

GALATIANS 2:1-10

REVIEW...

- **THE CHURCHES IN GALATIA...**
 - Galatia was not a city - it was a geographical region - group of churches...
 - The problem was false teachers called Judaizers who had come into the churches...
 - So Paul wrote the book to establish our freedom from the gospel of 'Legalism'...
- **GALATIANS 1:1-9 - THE GOSPEL OF GRACE...**
 - The message of the Gospel - Grace and Peace through the cross of Jesus...
 - Rejecting Legalism - Paul commanded them to reject any other gospel!
- **GALATIANS 1:10-24 - A BETTER GOSPEL...**
 - 1st - Legalism (*religion*) only pleases men / the Gospel of Grace is about pleasing God!
 - 2nd - The Gospel of God / not of men - Paul had received the Gospel from Jesus!
 - Jesus met Paul on the road to Damascus - as he was going to kill Christians...
 - After Paul's salvation he did not talk to any leaders in the church - Jesus taught Him!
 - 3rd - The Gospel of Grace produces lasting fruit - it is about God's Work / not ours...
 - None of the churches in Judea ever saw Paul after his conversion...
 - They only heard about the work God was doing in Paul's life!

THE COUNSEL OF JERUSALEM... (3 THINGS)

- **1ST - THE GOSPEL TO THE GENTILES... VS. 1-2**
 - After 14 years Paul went up to Jerusalem...
 - This was not Paul's second trip to the Holy city...
 - Paul taught at the church of Antioch in Syria for most of this interval...
 - During that time he made at least one other trip to Jerusalem...
 - He brought money to the poor saints in from the church of Antioch - **Acts 11:30...**
 - After Paul and Barnabus had returned from the first missionary journey...
 - They took this trip because the Judaizers had come to the church in Antioch...
 - **Acts 15:1** - "Certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'"
 - They taught that in order to be saved you must be circumcised - keep the Law...
 - Paul went up to Jerusalem to defend the Gospel of Grace...
 - Paul met with the leadership of the church - Peter / John / James...
 - And shared with them the Gospel of Grace he taught among the Gentiles...
 - He did not want to see the work destroyed by the Legalism of the Judaizers!
 - The defense of Grace (3 things)...
 - 1st - The Law has its place - but it is not for salvation...
 - The purpose of the Law - is to show we are sinners...
 - The Law points out to us all our failures – showed us all our flaws...
 - **Galatians 3:26** - "The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

- o The problem is it does nothing / can do nothing – to help us change...
- o There is only the ability to show us what we do is wrong – not to make it right...
- The Law actually stirs in us the desire for sin – sin that leads to judgment/death...
 - o Have you ever seen a sign that says ‘wet paint’ – and felt the need to touch it...
 - o Why is it the only toy a child wants – is the one they do not have...
 - o Why is it the moment we are given a ‘rule’ / ‘law’ we want to disobey it...
 - o Because we are sinners – and the Law ‘stirs’ up our sinful desires...
 - o Those sins inevitably lead to death – physical death / spiritual death!
- It only takes one sin to keep you out of heaven...
 - o **James 2:10** – “Whoever keeps the law, yet stumble in one point, is guilty of all.”
 - o God standard for heaven is perfection - not even one sin - **Matthew 5:48**...
 - o When we understand God’s standard – we see our need for Jesus!
- 2nd - The only way to get to heaven is through faith in Jesus...
 - It is not being a sinner (we all are – **Roman 3:23**) that keeps us from heaven...
 - It is rejecting the solution for sin that God provided in Jesus Christ...
 - We are saved by believing in the sacrifice that Jesus made for our sin on the cross
 - **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”
 - We do not earn our way to Heaven – it is a gift to those who believe in Jesus!
- 3rd - The place of the Law in a believer’s walk...
 - Being saved by Grace - does not mean we can live our lives in sin - **Romans 6:1**
 - o We are not saved by keeping the Law/works - but if we are saved...
 - o You will be able to tell – by what kind of works/fruit comes from my life...
 - o **James 2:17-18** – “So you see, it isn’t enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn’t show itself by good deeds is no faith at all—it is dead and useless...”
 - o Easy to say we have ‘faith’ and ‘believe’ in Jesus – but the proof is in our actions...
 - o If we say we’re Christians – but still live like the world – do we really have faith...
 - If we are saved - then the result should be good fruit coming from our lives!
 - o **II Corinthians 13:5** - “Test yourselves to see if your faith is really genuine.”
 - o Eternity is too important to be uncertain - check out the fruit on your branches...
 - o Be certain that you ‘bear’ the fruit of a life transformed by Jesus...
- 2ND - DO NOT COMPROMISE TO THE LAW... VS. 3-5
 - o Paul brought Titus (*a Greek who was not circumcised*) with him to Jerusalem...
 - Titus was a key example of what the debate in the church was about...
 - A Gentile believer who was not circumcised - was not keeping the Law of Moses...
 - Those who were pressing for the Gospel of Legalism - wanted Titus to be circumcised...
 - It is possible even Titus felt the need to conform - be like the other Jews...
 - If everyone is not eating pork - we feel funny if we do...
 - If everyone is dressing up for church on Sunday - we feel funny if we do not...
 - It is easy to get sucked up into legalism - feel the pressure to conform...
 - But there are only two things that can come from Legalism...
 - If we manage to keep the rules - we feel like we have boasting rights...

