

Galatians Chapter 2

Verse 10

1. The leaders at Jerusalem had one request of Paul - to remember the poor.
2. Why would they be so concerned about this?
3. The church at Jerusalem had fallen on very hard times. There had been a great famine, as prophesied by a prophet named Agabus. **Acts 11:27-28**
 - This especially affected the Jerusalem saints because they had sold all of their possessions and had not laid up anything in store. **Acts 2:44-45**
 - This was done in obedience to the command of Christ, as they were to divest themselves of all assets in anticipation for the coming kingdom.
cf. **Luke 12:22-33, Matthew 10:9-10**
4. Here was the problem: Israel had rejected the kingdom, God had raised up Paul (revealing to him the dispensation of grace), and Israel's kingdom program had been postponed.
 - Now the Jerusalem saints were suffering great need.
5. Paul gladly agreed to abide by the request made in Galatians 2:10. Paul had already been instrumental in taking a love offering to Jerusalem from the church at Antioch. **Acts 11:27-30**
6. Paul also worked hard to help the Jerusalem saints by collecting love offerings among the Gentile churches. **Romans 15:25-28, 2 Corinthians 8-9**

Verse 11

1. Paul had a face-to-face encounter with Peter, and it was not pleasant.
 - The word "withstood" means "to stand against, oppose."
2. After the council at Jerusalem, Peter had come to visit the saints at Antioch, many of whom were Gentiles.
3. Paul says that he rebuked Peter while in Antioch because Peter was to be blamed (at fault).
 - What was Peter to be blamed for? What did he do to provoke Paul to such anger?
 - As we read on, we will discover the reason for this contention.

Verse 12

1. When Peter arrived at Antioch, he was enjoying sweet fellowship with the Gentile believers. This is implied with the phrase "...he did eat with the Gentiles."
 - By eating with the Gentiles, Peter was acknowledging the oneness and equality of Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ.
 - Under the law it was forbidden for Jews to partake with Gentiles, but Peter was rejoicing in the freedom and liberty in Christ that was proclaimed at the Jerusalem Council.
2. Suddenly, things changed. Peter withdrew his fellowship from the Gentile believers. Why would Peter do such a thing?

3. According to this verse, a group of Jews came from the church at Jerusalem. They were associated with James.
 - James was the half brother of Jesus and had ascended to be the primary leader of the church at Jerusalem. **Acts 15:13-21**
 - James was a believer in Christ, but a very strict Jew. He wrote the New Testament book of James.
4. Peter became very intimidated by these Jewish legalists and withdrew his fellowship from the Gentile believers. Notice, it says, "...fearing them which were of the circumcision."
 - Peter boldly obeyed the Lord when God sent him to the house of Cornelius (a Gentile) in **Acts 10**.
 - Peter boldly defended his actions with Cornelius in **Acts 11:1-18**.
 - Peter boldly stood for the Gentile believers in **Acts 15:7-11** at the Jerusalem Council.
5. But, here in Antioch, Peter lost his courage and allowed fear to control his actions.
 - Because of Peter's past record of standing up for the oneness of Jews and Gentiles, Peter's actions here in Antioch appear as sheer hypocrisy.
 - He was seeking to impress and please people instead of Christ. Peter knew better and it was a clear lapse of faith.

Verse 13

1. Here is the tragic truth: Our actions do **not** just affect us, but they always impact others.
2. Peter's rejection of these Gentile believers had a domino effect. The other Jews in the church followed his leadership and also separated from the Gentiles.
 - "Dissembled" - to act hypocritically
3. It is noted that even "...Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation."
 - "Dissimulation" - acting under a feigned part (hypocrisy)
4. This must have broken Paul's heart when he saw Barnabas acting so foolishly.
 - Barnabas had traveled with Paul on their first missionary journey. He had seen firsthand the conversion and transformation of multitudes of Gentiles (apart from the law).
 - Barnabas had stood with Paul at the Jerusalem Council, defending the gospel of grace.
 - Barnabas was one of the original leaders in the church at Antioch. It is certain that he carried great influence (first leader mentioned). **Acts 11:19-26, Acts 13:1**
5. Peter and Barnabas both knew better and were allowing Satan to intimidate them with fear. The unity of the church at Antioch was now being seriously threatened.