

A Practical Study of

GALATIANS: You Were Running Well

"Freedom vs. Legalism: The Truth Shall Set You Free"

Study #4 – Galatians 2:11-21

UNTIL: Peer Pressure Postponed Progress

Key verse: Galatians 2:12

For before certain from James came, He was eating with the Gentiles (it was his habit to eat). But when they came He was drawing back and separating himself, fearing those of the circumcision.

TEXT:

v. 11 But when Cephas came to Antioch to his face I opposed him, because he stood condemned.

v. 12 For before certain from James came, He was eating with the Gentiles (it was his habit to eat). But when they came He was drawing back and separating himself, fearing those of the circumcision.

v. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the role with him. So that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

v. 14 But when I saw that they were not walking straight in relation to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of everybody, "If you being a Jew are living as the Gentiles and not as the Jews, how are you constraining the Gentiles to live as Jews?"

v. 15 As for us we are Jews by nature and not sinners of Gentile origin (the Gentiles).

v. 16 And knowing that a man is not justified (made righteous) by the works of the law only through faith in Christ Jesus. We also believed in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be made righteous by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law because by the works of the law there shall no flesh be made righteous.

v. 17 But if while seeking to be made righteous in Christ we ourselves also were found to be sinners, therefore is Christ a minister of sin? May it not happen (perish the thought).

v. 18 For if the things I tear down these things I build again I am showing myself a transgressor.

v. 19 For I through the law died to the law in order that I might live unto God.

v. 20 With Christ I have been crucified and I no longer am living but Christ is living in me and that life which now I am living in the flesh I am living by faith, which faith is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself on my behalf.

v. 21 I am not nullifying the grace of God. For if through law comes righteousness then Christ died uselessly (without a cause).

INTRODUCTION:

(Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright - Brennan Manning, 1994.

An old anecdote is told about a farm boy whose one skill was finding lost donkeys. When asked how he did this, he answered, "I just figured out where I would go if I was a jackass, and there it was."
p. 169

(The Medicine Keepers by J. B. Allen) Lubbock, TX: Grey Horse Press.
Copyright - J. B. Allen, 1997.

Compadres

“Hey, Pard!” I heard ‘im holler
As he strode across the floor;
I turned and saw him grinnin’ ear to ear.
We stood like long-lost buddies
Though we’d met just once before
And lookin’ back it’d been almost a year.

He didn’t look much older
And his eye and grip still firm
As we started in to ketch up on the news,
‘Cause it seemed we’d knowed each other
For a whole lot longer term
While we shared some common idys, thoughts, and views.

Miles and years still separate us,
Though we meet from time to time
Where some cowboys chance to gether, here and there,
And the friendship, quickly started,
With some agein’ rates as “prime,”
Though our natures now are kin to grizzly bear.

I ‘spect we’ll mind our manners,
Fer not often do we find
A feller who will overlook our faults
And still be glad to see us
When it seems we’ve lost our minds
While spriklin’ foolish statements with some salt.
p. 39

(Cowboy Poetry: A Gathering edited by Hal Cannon) Salt Lake City, UH:
Gibbs M. Smith. Copyright– Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1985.

COWBOY'S FAVORITE

BARNEY NELSON

When a man spends his life on horseback,
And the country's been his home,
There are things he learns to love
As across the range he roams.

There's the scent of burning cedar
And the rhythmic windmill creak,
The song of a friendly mockingbird,
And sunshine on his cheek.

There's the smell of boiling coffee
Or a lonely coyote call,
The smell of sweaty horseflesh
And a lost calf's mournful bawl.

The light from a kerosene lamp
And the early flow'rs in spring,
These are but a few of
A cowboy's favorite things.

But there's one thing that the cowboy
Loves more than all the rest,
That makes him glad to be alive
And puts strength in his breast.

It's not the song that a fiddle plays
Or the money in his jeans.
It's not a brand new pair o' boots
Or a pot of pinto beans.

It's the promise from the Foreman,
Who rules the Range on High,
That the cows will once more fatten
And that the short grass will not die.

This smell that every cowboy loves,
No matter what the season,
And this sound that chases frowns away
Not matter what the reason,

Is a simple thing that fills his heart
With peace from crib to cane,
The gift that brings life to his home,
The sound and smell of rain.
pp. 172-3

I Shall Not Be Moved Lyrics

Johnny Cash

(Homer Morris)

Well lordy I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 Just like a tree that's growin' in the meadow (down by the water)
 I shall not be moved

I'm on my way to glory land and I shall not be moved
 On my way to glory land I will not be moved
 I'm like a tree that's planted by the water
 I shall not be moved

I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 Just like a tree that's planted by the water
 I shall not be moved

I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 Just like a tree that's planted by the water
 I shall not be moved

Well I'm on my way to glory land and I shall not be moved
 On my way to glory land I shall not be moved
 I'm like a tree that's planted by the water
 I shall not be moved

Oh well
 I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 I shall not be, I shall not be moved
 Just like a tree that's planted by the water
 I shall not be moved

On this rock of ages, I shall not be moved
 On this rock of ages, I shall not be moved
 Just like a tree that's planted by the water
 I shall not be moved

Glory, glory, glory hallelujah, I shall not be moved
Glory hallelujah, I shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted by the water
I shall not be moved

<http://www.lyricsondemand.com/j/johnnycashlyrics/ishallnotbemovedlyrics.html>

Grandma's Hands

Grandma, some ninety plus years, sat feebly on the patio bench. She didn't move, just sat with her head down staring at her hands.

When I sat down beside her she didn't acknowledge my presence and the longer I sat I wondered if she was OK.

