



## World Christian Fellowship

[www.wcflondon.com](http://www.wcflondon.com)  
[wcflondon@gmail.com](mailto:wcflondon@gmail.com)

### Galatians

#### Lesson 11 Synching with Gospel! Always!!

**Galatians 2:11-14,** <sup>11</sup> Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup> 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?"

In lesson 09 we saw in Galatians 2:4–5 that there were certain professing Jewish Christians in Jerusalem who tried to compel Titus, a Christian Greek, to be circumcised. The apostle Paul refused to submit to this pressure. The reason Paul gave was, "that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." (**Galatians 2:5**)

If Paul had yielded to the demand for Titus to be circumcised under those circumstances, he would have wrecked the truth of the gospel. The Gentile mission would be over, Christ would have died in vain, and we would all still be under the wrath of God for our sin.



The gospel is the good news that the privilege of getting right with God was purchased fully when Christ died for our sins, rose again, and that the only way to enjoy this privilege is to live by faith in the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us.

- If you add other requirements which encourage people to rely on their own works, then the gospel is wrecked.
- If justification and sanctification are not by faith, then Christ died in vain.

Hence, Paul took his stand saying that Titus will not be compelled to be circumcised so that the truth of the gospel shall be preserved and continue with us even today.

## The Truth of the Gospel and Paul's Apostleship

Now in 2:11–14 the "truth of the gospel" is again at stake. Again, Gentiles are about to be compelled to live like Jews.

In Jerusalem the issue was circumcision.

In Antioch the issue is Jewish dietarian laws specified in **Leviticus 11**.

Two terms that make the connection between the Titus issue and the Antioch issue explicit are,

First, the term "***compel***."

In verse 3 Paul says, "But even Titus . . . was not compelled to be circumcised."

In verse 14 Paul says to Cephas, in Antioch, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

The other term is "***the truth of the gospel***."

In verse 5 Paul says, "We did not yield submission even for a moment, that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you."

In verse 14 he says, "When I saw they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel . . . "

Paul in verses 11–14 teaches us that they can contradict the gospel in theirs and our life not only by requiring circumcision, but also by other kinds of ritual demands.

Paul continue to defend his apostleship.

Paul was called by God.

Paul was not sent by man.

Paul was not sent through man.

His message was from Jesus Christ.

His message was endorsed by the apostles when they did not compel Titus to circumcise.

Paul was justifying that he was equal to Peter

Jerusalem church and the prominent leaders accepted the leadership

Leadership at Jerusalem had endorsed the message.

So far Apostle Paul had confirmed that he was operating independently, without any influence or direction from any other apostles.

## **Paul confronts Peter**

The scripture on today's lesson in Galatians 2:11–14 Paul takes one more opportunity to prove that he is commissioned by God and he has independence from the Jerusalem apostles. Since Apostle Paul had been to Jerusalem council, no one in Galatia should not think, that Paul had been doing ministry under the guidance and endorsement of Apostle Peter or for that matter Peter, James, and John. This portion of scripture shows that not only Paul was not guided by Peter, but rather Peter got instructed by Paul.

Even after the Council, Paul once again confirms his independence as forcefully as ever. Paul was serving Christ as His ambassador and not by any human agency.

Some may think that Paul has confessed too much about his disagreement with Peter and that his case collapses. They argue that these verses reveal such a deep disagreement between Paul and Peter. Paul's insistence on their unity is hopelessly contradicted.

1. There is no convincing evidence that after this conflict in Antioch Peter and Paul were adversaries or disagreed about the truth of the gospel.

On the contrary, Peter's first epistle, written later, reflects the same attitude to the Gentiles Paul that does.

Peter does refer the writings of Paul are scriptures and it's difficult to understand in his second epistle. **2 Peter 3: 15-16.**

2. The conflict here in Antioch was because of a temporary and inconsistency behaviour of Peter, not because of a deep difference in principle.
3. If it was well known that Paul and Peter were at loggerheads over the truth of the gospel, then 2:1–10 would have been pointless to write.

