

A Practical Outworking of Gospel Identity and Calling Pt. 5

Galatians 2:11-21, CBC, Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Amazing gospel vv. 1-5, very serious problem with gospel tie vv. 6-10, 1:11-2:10 defends that gospel and call come directly from God; vv. 11-14 continues this theme by referring to incident where tested **I. We MUST Defend the Gospel Relationally vv. 11-14 A. It takes place as we live together** 11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. 13 The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. Many things motivated these actions, talked about conscience, persecution, culture, caring for others who are effected, how we know God's will, ALL part of the discussion, **but need to come back to the surface—actions regardless of their roots needed to be addressed;** Paul seen enough **I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. B. It will include confrontation what forced the issue to head?** 14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas b/c of all the other issues and fears; shouldn't we **back away from controversy and just let people wrestle on own?** Won't it just create more hurt and confusion? Need to remember what at stake—book to this point shows glorious gospel being attacked, **Paul seeking to bring them back to that gospel by establishing CLEAR line from God to his message;** In Ryken, J. Gresham Machen summarized problem this way—"The Gentile Christians, it will be remembered, had been released from the obligation of being circumcised and of undertaking to keep the Mosaic Law. The Jewish Christians, on the other hand, had not been required to give up their ancestral mode of life. But how could the Jewish Christians continue to live under the Law if they held companionship with Gentiles in a way which would render the strict observance of the Law impossible?" when yield to gospel, tied to all those God has called to Himself—involves much more than think at beginning; **You don't need to seek confrontation, it will come as you daily take up your cross to follow Christ together with other believers;** 14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas because of public actions affecting others, public confrontation for gospel's sake I said to Cephas in the presence of all, **Many different issues, but here specifically, address one—"If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? what is that error?"** NOT in eating like Jews/with Jews, but hypocrisy not in belief, but in how that belief lived; **whether knowingly or not, while** you don't believe that you have to eat like the Jews to be a Christian and separate from the Gentiles, NOW acting like boundary markers separating Jews from Gentiles DO matter for gospel fellowship; McNight goes farther—don't go to Greek/English definition of hypocrisy as role playing/switching masks, Jewish roots of word stronger--wickedness, opposition to God and his truth, even heresy; **in** other words, Peter was not simply 'acting' here; he was not simply 'deceiving through pretense.' Instead, he was morally wrong because he was theologically wrong (v. 11); not surprisingly, Paul would say next that Peter had jettisoned the 'truth of the gospel' (v. 14)." See this evidenced by words used here-- **because he stood condemned. AND when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel,** asked, **why does Paul LEAN on this issue as hypocrisy with regards to the gospel? How would this action obscure/undermine the gospel and therefore be sin in spite of Peter's best intentions?** his action showed ALL NOT saved & unified by the same grace—regardless of other intentions/fears, sin b/c full-fledged baptized believers pushed to side as the gospel was denied by another set of priorities/values; gave reason for others to feel justified in NOT fellowshiping w them; issue GOSPEL Rooted, NOT personality/culturally rooted; **the glory of God seen in the incarnation perfect obedient life of Jesus and atoning work of cross meaningless, thereby spreading a different gospel v. 21** **Four quick lessons from this section: 1. ALL need to be held accountable to same gospel**—ALL slip, Easy for fears/convictions/social issues that arise when trying to follow/serve/obey Christ to take your focus from simple devotion to Christ alone and His gospel being clearly seen through; call for all of us to constant recalibrating, not resting on yesterday's grace; correction part of being faithful to end; **2. Our gospel inconsistencies affect the gospel spread to others; don't take it so much as personal attack when others cross you seeking for your life to represent what you profess about Christ;** see it as God through others helping you see His glory and holiness and your tie to it with your actions—then will accept examination/correction for His name's sake **3. It takes courage to stand for the gospel with others**—won't always be acknowledged as such; Paul had feelings, cared about relationships—Paul in minority—even Barnabas who was with him to minister to Gentiles who called him to help him with this group in Antioch Acts 11:25-26 went w Peter; Paul had to think carefully, look farther than just speaking his mind so not discouraged or lost in chaos when pandora's box opened by his words to Peter **4. Standing for the gospel inside relationships allows you to be a minister of mercy as God intended** if Paul not stood up against Peter, would have drifted into Jewish backwater and stagnated or permanent rift b/n Jewish and Gentile Christians—one Lord, two Lord's Tables; preserved both truth of the gospel and "the international unity of the church." Stott, p. 36 encouragement and love includes mercy, way forward, not leaving people in boxes, but also great care that lives moving in line with true gospel—this is merciful/kind/honoring to God must defend the gospel relationally, but also