Finally, not really wanting to disturb her but wanting to check on her at the same time, I asked her if she was OK. She raised her head and looked at me and smiled. "Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking," she said in a clear, strong voice.

"I didn't mean to disturb you, grandma, but you were just sitting here staring at your hands and I wanted to make sure you were OK," I explained to her.

"Have you ever looked at your hands," she asked. "I mean really looked at your hands?"

I slowly opened my hands and stared down at them. I turned them over, palms up and then palms down. No, I guess I had never really looked at my hands as I tried to figure out the point she was making.

Grandma smiled and related this story:

"Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well throughout your years. These hands, though wrinkled shriveled and weak have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out and grab and embrace life.

"They braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed upon the floor. They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back. As a child, my mother taught me to fold them in prayer. They tied my shoes and pulled on my boots. They held my husband and wiped my tears when he went off to war.

"They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent. They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn son. Decorated with my wedding band they showed the world that I was married and loved someone special.

"They wrote my letters to him and trembled and shook when I buried my parents and spouse.

“They have held my children and grandchildren, consoled neighbors, and shook in fists of anger when I didn’t understand.

“They have covered my face, combed my hair, and washed and cleansed the rest of my body. They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and raw. And to this day when not much of anything else of me works real well these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer.

“These hands are the mark of where I’ve been and the ruggedness of life. But more importantly it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when he leads me home. And with my hands He will lift me to His side and there I will use these hands to touch the face of Christ.”

I will never look at my hands the same again. But I remember God reached out and took my grandma’s hands and led her home.

When my hands are hurt or sore or when I stroke the face of my children and husband I think of grandma. I know she has been stroked and caressed and held by the hands of God.

I, too, want to touch the face of God and feel His hands upon my face.

(Received via email from Linda Wilson, April 17, 2008)

(The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You by John Ortberg)
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright— John Ortberg, 2010.

Some people tempt me out of the flow of the Spirit. They judge me, and I feel discouraged. They dislike me, and I feel rejected. They are a black hole of need and drain me. They throw roadblocks in my path and discourage me. They anger me. They scare me. Plus I don't like them.

The playwright George Bernard Shaw sat next to a pompous bore at a dinner party one evening. After listening to an interminable monologue of useless information, Shaw observed, "Between the two of us we know all there is to know."

"How's that?" asked his fascinated companion.

"Well," replied Shaw, "you seem to know everything except that you're a bore. And I know that!"

Shaw and Winston Churchill famously found each other to be difficult. Shaw once sent two tickets to Churchill to the opening night of one of his plays, with instructions to "bring a friend—if you have one." Churchill sent them back because he was busy opening night. He said he would come on "the second night—if there is one."

p. 203

(Faith & Doubt by John Ortberg) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright—
John Ortberg, 2008.

Frederick Buechner has written, "There is perhaps no better proof for the existence of God than the way year after year he survives the way his professional friends promote him."

p. 112

(The Barbarian Way: Soul Cravings by Erwin Raphael McManus) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Erwin Raphael McManus, 2005.

There was no pristine call to a proper religion. It was a barbaric call to a barbarian way. Peter understood that and struggled to live up to it. Jesus' words about love ignited the primal fires within Peter's faith. Longing to follow Jesus even to His death, he declared to Jesus, "Lord, why can't I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You."

Jesus' simple response was, "Will you really lay down your life for Me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows you will disown Me three times." (See Matthew 26:31-35.)

Yes, Peter failed in his endeavor, but he understood what Jesus was asking for. Love and sacrifice were inseparable. The barbarian way is not about violence fueled by vengeance and hatred. The barbarian way is about love expressed through sacrifice and servanthood.

p. 34

(My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers) Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House. Copyright– Oswald Chambers Publications Association, 1992.

Never disregard a conviction that the Holy Spirit brings to you. If it is important enough for the Spirit of God to bring it to your mind, it is the very thing He is detecting in you. You were looking for some big thing to give up, while God is telling you of some tiny thing that must go. But behind that tiny thing lies the stronghold of obstinacy, and you say, "I will not give up my right to myself"—the very thing that God intends you to give up if you are to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

(September 24)

A commentary on many a life in Christ can be summarized in the statement:

"You were running well UNTIL: Peer Pressure Postponed Progress."

When we get our eyes off the Lord Jesus and our one desire to please Him, and we get those eyes on people around us and our desire is to please them, we then begin to fail in making the normal progress toward spiritual growth that should be ours.

Galatians 1:10 (DAV)

For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God or am I seeking to please men? If I still were pleasing men, a bondservant of Christ I would not be.

Since the Judaizers were claiming special authorization from Peter, it was necessary to point out in Paul's argument that Peter by no means was infallible.

I think it is interesting for us to note here that Peter is by no means pictured as a person who is perfect or infallible in all of his judgments but that he, too, can make mistakes and can fail to act in the best interest of everyone who is involved in a situation.