It seems far more likely to me that the reason Paul wrote 2:1–10 is that even after the conflict in Antioch, unity remained. The conflict in Antioch did not reveal a fundamental difference in theology. It revealed a temporary lapse of faith in the hearts of Peter and Barnabas.

### **The conflict in Antioch:**

1. Peter comes to Antioch and mingles with Gentile Christians and eats with them. (V11&12)
2. Certain men from Jerusalem from James comes to Antioch. (V12)
3. Peter was afraid of the group of men from Jerusalem. (V12)
4. Because of the fear of people from Jerusalem Peter withdraws himself from the Gentile Christians (V12)

5. Rest of the Jews joined with Peter also did the same (V13)
6. Barnabas the companion of Paul also did the same (V13)
7. Peter stood condemned and guilty of wrong. (v11)
8. Paul rebukes Peter face to face in front of everyone(V11)
9. Paul writes to all the churches in Galatia including ours!
10. Peter's behaviour was out of sync with the Gospel.

### **How do we keep our life in sync with the gospel always?**

*V12, <sup>12</sup>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.*

Peter was a Jew, he was living like a Gentile. Peter was enjoying the freedom of the gospel.

There is a two-way freedom.

1. The Gentile need not require to get circumcised and keep the ceremonial laws and become a Jew.
2. Jew, who was burdened by all the ceremonial laws and traditions, even as a Jew they are free in Christ to become like a Gentile.

## **Peter and Dietary Laws.**

### **Acts 10.**

An event that took place at Cornelius house is reported in Acts 15 and described by Apostle Paul in Galatians 2:1-10.

There was a Gentile named Cornelius at Caesarea.

God wanted Peter to evangelize.

To prepare Peter, a Jew, to visit the home of Cornelius, a Gentile.

God gave Peter a vision in **Acts 10:9–16**, *The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. <sup>10</sup>Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance <sup>11</sup>and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. <sup>12</sup>In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. <sup>13</sup>And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." <sup>14</sup>But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." <sup>15</sup>And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." <sup>16</sup>This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.*

**V9, *The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.***

It's a noon time for prayer and Peter was going up on the roof to pray. Peter needed one other super natural vision to try to get him over the hump of dealing with Gentiles.

***V10, Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance***

Now Cornelius was fasting at this time, verse 30 says, when he was spoken to by his vision. But Peter was doing the same thing. Peter went up there to pray and he was hungry, and he was going to go down and eat. They were getting the lunch ready. Peter went into trance and God invaded his consciousness with a vision.

***V11, and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.***

He looks up and there's heaven and there was a large sheet dropped with four corners tied and pull together.

***V 12, In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air***

It's full of all collection of all animals, in this big sheet that he sees in his vision. Now the animals in it were clean and unclean.

***Leviticus 11:2-8, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, 'These are the animals which you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth: <sup>3</sup>Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves and chewing the cud—***

*that you may eat. <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; <sup>5</sup> the rock hyrax, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; <sup>6</sup> the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; <sup>7</sup> and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. <sup>8</sup> Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. They are unclean to you.*

When you have time please read this entire chapter and you will find all of these dietary laws that were given to Israel. In the mind of a Jew, there was a division between clean animals and unclean animals. And no self-respecting kosher Jew would ever eat anything but clean animals, and so does Peter. He never touched anything but the clean, because that was the tradition.

Why did God make clean and unclean animals?

The reason may be,

1. There are some animals who are perhaps more liable to carry epidemic-type diseases. Because the preparation of food in those days wasn't hygienic and God was purifying Israel from at least the dominant threat of epidemic. They always lived together as a community.
2. To distinguish Israelites from other Gentile people. Those days, social interaction took place at banquets.

They didn't have any of the entertainment we have today. Feasts were elaborate celebration of gathering together and eating together.

Roman feasts were where they would throw up and then go back and eat more, and they did all horrible things.

So, feasting was their common relationships. God gave the Jews such distinct dietary laws that they couldn't get together socially with Gentiles.

As they entered the promised Land it was so easy for them to get intermingled and get corrupted. Yet from the history we can see exactly that is what took place.