II. We Must Defend the Gospel with Precision vv. 15-21

Did it NOT b/c had temper, ticked off, but emotions and actions driven by truth of the gospel—what is that truth? Stott, truth? we sinners, guilty and under judgment of God, may be pardoned and accepted by his sheer grace—free and unmerited favour, on ground of His Son's death and not for any works or merits of our own—doctrine of justification—acceptance before God by grace alone through faith alone THIS is what elaborates here; Schreiner notes vv. 15-21 is in short form the gospel Paul proclaims—Betz calls this the central idea/thesis of the letter—right standing w God does not come from keeping the law since everyone sins—only through faith in Jesus—those who revert to law display their own sinfulness in returning to a covenant that has passed away—reject grace of God given in cross of Christ; structure of this section hermeneutical key for remainder of the letter, supports 2:14 assertion—could be still talking to Peter for number of reasons including not clear line b/n 11-14 & 15-21 and new section starts in 3:1, or could be moving into general principles derived from this incident as reflects later; let's dig into section

A. Foundation established vv. 15-16

15 "We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; We (those like Peter, Paul who were born Jews and who have believed in Christ), sinner here speaks of those alienated from God—Jews were God's chosen ones, set apart to be holy and recipients of God's promises Calvin not by own merit, but by God's choice—position established; 16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, KNOWING—Paul speaks with full authority that sought to establish in letter to this point--talking about source of justification (used 8x in Galatians, 3x in this verse—15x in Romans)—Stott notes that justification is the exact opposite of condemnation—to declare guilty; here, to declare righteous—to look and see NO GUILT before God—focused specifically on the day of judgment to come—**KNOW that declared righteous on what basis?** NOT by works of the law 3x—actions in line with all of God's commandments/ the law of God—when you act in light of these commands, it is NOT seen as righteousness which makes you be seen as righteous before God; courtroom not about determining something not true, but ascertaining what took place—here, something different; faith in Christ's work to make us righteous; Rom.

8:33; says it generally, then even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; even we those born as Jews, those chosen of God—even we meaning what HAD as standing not sufficient—Peter/Paul other true Jewish Christians by faith accepted being declared righteous by God through faith in Christ and not by works of the law; final statement universal again since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. Ps. 143:2 referred to here; NOT putting down actions that result from obeying law of God (ie. Rom. 7:12 Mounce—consistent w God’s holy nature; God’s commandments are fair/make no unreasonable demands—good b/c intends very best for people, Gal. 5:14), but IS putting down idea that performance will win acceptance b/r God Rom. 4:5—“Paul saw Christ as the fulfilment of law, when law means God’s revelation of himself and of his character and purpose, but as the condemnation and termination of any attempt to use law to justify oneself. And it is this latter use of law which may conveniently be called (for short) ‘legalism’.” If ‘law means the upward striving of human religion and morality, and therefore colours all human activity with sin, for it represents man’s attempt to scale God’s throne’, it is Moule’s latter use of law that is presumably implied.” Pp. 137-138 Bruce, Rom. 3:20, 10:3-4; both Jew/Gentile Paul/Peter convinced that Jesus “agent of salvation in God’s plan” McKnight; therefore, NOT law; this all sounds good, but what would we be wise to ponder as we dive deeper into these arguments? reading Calvin, reminded that Catholics believe in justification by faith in Christ, but not faith alone—saving grace IN our obedience Where do you think we slide from obedience resulting from faith to obedience which becomes our righteousness? What could be possible warning signs of self-righteousness replacing faith in Christ?

Psalms 143:2 And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no man living is righteous.

Romans 3:20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Romans 4:5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Romans 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

Romans 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

Romans 7:14 For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.

Romans 8:33 Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies;

Romans 10:3-4 For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Galatians 5:14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”