to eat with Gentiles at one time? ([2:12](#))
45. Who pressured Peter to stop eating with Gentiles? ([2:12](#)) Why?
46. How did Peter’s behavior influence other Christians? ([2:13](#))
47. What did Paul say in response to Peter’s hypocritical behavior? ([2:14](#))
48. What did Paul say to those who were Jews by birth? ([2:15](#))

49. How is a person justified before God? ([2:16](#))
50. How does a Christian avoid being a lawbreaker? ([2:17-19](#))
51. How does Christ live out His life through Christians? ([2:20](#))
52. How had Peter set aside God's grace? ([2:21](#))
53. If righteousness were possible by keeping the Law, why would the Cross have been absolutely useless? ([2:21](#))
54. If Paul hadn't spoken out against Peter's inconsistency, what could have happened among Hebrew and Gentile Christians?