**Leviticus 20:25-26**, *You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. <sup>26</sup>And you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.*

God did not want the Israelites getting involved with Gentiles. The reason was that they will end up acting and behaving like the Gentiles.

Peter, who all his life had been strictly kosher now see this vision of whole bag full of all these mixed-up animals which was a terrible thing for him to have to look at.

***V13, And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”<sup>14</sup> But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”***

Wow, that is hard to swallow

***V14, But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”***

Peter says, “Not so, Lord” He says now, “I have never done that. I have never eaten anything unclean.”

Peter was zealous for the standards that God had set up.

Peter had never touched anything unclean.

The voice spoke unto him a second time!

What God had cleansed, you don't call unclean or defiled.

***V15-16, And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.”<sup>16</sup> This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.***

That's a hard message for Peter.

God told him three times.

## What's this specific meaning of the vision?

Let me give you two things.

### 1. Specific meaning.

The specific meaning God is saying this is that He is abolishing the Old Testament Jewish dietary laws.

Why?

We saw the 2 specific reasons.

What is the body of Christ designed to do?

Unite both Gentile and Jews as one body.

Therefore, this one social barrier had to be removed for them to come together.

Now the Jew and Gentile should be able to socialize around the tables together, because they were now one. In the early years of the church this was the problem that kept popping up. The Jews and the Gentiles who were both in the church wouldn't eat together.

Paul dealt with this in Romans 14.

The Gentiles were abusing their privileges.

The Jews Paul says, don't you try to make the Gentile conform to dietary laws that God has set aside.

Jesus did preach about this in Mark.

**Mark 7:14-15 & 18-23**, *When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand: <sup>15</sup>There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the*

*things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.*

*<sup>18</sup>So He said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, <sup>19</sup>because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?"<sup>20</sup> And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. <sup>21</sup>For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>22</sup>thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup>All these evil things come from within and defile a man."*

Paul write to Timothy about this.

**1 Timothy 4:4-5**, *For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; <sup>5</sup>for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

## **2. Generic meaning.**

Vision shows that those clean and unclean animals represent Jew and Gentile.

The Jew is represented by the clean animal.

The Gentile by the unclean.

God is saying, "Jew and Gentile are going to be mixed in the church."

The sheet is the church.

The church was born in heaven!

The church came down to earth.

It includes Jew and Gentile.

The significant part of the vision is that it says, “And the sheet” when it was finished “was received up into heaven.”

**How is the church going to be leaving this world?**

Rapture!

If the church mixed of common and uncommon, Jew and Gentile, is acceptable to God to enter into heaven. It ought to be acceptable to us to allow Gentiles to come in.

Peter has then learned that no more barrier on dietary laws, God accepts both in His church, and God will receive to Himself. And if God can receive the mixture, then you must also.

This is how Peter’s heart is being prepared for His work.

So, Peter makes his journey to Cornelius house and while he was still preaching the Holy Spirit fell upon them. Imagine the astonishment for Peter, the Jewish mind, that uncircumcised Gentiles who kept none of their ceremonial laws could receive the Holy Spirit simply by hearing the gospel with faith.

An utterly life-changing experience for Peter. He evidently understood that not only did Gentiles not have to keep the Old Testament law of circumcision or the Old Testament ceremonial

laws to have the same spiritual blessings as Christian Jews. Also, he understood that he as a Jew is free from those same laws. Slowly but surely Peter and Paul had been moving independently by same revelation with the same understanding of the truth of the gospel.

The condition for receiving the Holy Spirit and enjoying all the benefits is a living faith in Jesus Christ!

**Galatians 3:2**, *This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

That is the gospel!

When Peter ate with Gentile brothers and sisters in Antioch, he was in sync with the gospel. He was standing fast in freedom, honouring the all-sufficiency of Christ by faith, and walking in love.

## **Peter out of Sync with the Gospel**

The circumcision party from Jerusalem came to Antioch calling themselves that they were sent from James (v. 12).

Peter feared this group.