Anders says:

SUPPORTING IDEA: *Paul was a true apostle because he admonished and corrected Peter's accommodation of the false teachers. Only a true apostle could rebuke and correct Peter.*

p. 22

Barclay says:

THE trouble was by no means at an end. Part of the life of the early Church was a common meal; they called it the *Agape*, the Love Feast. At this feast the whole congregation came together to enjoy a common meal provided by a pooling of whatever resources they had. For many of the slaves it must have been the only decent meal they had all week; and in a very special way it marked the fellowship, the togetherness of the Christians. That seems, on the face of it, a lovely thing. But we must remember the rigid exclusiveness of the narrower Jew. The narrower Jew regarded his people as the Chosen People in such a way that it involved the rejection of all other nations.

p. 18

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

3. *Peter comes to Antioch (2:11-14)*

The account of the Jerusalem Council is followed immediately by another historical incident, the last in Paul's series, in which he dramatically supports his claim to possess an authority equal to and independent of the other apostles. In the opening part of this chapter, Paul has demonstrated his essential unity with those who were apostles before him. Now he shows that he stood so firmly grounded in the Gospel that he opposed even Peter, contradicting him publicly when Peter's conduct at Antioch threatened to compromise that Gospel.

p. 716

Bartlett says:

Upon that occasion Paul's authority as an apostle showed to better advantage than did that of Peter. Instead of Peter's rebuking Paul—as the Judaizers no doubt would have preferred—we find Paul rebuking Peter. Nor does this occurrence fit in very well with theories of the primacy of Peter that have held sway in many quarters from that day to this. Out of fairness to Peter, however, it ought to be pointed out that his true greatness is shown in the humble spirit in which he took the rebuke and profited by it. True humility submits to correction.

p. 43

Bartlett says:

Peter stood condemned by the Christians of Antioch for inconsistency of conduct that was not without a mixture of cowardice and hypocrisy.

p. 44

Baxter says:

Here, then, in chapters i. and ii., we have the AUTHENTICITY of the Gospel: (a) as to its *origin*, in chapter i.; and (b) as to its *nature*, in chapter ii. Moreover, these two chapters are important as showing the basic identity of the Gospel preached by Paul, Peter, and the other apostles. Beware of some today who play off “Pauline” versus “Petrine” versus “Johanine”!
p. 145

Bickel & Jantz say:

When Leaders Collide

Galatians 2:11-21

p. 55

Bickel & Jantz say:

So far Paul has made two points in this phase of his argument. One, he was given his authority by God independent of the other apostles. Two, his authority and message were recognized by the other apostles.
p. 55

De Haan says:

The message for this age is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house.” To place oneself under the law is to return to the curse and be lost. The sinner is saved by grace WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW, and the believer is kept by the grace of God WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW. In our next message we shall see Paul’s testimony in Galatians 2:19,

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God (Gal. 2:19).

For Christ is the end of the law . . . to every one that believeth (Rom. 10:4).

pp. 61-62

Gutzke says:

Do you realize the importance of being consistent in the way you act?

Actions speak louder than words! “What you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say.” How often I have felt the truth of this. Witnessing for Christ and the gospel depends largely on the way a person acts before others. Part of the condemnation of the Pharisees by our Lord was this very fact: “They say, but they do not.” James urges all, “Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

In Galatians 2:11-14 is reported an occasion when Peter and others did not live up to their convictions, and Paul found it necessary to challenge them.

p. 38

Hendriksen says:

Paul continues to prove “the essential independence both of his gospel and of his position.” That gospel which had been so enthusiastically endorsed by the “pillars,” etc. at Jerusalem was able to assert itself, when necessary, even *over against* one of those very “men of repute.” The theory according to which the rebuke here administered was addressed to some other “*Cephas*,” not to the apostle, is without a shred of evidence. The *Cephas* or *Peter* indicated here in 2:11 ff. must have been the one to whom Paul referred previously in this same letter (1:18; 2:7-9). And that person was one of Jerusalem’s “pillars,” none other than Peter the apostle, the leader of The Twelve.

p. 89

Hendriksen says:

When Cephas arrived in Antioch he, too, had fallen in line with this new procedure and had continued in this manner for some time. But then something occurred which brought about an inexcusable and dangerous change in his behavior. Into the church-gathering walked “certain individuals from James.” In the light of such passages as Acts 15:1, 24 it is not necessary to conclude that these “investigators” actually represented the view of James or that they had been delegated by him. Far more natural would seem to be the explanation that they came from the church at Jerusalem, a church in which James occupied a position of special prominence. Although some cling to the theory that these “individuals from James” and “those who belonged to the circumcision party” are two different groups, the text does not demand this interpretation. In all probability the “individuals from James” belonged to the same group as the Judaizers to which reference is made in Acts 15:1. In the latter passage they demanded that the Gentiles, in order to be admitted to the church, be circumcised. Here we meet them once more in the same city of Antioch, and this time they insist (perhaps by their very presence and refusal to eat with Gentile believers) that Jews dine with Jews, Gentiles with Gentiles. And Cephas hesitates, then little by little begins to withdraw himself from the Gentiles, until at length he is completely separating himself and is no longer eating with the Gentiles.

p. 93

Hogg & Vine say:

Moreover, if the incident about to be related took place after the Council at Jerusalem at all, it must have taken place immediately after it, for Paul and Barnabas separated soon after their return to Antioch, as recorded in Acts 15. 36-40, and were never together again.

p. 80

Ironside says:

THIS passage suggests a number of interesting considerations. First of all, we are rather astonished perhaps to find Paul and Peter, both inspired men, both commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ to go out into the world proclaiming His gospel, both apostles, now sharply differing one from the other. It would suggest certainly that the apostle Peter who is the one at fault is not the rock upon which the Church is built. What a wobbly kind of a rock it would be if he were, for here is the very man to whom the Father gave that wonderful revelation that Christ was the Son of the living God, actually behaving in such a way at Antioch as to bring discredit upon the gospel of the grace of God.
pp. 74-75

Ironside says:

To Antioch, a Gentile city in which there was a large church composed mainly of Gentile believers, where Paul and Barnabas had been laboring for a long time, Peter came for a visit. I suppose he was welcomed with open arms. It must have been a very joyous thing for the apostle Paul to welcome Peter, and to be his fellow-laborer in ministering the Word of God to these people of Antioch. At first they had a wonderfully happy time. Together they went in and out of the homes of the believers and sat down at the same tables with Gentile Christians. Peter was once so rigid a Jew that he could not even think of going into the house of a Gentile to have any fellowship whatsoever. What a happy thing it was to see these different believers, some at one time Jews, and others once Gentiles, now members of one Body, the Body of Christ, enjoying fellowship together, not only at the Lord's table, but also in their homes. For when Paul speaks of eating with Gentiles I take it that it was at their own tables where they could have the sweetest Christian fellowship talking together of the things of God while enjoying the good things that the Lord provides. But unhappily there came in something that hindered, that spoiled that hallowed communion.
pp. 76-77

MacArthur says:

2:11-13 A brief account of the darkest of days in the history of the gospel. By withdrawing from the Gentile believers to fellowship with the Judaizers who held a position he knew was wrong, Peter had in appearance supported their doctrine and nullified Paul's divine teaching, especially the doctrine of salvation by grace alone through faith alone.
p. 1662

MacArthur says:

In Galatians 2:11-21, the scene changes from Jerusalem and the council there to Syrian Antioch, where the first church in a Gentile area was established and where Paul and Barnabas served as co-pastors, with help from three other men (see Acts 13:1). Paul continues the defense of his apostolic credentials by reporting his exercise of authority on one occasion even over Peter, whom most believers in the early church consider to be the preeminent apostle. And Paul did not hesitate to correct him when he was out of line with the truth. First he briefly explains Peter's deviation from the gospel and then, from that platform, presents it in its true form.
p. 48

Machen says:

Now, in Gal. 2:11-21, Paul presents the third and last of his arguments for his apostolic independence. So independent was he, he says, that on one occasion he could even oppose the chief of the original apostles himself.

"But when Cephas came to Antioch," says Paul, "I withstood him to the face, because he was condemned." It is not necessary to ask *by whom* Peter "was condemned"; Paul means that his very act condemned him. When he says that he "was condemned," that is only a more forcible way of saying that he was worthy of condemnation.

p. 134

McGee says:

In this personal section of Paul's life we have seen his experience in Arabia with the Lord Jesus Christ, and his experience with the apostles in Jerusalem. Now we see Paul's experience in Antioch with Simon Peter—I love this section.
p. 159

McGee says:

When Simon Peter came up to visit Paul in Antioch, it was a new experience for him because, although converted, he had never eaten anything unclean. Remember what Peter told the Lord on the roof in Joppa before he went to the home of Cornelius. He had a vision of heaven opening and a sheet being lowered in which were all kinds of unclean animals. “And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common” (Acts 10:13-15).

Peter had been a believer for some time when he came to visit Paul in Antioch, but he had still followed the Jewish eating pattern. When Peter came to the church, he found there a gentile table and a kosher table. Now notice Peter's reaction: . . .
p. 159

Pinnock says:

Paul's clash with Peter is revealing both of Paul's independence of other apostles and of the evangelical principle of justification by faith. It is quite a spectacle. Two of the greatest apostles locked in confrontation. Paul calls Peter to account for his conduct as a Christian leader.

It is not difficult to figure out what happened. Peter had been in the habit of eating with Gentile Christians. In line with early Christian custom, the common meal would have included the Lord's Supper. Then a pressure group from Jerusalem arrived, claiming to have been sent by James. They may well have been from his circle (cf. Acts 15:24). But it is certain he did not send them to create dissension in the church at Antioch. At any rate their presence caused Peter to withdraw from the common table with Gentile believers. For this Paul stood up against him because he was clearly in the wrong. Though he respected him as a pillar apostle, he had to expose this act of duplicity.

pp. 30-31

Ridderbos says:

Some want to fix the time of Peter's arrival as preceding the apostolic council, on the ground that otherwise his performance at Antioch would not be intelligible. Against this, it can be said that Peter could come to Antioch, where many Jews were certainly living, notwithstanding the settlement of the council. Further, the difference between Paul and Peter was concerned in the first place, not with the way in which the Gentiles, but with the way in which the Jews should conduct themselves. Although no time indication is given, it seems to lie in the whole bearing of the context that Peter came to Antioch *after* the apostolic council. Nothing is said here about the purpose of Peter's coming.

p. 95

Vos says:

After the Jerusalem Council Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch. Great rejoicing occurred there over the council decision, which was worded as follows: “We trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornications, and from things strangled, and from blood” (Ac 15:19-20). In other words Gentiles were not under the law but were expected to avoid certain pagan religious and social practices for the sake of the Christian testimony. For a while all went well in Antioch. Such great love sprang up between Jewish and Gentile believers that they ate the agapē, or love-feast together. This practice was an emblem of Christian unity and the interruption of it was sure to harm the church.
pp. 43-44

Wiersbe titles verses 11-13 and then verses 14-21 and then says:

The watchman (11-13). Paul was not afraid to confront the apostle Peter when Peter moved away from the truth of the gospel. “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty!” said Wendell Phillips, and that applies to our spiritual liberty as well.