- If we fail to keep the rules - and do not do as well as others - condemnation...
 - The Judaizers came in secretly - to bring the believers into bondage...
 - They saw the freedom the Gospel of Grace brought - and they did not like it...
 - They all kept the Law - so in their mind everyone else had to as well!
 - If we have convictions we think God expects to obey - we expect others to as well...
 - We might be convicted that we have to go to church on Saturday...
 - Or be convicted that we need to give 10% of our money to the church...
 - Yet often we get our 'convictions' – not from God – but from other people...
 - But we tend to look down on and judge others who do not have those same rules...
 - Then we tend to think we are better Christians – more righteous than they are...
 - o Paul would have nothing to do with it - he ABSOLUTELY refused to circumcise Titus...
 - What is interesting is Paul did circumcise Timothy - **Acts 16:3**
 - The reason - Timothy was a Jew where Titus was a Gentile...
 - o No one should have been surprised Titus - being a Greek - was not circumcised...
 - o Timothy had Jewish mother – the circumcision was the sign he was a Jew...
 - o Timothy was circumcised - not to be saved - but so as not to offend the culture...
 - There are times when we should we relent and follow the 'rules' of others...
 - o If you want me to wear shoes and a nice shirt to church - I can do that...
 - o **I Corinthians 9:22** - "All things to all men, that I might by all means save some..."
 - o We should be willing to be flexible so we can reach others with the Gospel...
 - But Paul did not give in to Judaizers - even for one hour!
 - Because they were not talking about culture - to them it was about salvation!
 - For the sake of the Gentile churches Paul would not give in to their pressure...
 - Typically when we hear how to be a 'good' Christian we are given a lot of rules...
 - Read your Bible / go to church / pray every day / stay away from 'bad' people...
 - They are good things - but following rules does not make us righteous...
 - We are not a better person if we read our Bible today - or worse if we do not...
 - The danger of these rules are they cannot change our hearts - **Colossians 2:21-23**
 - When depend on these rules - we end up putting ourselves in danger...
 - Because we trust in the rules - rather than looking to and depending on the Lord!
- **3RD - THE COUNSEL OF JERUSALEM... vs. 6-10**
 - o The courtroom setting... vs. 6
 - To finally solve this Great debate - do Gentiles have to become Jews to be saved...
 - A counsel was called - and the leaders of the church met to decide...
 - The Apostles Peter / John / and James (*the Lord's brother*) - presided...
 - Not that Paul was dropping names - 'God shows personal favoritism to no man...'
 - It was Paul and Barnabus stood in defense of the Gospel of Grace...
 - While the Judaizers - many of them former Pharisees - argued for Legalism...
 - o The Apostle to the Gentiles... vs. 7-8
 - The Judaizers assumed the counsel (*all Jewish leaders*) would rule in their favor...
 - Instead Peter stood up and joined in to defend the Gospel of Grace...
 - Peter was used by God to bring salvation to the gentles - Cornelius – **Acts 10**

- God gave proof He had granted salvation to the Gentiles - baptism of the Spirit...
- So the Jews did believe that God had granted salvation to Gentiles - **Acts 11:18**...
- But the Jew had the Law of God - and they thought that made them better...
- If you read a book on how to drive a car - and a map - how to get to Bacolod
- That does not mean you have driven a car to Bacolod - reading is not enough
- There are many 'religious' who can quote Bible verses - tell you all about the Word
- But their lives do not reflect their knowledge - they don't live what they preach
- Knowing what Jesus can save you - is not the same as believing in Jesus!
- Peter's conclusion - why would we burden the Gentiles - **Acts 15:10**...
 - The Jews were never able to live up to the standard of the Law...
 - So why would they want to place that impossible standard on the Gentiles...
 - If I told you the only way to heaven was to swim across the Pacific Ocean...
 - The first question you would want to ask - did you swim across yet...
 - If I were unable to keep my own rules - why would you want to follow them!
 - **Matthew 23:4-5** - "They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."
 - So many churches today suffer from hypocrisy - living a double standard...
 - From the pulpit you hear the message of holiness / purity...
 - But practically the people listening - even the pastors - live just like the world...
 - If even they cannot live up to the message - obviously it does not work...
- o The conclusion of the counsel of Jerusalem... vs. 9-10
 - Peter said that the Jews could be saved the same way as the Gentiles...
 - So not only did the Gentiles not need to become Jews in order to be saved...
 - It was the Jews who had to be saved - just like the Gentiles - faith in Jesus!
 - So the Gospel of Grace was the only Gospel - for Jew and Gentile alike!
 - Paul might be the Apostle to the Gentiles / Peter to the Jews...
 - But the message they both taught - was salvation by faith in Jesus!
 - The main decision of the counsel was to spread the Gospel of Grace to all!
 - The Pillars of the church - James / Peter / and John - saw the Grace given to Paul...
 - They extended the right hand of fellowship - they would reach the Jews...
 - Paul and Barnabas would go to share the Gospel of Grace with the Gentiles...
 - The only other request they made - remember the poor...
 - This is something that was already important to Paul...
 - He and Barnabas has delivered money for the poor from Antioch...
 - **Acts 11:30** - "They sent [money] to the elders by the hands of Barnabas & Saul."
 - Paul also encouraged Corinth and Macedonia to give a collection for the poor...
 - **Romans 15:26** - "For it pleased those from Macedonia and Corinth to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem."
 - You can always spot a good church / believer - by two things...
 - 1st - They are focused on telling other people about Jesus - the Gospel of Grace...
 - They do not concern themselves with religion / rules / of denomination...
 - 2nd - At the same time they are concerned about and care for the needs of others!