### **Why?**

- Maybe they were capable of violence.
- May be Peter feared that he may not be able to give a good reason for his freedom and he may look foolish.

- Maybe Peter feared that he will fall out from them and get into the bad books of people in Jerusalem.
- Maybe Peter feared that his position as the chief Apostle would be threatened.

We are not told why he feared, but he did!

In a moment of weakness, he pulled himself away from the fellowship with his Gentile brothers and sisters. And when he did it as the leader, so did Barnabas and all the other Jews.

Imagine yourself, if you were Christian at Antioch church on that day?

***V14, <sup>14</sup> 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?"***

According to this verse that Peter and Barnabas and the others are not being "*straightforward with the truth of the gospel.*"

They are not walking right with the truth of the gospel. They are now out of line with the Gospel.

Do you see what this means?

The benefits of the gospel can only be received by a living faith in the Son of God, not by works of the law.

But when the gospel is received by faith, your life changes.

You don't attain the benefits of the gospel by doing a little moral clean-up job on your life.

You attain forgiveness and joy and peace and power through daily reliance upon Jesus Christ who loved you and gave himself for you.

**Let us look at the reason why they were out of sync with the Gospel?**

## **1. Fear**

The gospel does not bring fear!

**2 Timothy 1:7**, *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

If you are listening to this message or reading and you are tensed, anxious, stressed, depressed with fear or with a vague feeling that something is going to go wrong, you must turn to this great gospel once again.

You need to stop and ponder what it implies about God's intentions toward you that he gave his Son to die for you.

Almighty God is for you and not against you, if you trust him.

**Romans 8:31-34**, *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*

**Hebrews 13:6**, *So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

We have our temporary lapses of faith, like Peter here. But God is gracious! He sent Paul to Peter to bring him back so that he can sync with the gospel again.

Please don't have any fear towards any man if you believe it.

## **2. Hypocrisy**

**V13, <sup>13</sup> And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.**

Rest of the Jews also joined with Peter.

Peter and Barnabas and the others were being two-faced when they withdrew from eating with the Gentile Christians. Their words and actions did not match. They were saying one thing with their actions and believing another in their heart.

They were willing to compromise the gospel for the sake of people. Never compromise on your principle.

Fear brings hypocrisy. All hypocrisy is rooted in fear or insecurity.

**Luke 12:1–4**, *In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. <sup>2</sup>For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. <sup>3</sup>Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. <sup>4</sup>“And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.*

Insecurity is inconsistent with the gospel. When you feel insecure or frightened and are tempted to act out. You end up putting an act in the front and avoid taking a stand for what you believe is right.

Center your life on Jesus and his gospel and the hypocrisy will be plucked out from its root.

### 3. Legalism

***V14, <sup>14</sup> 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?"***

Want you to imagine the conversation between Peter and Paul.

If Peter had said, What compelling? I haven't said they have to live like Jews,

Paul would have said that Peter your actions speak louder than your words. You as an apostle have distanced yourself and cut off the table fellowship with Gentile brothers and sisters because they don't keep dietary laws, and you take Barnabas and all the Jews with you, the Gentile believers cannot escape the impression that they are not fully Christians unless they become Jews.

That is nothing but legalism.

What is legalism?

Requiring a person do some works of law to be accepted by God and by the church.

So, when you promote legalism then you are out of sync with the Gospel.

**Galatians 2:21**, *"I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose."*

If Titus must be circumcised to be accepted in Jerusalem, or if Gentile Christians in Antioch have to keep the Jewish dietary laws to enjoy full fellowship in the body of Christ, then grace is nullified, and Christ died in vain.

## **Conclusion:**

Believe the gospel of Christ and do not fear what men can do to you. Remove every ounce of fear from you.

Believe the gospel of Christ and do not play the hypocrite. Hold to your biblical principles and be willing to suffer the consequences. There is great security and comfort in the gospel.

Believe the gospel of Christ and do not nullify the grace of God. "By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God not because of works lest any man should boast."

Let us make it our aim to glorify and magnify God in all that we do in the grace of God rather than the achievements of man. Let us be in sync with the gospel! Always!!