The destroyer (14-21). Jesus destroyed the law by fulfilling it (Matt. 5:17-20). His death tore the temple veil (Luke 23:44-45) and removed the wall between Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14-18). To go back to Moses is to rebuild what Jesus tore down and say that He did not really save us when we trusted Him.
p. 767

Wiersbe says:

The curtain falls on this drama, but it will go up to reveal another. Once again God’s “freedom fighter” will have to defend the truth of the gospel, this time before Peter.
p. 51

Wiersbe says:

“Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty!” Wendell Phillips said that at a Massachusetts antislavery meeting in 1852, but its sentiment is valid today—not only in the realm of the political, but even more so in the realm of the spiritual. Paul had risked his life to carry the gospel of God’s grace to the regions beyond, and he was not willing for the enemy to rob him or his churches of their liberty in Christ. It was this “spiritual vigilance” that led Paul into another dramatic encounter, this time with the apostle Peter, Barnabas, and some of the friends of James. Again, the drama is in three acts.

p. 55

Wuest says:

But Paul’s independence of the Twelve is not only seen in his activities at Jerusalem, but in his act of rebuking Peter at Antioch when the latter was yielding to pressure from the legalizers and was adding law to grace, and in that way denying the fundamental of the gospel (2:11-21).

p. 68

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles verses 11-21 and then says:

He rebuked the reputed chief of the apostles (2:11-21).

In this final historical incident Paul related how he found it necessary to oppose even Peter, the reputed chief of the apostles, for conduct which threatened to compromise the gospel. The contrast with the previous section is dramatic.

Let’s remember now that our key verse for the whole book is:

Galatians 5:7 (DAV)

You were running well. Who cut in on you that you should not obey the truth.

We have considered:

1. You Were Running Well UNTIL: No Runs, No Hits, and a Big Error (Galatians 1:1-9)
2. You Were Running Well UNTIL: You Forgot What God Was Doing in Your Life (Galatians 1:10-24)
3. You Were Running Well UNTIL: Divine Direction Was Not Discerned (Galatians 2:1-10)

This now brings our attention to:

4. You Were Running Well UNTIL: Peer Pressure Postponed Progress (Galatians 2:11-21)

We will conclude Galatians 2 with this particular study.

Let's pick up our study now with Galatians 2:11.

v. 11 But when Cephas came to Antioch to his face I opposed him, because he stood condemned.

The NET Bible titles this section:

Paul Rebukes Peter

The NET Bible translates verse 11:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he had clearly done wrong.

Peterson paraphrases verse 11:

Later, when Peter came to Antioch, I had a face-to-face confrontation with him because he was clearly out of line.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

2:11. When Paul visited Jerusalem, Peter (and others) gave him “the right hand of fellowship”; but when **Peter** visited **Antioch**, Paul **opposed him to his face**. The time of Peter’s trip to Antioch is not known. There is no reference to it in the Book of Acts, but perhaps the visit occurred soon after Paul, Barnabas, and Titus returned to Antioch from Jerusalem. At any rate Peter’s conduct in Antioch produced a tense face-to-face confrontation between two Christian leaders. Paul felt compelled to rebuke and condemn Peter for his actions, thus defending the gospel and demonstrating again his own independence and equality as an apostle.

We just left them in **JERUSALEM UNIFIED** and now in **ANTIOCH THERE IS CONFLICT**.

Paul goes to Jerusalem and in their **CREED** they are **UNIFIED**. Peter goes to Antioch and in their **CONDUCT** they are **DIVIDED**.

They joined their hands singing “Blest be the Tie that Binds” in our last study and now there is conflict between them.

Peter has gotten a report on the fabulous things that have been happening in Antioch and so he wants to check it out. He takes this 360-mile trip north to Antioch, and this is where the confrontation takes place.

The word **“BUT”** forms the **CONTRAST** to the previous verses which Paul has just recounted with regard to their unity and the extension of the “right hand of fellowship” to him and Barnabas and their ministry.

Paul says that when Peter came to Antioch, “I stood against him face-to-face.”

In Jerusalem Paul looked on Peter as his equal in rank and sphere of work, but in Antioch he was his superior in character and courage.

Pinnock points out:

Peter knew as well as Paul that God accepted Gentiles and Jews alike on the basis of Christ’s death. His vision of the great sheet lowered, containing all kinds of clean and unclean animals, had taught him a never-to-be-forgotten lesson. “What God has cleansed, you must not call common” (Acts 10:9-16). So it was not that Peter did not know better. He simply did not have the courage of his convictions, and actions speak louder than words. What made matters worse was the great effect Peter’s action had on others. The rest of the Jews and even Barnabas went along with him. It was an emergency situation. A split in the church was imminent and the truth of the gospel was about to be lost.

p. 31

Acts 10:34 (DAV)

And Peter having opened his mouth, said, “Of a truth I am in the process of comprehending the fact that God is not one to show partiality.

(Lonely Husbands, Lonely Wives: Rekindling Intimacy in Every Marriage by Dennis Rainey) Dallas: Word Publishing. Copyright - Dennis Rainey, 1989.

Rare is the person who can weigh the faults of others without putting his hands on the scales.

Author Unknown

p. 225

(Honest to God? Becoming an Authentic Christian by Bill Hybels) Grand Rapids: Zondervan Books. Copyright - Bill Hybels, 1990.

One day when I was getting ready to step out of the shower at the YMCA where I work out, I noticed another man step out ahead of me. After making sure no one was watching, he grabbed my towel, dried himself, threw the towel on the floor, and then headed for the locker room. I couldn't believe it!

I was upset by his action, and, being the forthright, fearless, outspoken, born activist that I am . . . I said absolutely nothing. I've learned over the years to mind my manners around people bigger and stronger than I. But this guy was little and old. He was probably freebasing his vitamins! And still I said nothing—on the outside. On the inside I was raging. "Excuse me, mister. That was my towel you just profaned. And I am more than a little perturbed about it!"

The man didn't know it was my towel he had just ripped off, so when I entered the locker room, he tried to engage me in friendly conversation: the stock market, the Bears' players strike, the weekend, the weather forecast. What did I do? I joined in the conversation and graciously submerged my feelings about what he had done. We dressed and parted ways.

