The Book of Galatians
"The Truth of the Gospel"
Galatians 2:11-19

Foreview

1. A brief autobiography of the Apostle Paul is given by the Holy Spirit (1:1-24). Make no mistake about it—Paul was brought in right relationship with God through faith on the Lord Jesus' complete work at Calvary. He was saved on the basis of Jesus Christ plus nothing!

2. God's revelation of Christ to Paul was real indeed. He, therefore, stood unmovable for the only Gospel of God's grace (1:6-9). But the revelation led to a revelation in Paul (1:16) which was patently recognized by the churches of Judea (1:23). Consequently, God was glorified in Paul (1:24).

3. So radical is the Gospel of grace to what the Jews perceived the O.T. to teach that contention about it rose (2:1-10). A consultation at Jerusalem settled the matter. God's salvation, for both Jews and Gentiles, is in Christ Jesus the Lord plus NOTHING!

4. How this decision of the Consultation was upheld is explained in the text. Two ways are delineated:

1. Showing Peter's INCONSISTENCY vv. 11-13
   a. Personally v. 11
      
      It all happened at Antioch in Syria, although Peter was actually from Jerusalem. This church was a thriving ministry (cf. Acts 11:19ff; 13:1ff). Paul actually stood up against Peter face to face. Scripture records that Peter stood condemned (perfect passive verb found only here and 1 John 3:20f).
   
   b. Practically v. 12
      
      Peter crumbled in the faced of those whom he feared (cf. Mt. 26:69-75). Here it is James who came from Jerusalem! Peter customarily took meals with Gentiles (imperfect tense). However, when James came, he irresolutely kept withdrawing and kept separating (both imperfect tenses). Hence, rather than identify and doing what he knew was right (cf. Acts 10, 11), he feared (present tense) those who Judaized. Peter invited division (cf. 1 Kgs 18:21; Prov. 29:25).
   
   c. Persuasively v. 13
      
      Not even Peter lives by himself. So the divine Record is here: others joined Peter's hypocrisy and Barnabas was led away in the hypocrisy (transliteration of Greek word). No one is an island!

2. Reporting Paul's TESTIMONY vv. 14-21
   a. To Peter vv. 14-18
      
      1) About nature-ization vv. 14, 15
      
      Paul observed that the events of vv. 11-13 were not face to face (Greek) with the (Greek) truth of the (Greek) Gospel, so he spoke up to Peter in the face of all! His argument is simple: Peter was born and bred a Jew, but he lived as the Gentiles. Therefore, why should he, Peter, constrain the Gentiles to Judaize (Greek verb)? After all, the Gentiles were considered to be "sinners," but not the Jews (v. 15). Really, Paul had Peter "over the barrel" with these words.

      2) About justification v. 16
      
      Even though Jews, Paul explains that something is known. It is this: a man is not declared righteous by the law. The only way to be declared righteous is through faith in Christ Jesus (belief is active). And that, says Paul, we did! Why out of faith and not out of law? Purpose (Greek): that we might be declared righteous out of faith on Christ and not out of works of law. Why? Reason: because all flesh shall not be justified out of law (emphasis on "not" and "all").

   3) About condemnation vv. 17, 18
      
      The issue is clear. Being justified out of faith, Jews, as Gentiles, are sinners, but this does not make Christ a minister of sin. That is a totally illogical inference. Jews were sinners in spite of being Jews. Christ's "out of faith justification" made it obvious that Jews were sinners. No wonder Paul wrote "God forbid." Christ cannot be a minister of sin! But to return to the law for hope proves that individual is a transgressor and not Christ. Why? To rebuild what we destroyed proclaims that one was wrong when he threw it down or wrong when building it up again. In either case, he is a transgressor. What a horrible state. When it is no longer possible to rest in the law, there is no security there. But if one fails to rest in Christ alone, there is no refuge in Him. What to do? Cast oneself upon the mercy of God as a lost sinner. Refuse to turn back to any old false hope.

Postview

There is not a scintilla of hope for eternal salvation before God except in His grace. Except a man throw himself upon the infinite mercy of God demonstrated in the finished work of Christ at Calvary, he is lost, undone, and will be eternally condemned. Horrors!