

Galatians

The Unencumbered Gospel of Jesus



The Love Feast

What so wrong about Peter withdrawing from the Gentiles to eat with the Jewish brethren?

Peter's actions may seem insignificant to us, but to the first century church, it was a huge statement. To understand, though, we need to take a peak into what Jude calls a "love feast" (Jude 12). In the first century, communion was taken around a table as part of the meal, like on the eve of Jesus's crucifixion. In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul condemns some in the church for leaving behind others in taking the supper. One was full while the other was hungry (1 Corinthians 11:20-22). This brought shame on those who had nothing and ruined the whole purpose of breaking bread together.

Breaking bread was meant to be a community event where everyone was an equal. In leaving the Gentile brethren behind, Peter was showing favoritism and not accepting them into the body of Christ. The practice of communion put Jews and Gentiles on the same level. Peter's actions brought division.



What is the Truth?

The truth of the gospel has to do with *action!*



Are Gentiles Sinners?

The Gentiles were a law unto themselves.



How Did Paul Die to the Law?

Paul died to the Law through the body of Jesus.

Galatians 2:11-21

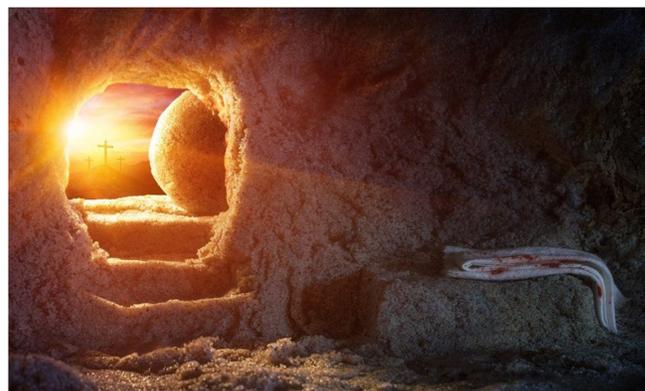
The second half of Galatians 2 recounts a major problem Paul had with Peter. He also introduces his theological arguments in defense of the Gentiles and his law-free gospel.

In not eating with the Gentiles in the presence of the Jewish Christians, Peter was basically saying that the Gentile Christians were not equal members of the body of Christ.

Paul said this was contrary to the “Truth of the Gospel,” which is not simply doctrinal, it is how the community lives out the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus who died to bless all families of the earth.

Paul saw dying to the Law as liberating because nobody can be justified by the Law. If Jews and Gentiles are equally justified by faith, why should the Gentiles be compelled to keep something that was ineffective in bringing about justification?

Paul’s point is that he died to the Law through



“I died to the Law, so that I might live for God.”

being crucified with Christ. Because of that crucial fact, he no longer lives for himself, but he allows Christ to live through him.

Although he lives “in the flesh” (that is, he still keeps the Law), he does so by faith in the Son of God, not for the sake of his own righteousness.

If righteousness comes through the Law, then Jesus died needlessly.

PAUL AND BARNABAS SPLIT UP

One of the saddest scenes in Acts is when Paul and Barnabas split up. In Acts 15, Luke only gives us a few details: Paul and Barnabas disagreed over the reliability of John Mark, but is this the full story?

In Galatians 2, Paul gives a few additional details about their time in Antioch (Acts 15:35). Apparently Barnabas, the son of encouragement, was caught up in the hypocrisy of Peter. Though he had taught the gospel alongside Paul to countless believers, he was carried away by Peter’s example.

Could this further explain their split in Acts 15? Possibly!