But you know what? The next time I see that man, the first thought that's going to cross my mind is, "Why did he swipe my towel?" That man doesn't know it, but there's a major blockage in our relationship.

PEACE-KEEPING OR TRUTH-TELLING

Why didn't I just say, "Excuse me, sir, that's my towel"? or "Sir, did you forget your towel? I'll be happy to get you one." Why didn't I engage myself in the situation honestly?

I'll tell you why. Because it's human nature to prefer peace-keeping over truth-telling. Most of us will do almost anything to avoid conflict.

Years ago I saw a television show where a camera was hidden in a restaurant. An actor entered, sat next to a man eating at the counter, and without saying a word, grabbed some French fries off the man's plate. This scenario was repeated numerous times, and nine times out of ten the victims never said a word. You knew they were doing a slow burn inside; they clenched their fists and glared at the thief in disbelief. But they never said a word.

When people submerge their true feelings in order to preserve harmony, they undermine the integrity of a relationship. They buy peace on the surface, but underneath there are hurt feelings, troubling questions, and hidden hostilities just waiting to erupt. It's a costly price to pay for a cheap peace, and it inevitably leads to inauthentic relationships.

pp. 52-53

The reason Paul opposed Peter here is because he stood condemned. In other words, he knew better so he was not acting in accordance with his personal convictions.

Ephesians 6:13 (DAV)

On this account, take the whole armor of God in order that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and after proving victorious over everything, to stand your ground.

Peter is **COMPROMISING** here instead of standing for his **CONVICTIONS**.

One is reminded of the **CHARACTER** and **COURAGE** of **MARTIN LUTHER** at the Diet of Worms when he said:

“Here I stand. God help me.”

May it be God’s desire to give us more mighty oaks like the Apostle Paul that can stand the storms and pressure of life even if it means that it is necessary to stand alone.

The Phillips translation of Romans 12:1-2 is very significant at this point.

Romans 12:1-2 (Phillips)

With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.

Matthew 26:69-75 (NASB)

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a certain servant-girl came to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." And when he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." And again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." And a little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; for the way you talk gives you away." Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!" And immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, "Before a cock crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Anders says:

2:11. Having presented his acceptance by the Jerusalem leaders, Paul turns to an incidence that illustrated his apostolic clout. He exercised his apostolic authority with the strongest church leader—Peter. Paul's authority as an apostle is confirmed through this correction of Peter. In this section, Paul comes to **Antioch** and corrects Peter, the leader of the Jews, **because he was clearly in the wrong** by giving the appearance that he was siding with the false teachers. By assuming the authority to correct Peter, Paul shows his authority and the truth of his message of grace.

p. 22

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

For some reason, Peter had left the Jewish community at Jerusalem and had gone to the Gentile city of Antioch in Syria. There he discovered a community of Jewish and Gentile Christians living together and, in particular, eating together in apparent disregard of Jewish dietary customs. This was probably against the practice then prevailing in Jerusalem even after the council, but God had already shown Peter what he was to do in such situations (see Ac 10:15). So Peter joined with other Jews for some time in eating with his Gentile brothers. In this decision, he went beyond the letter of the decrees of the council, for though the council had acknowledged the right of freedom from the law for Gentiles, it had nevertheless retained the observance of the law for Jews. Now Peter was declaring that the Jew as well as the Gentile was free from Mosaic legislation.

p. 716

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

What did Paul do? Since the schism was public, Paul confronted Peter publicly, charging him with inconsistency and stating once again that observing the law has no place in God's plan of salvation. From this response, the Galatians could realize that Paul was not a self-appointed apostle, nor even a worker appointed and approved by the Twelve. He was rather a full apostle in his own right, who could therefore speak with full authority—even, if necessary, in opposition to another apostle.

p. 717

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

1. It is not known exactly when Peter came to Antioch, but the flow of events suggests that it was after the council. The Antioch incident reflects an entirely new situation from the council. There was a new issue (foods rather than circumcision), a new area of the faith (Christian living rather than the basis of salvation), and a new subject (Jewish liberty rather than the freedom of Gentile Christians). This dispute could have followed naturally upon the compromise reached at the council.

p. 717

Bartlett says:

Thus Peter was forcing the issue of conformity to the law of disunity in the Church. The Church was being split wide open. It was a crisis that called for decisive action. No half-way measures would do. As Peter had erred and sinned publicly, it was needful for the cause of the gospel that he be rebuked before the whole Church.

p. 45

Eadie says:

Antioch, a large and magnificent city, had communication by the Orontes and its port of Seleucia with all the territories bordering on the Mediterranean, and it was connected by an overland route with Arabia and the countries on and beyond the Euphrates. Men of all nations easily found their way into it for business or pleasure; and into this capital named after his father, Seleucus had introduced a large colony of Jews who lived under their own ethnarch. From being the metropolis of Greek sovereigns, it became through the fortune of war the residence of Roman proconsuls. The gospel had been brought to it at an early period. Persons who had fled on the martyrdom of Stephen travelled as far as Antioch, "preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only," acting according to their light and their national possessions. But a section of these itinerating preachers, "men of Cyprus and Cyrene," had larger hearts and freer views, and they at Antioch "spoke unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus." Great results followed these ministrations.

pp. 146-7

Eadie says:

Antioch thus became the metropolis of Gentile Christianity, and Jerusalem looked with jealousy on its northern rival. In it originated the first formal Christian mission, and Paul made it his headquarters, starting from it on his three great evangelistic journeys.

p. 147

Eadie says:

Peter therefore being signalized as a condemned man, Paul was obliged to interfere on behalf of honesty, consistency, and spiritual freedom—
p. 150

Fergusson says:

3. The most eminent saints on earth are not free of their own sinful and blameworthy failings; they hereby they may be kept humble, and from being lifted up with their gifts, graces, and other excellences, 2 Cor. xii. 7, and others may hereby learn not to think of them above what is written, 1 Cor. iv. 6; for, ever the apostles themselves, and penmen of Scripture, though they could not err in writing Scripture, being therein guided by the infallible assistance of the Spirit, 2 Pet. i. 21; yet in other things they had their own sinful failings, as is evident in Peter; “Because he was to be blamed.”
p. 35

Gaebelein says:

Peter had visited Antioch and Paul had to withstand him to the face, for he was blameworthy.

Coming to Antioch, where Peter found a large Gentile church he there enjoyed his liberty in Christ; he ate with the Gentiles, realizing that the middle wall of partition was broken down (Eph. ii:14) and that believing Jews and Gentiles were one in Christ. All went well till some from James in Jerusalem showed themselves in Antioch. Then Peter, afraid of opposition, not because he thought in the least that he was wrong, separated himself, leaving them which were of the circumcision. His example led the other Jewish believers to dissemble likewise with him and even Barnabas joined in and, as a result, the unity of the Spirit was given up and the truth of the gospel marred.
p. 211

Henry says:

I. He acquaints them with another interview which he had with the apostle Peter at Antioch, and what passed between them there, v. 11-14. In their other meeting, there had been good harmony and agreement. But in this Paul finds himself obliged; to oppose Peter.

p. 1839

Hogg & Vine say:

Antioch, now Antakia, the ancient capital of Syria, situated on the river Orontes, was founded by Seleucus Nicator, 300 B.C., and named after Antiochus, his father. It became a city of great importance under the Greeks, who granted full political privileges to the Jews there. Syria became a Roman province under the rule of Pompey, who in 64 B.C. made Antioch a free city.

p. 81

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

Paul's withstanding Peter is the strongest proof that the former gives of the independence of his apostleship in relation to the other apostles . . .

p. 1262

Lange says:

Moreover, the scandal which he had given, was notorious, and Paul was obliged to do what he did. But he certainly did not do it out of personal irritation or from arrogance or malice; his own words prevent such a charge.

p. 45

Lenski says:

The terse way in which Paul states the fact that he withstood Peter shows that the Galatians had already heard of this affair, that Paul is now merely recalling it to their minds and emphasizing the features that bear on the present issue in Galatia.

p. 91

Lenski says:

Think how this smashed the Judaistic convention which would have Peter correct Paul and never Paul correct the great Peter.

p. 92

Lenski says:

Barnabas and all the others at Antioch who acted as Peter did were certainly under the same verdict. Paul took Peter to task, not because he intended to leave out these others, but because Peter was the great apostle, the one who was blameworthy in this instance. When he was convicted, all those who stood with him were convicted. Peter misled even a man like Barnabas. We see at a glance what a calamity was threatening because of Peter's act of Judaizing. It was a God's blessing that Paul was there and withstood Peter to his face.

p. 93

Lightfoot says:

'At Jerusalem, I owed nothing to the Apostles of the Circumcision. I maintained my independence and my equality. At Antioch I was more than an equal. I openly rebuked the leading Apostle of the Circumcision, for his conduct condemned itself. He had been accustomed to mix freely with the Gentiles, eating at the same table with them. But certain persons arrived from James, and he timidly withdrew himself. He had not courage to face the displeasure of the Jewish converts. The rest were carried away by his example. Even Barnabas, my colleague, and fellow-apostle of the Gentiles, went astray.'

p. 111

Lightfoot says:

The inconsistency which St Peter thus appears to have shown so soon after his championship of Gentile liberty at the congress, is rather in favour of than against this view; for the point of St Paul's rebuke is his inconsistency. But in fact there is scarcely an alternative.
p. 111

MacArthur says:

Better translated, "stood condemned." Peter was guilty of sin by aligning himself with men he knew to be in error and because of the harm and confusion he caused his Gentile brethren.
p. 1662

MacArthur says:

Because the Judaizers had told believers in the Galatian churches that Paul was not a true apostle, the incident mentioned in this verse is especially significant. Paul not only was equal to the other apostles but had on this occasion even reprimanded Peter (**Cephas**), the one who was recognizably the leading apostle among the Twelve. Both Peter and Paul had experienced salvation by grace through faith, both were directly chosen by the resurrected Jesus Christ to be apostles, and both had been mightily used by the Holy Spirit in establishing and teaching the church. The book of Acts can be divided between the early church ministry that centered on Peter (1-12) and that which centered on Paul (13-28). But in **Antioch** these two men of God came into head-on collision.
p. 49

MacArthur says:

Peter was not **condemned** in the sense of losing his salvation but in the sense of being guilty of sin by taking a position he knew was wrong. He no doubt also **stood condemned** as a sinner in the eyes of the Gentile believers in Antioch, who, because they were well-grounded in the gospel of grace, were perplexed and deeply hurt by his ostracism of them.
p. 49

MacArthur says:

Before Peter's compromise with the Judaizers could do serious damage in the Antioch church, God used Paul to nip the error in the bud. In so doing He also provided Paul with perhaps his most convincing proof of apostolic authority. God has a purpose even in the worst of circumstances, and what could have been a tragedy He used for His glory and for the strengthening of His church.
p. 49

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

2:11, 12 Antioch was the largest city of the Roman province of Syria. It became a center for missionary outreach to other Gentile cities in Asia Minor and Macedonia (Acts 13:1-3). After the earlier meeting in Jerusalem (vv. 1-10), the behavior of **Peter** in Antioch was contradictory and hypocritical (vv. 12, 13). Given Peter's immense influence, Paul had little choice but to point out the hypocrisy directly (vv. 11, 14).
p. 1520

Wuest says:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, to his face I opposed him, because he stood condemned. For before certain from James came, with the Gentiles it was his habit to eat meals. But when they came he began gradually to draw himself back, and began slowly to effect a final separation, fearing those of the circumcision.
p. 203

Wuest says:

Verse eleven. In this verse Paul opens the question *as to whether the Jew himself is still bound by the Mosaic law*. In the Jerusalem council, the question was *as to whether the rite of circumcision should be required of the Gentiles*. The particular Mosaic legislation to which Paul had reference here and which he presented as a test case before the Galatians, had to do with the Levitical legislation regarding the eating of certain foods. While one purpose of the giving of this legislation permitting the eating of certain foods and the prohibition regarding other foods, was a dietary one to promote the physical well-being of the Jews, yet another was that of keeping the Jews a separate people from the Gentiles, thus preserving clean the channel which God was using to bring salvation to the earth. The forbidden foods were found on the tables of the Gentiles. Hence a Jew could never accept a dinner invitation of a Gentile. This was one of the factors which kept the nation Israel apart from the Gentile world.

pp. 68-69

Wuest says:

The word *withstood* is from *anthistemi* which means “to set one’s self against, to withstand, resist, oppose.” This verb usually implies that the initial attack came from the other side. It was Peter, in Paul’s mind, who was the aggressor. Although not intentional, yet in effect it was an attack on the position which Paul was maintaining at Antioch.

p. 69

I am reminded of a statement I read in the Daily Walk Bible:

YOUR DAILY WALK Working with people is not so difficult. All you need is inexhaustible patience, unfailing insight, unshakable stability, and a tremendous amount of experience!

(August 1)

The Necessary Shame of Being Named as Sinners

When I was a teenager, I stole a hat. What is worse, I arrived at the store with a wad of cash in my pocket. Staring at the price tag, I thought, *Hey, why should I spend my money on that hat? I can get it for nothing by pinching it, then save my money for something else.*

As I headed for the door, the store manager stopped me. I [suddenly] wished I were dead. The manager saw I was not yet a hardened criminal and sent me home with instructions to have my parents call him back with the news or he would call the police. I went home to take my lumps. To this day, I remember what my 18-year-old sister said when she overheard me confessing: “How totally embarrassing. I’ve got a brother who’s a thief!”

She called me a thief! . . .

[But] becoming ashamed of what we are as a result of what we do is a good thing and a necessary part of getting real about guilt. If you commit adultery, you are an adulterer. If you lie, you become a liar. I stole, and I had become a thief. It led me to my room weeping and ashamed of myself. But that was good! Painful, but good.

Adapted from John Ensor’s The Great Work of the Gospel (Crossway, 2006), for the 5-18-10 entry in Men of Integrity (May/June, 2010)

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

v. 12 For before certain from James came. He was eating with the Gentiles (it was his habit to eat). But when they came He was drawing back and separating himself, fearing those of the circumcision.

The NET Bible translates verse 12:

Until certain people came from James, he had been eating with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he stopped doing this and separated himself because he was afraid of those who were pro-circumcision.

Peterson paraphrases verse 12:

Here's the situation. Earlier, before certain persons had come from James, Peter regularly ate with the non-Jews. But when that conservative group came from Jerusalem, he cautiously pulled back and put as much distance as he could manage between himself and his non-Jewish friends. That's how fearful he was of the conservative Jewish clique that's been pushing the old system of circumcision.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

On arrival at Antioch, Peter found Jewish and Gentile Christians fellowshiping together at mealtimes without regard to Jewish dietary laws. Because of the vision Peter had received at the house of Simon the tanner (Acts 10:9-15, 28), he felt free **to eat with the Gentiles**, and did so on a regular basis. While it lasted, this was a beautiful demonstration of the unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ. **But** a breach occurred when some arrived from Jerusalem who were shocked at Peter's conduct. These emissaries **came from James** and belonged **to the circumcision** party, but it is doubtful that they had James' endorsement. Nonetheless Peter was influenced by their presence and slowly but surely **began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles**. The verb tenses (imperf.) indicate a gradual withdrawal, perhaps from one joint meal a day, and then two; or it may be that he began a meal with Gentiles but finished it with only Jewish Christians. By such actions Peter in effect was teaching that there were two bodies of Christ, Jewish and Gentile. And that was heresy. But why did Peter create this breach? Not because of any change in theology, but simply out of fear. Once, after preaching to Gentile Cornelius, Peter courageously defended himself before the Jerusalem leaders . . . but this time he capitulated to some Jewish friends.

Verse 12 records Peter's failure in **THREE WAYS**. "HE WAS":

1. **"DRAWING BACK,"**
2. **"SEPARATING HIMSELF,"** and
3. **"FEARING THOSE OF THE CIRCUMCISION."**

So similar to the night before the crucifixion when Peter denied the Lord. So once again, Peter blew it on this occasion.

Now in verse 12 the apostle states the **REASON** for the previous **CONFRONTATION** and **CONDEMNATION**.

Peter was acting one way before some of those representatives from James came to Antioch from Jerusalem. When they came, he did something different.

We have seen James a couple of times earlier in this epistle:

Galatians 1:19 (DAV)

But another of the apostles I did not see except James the brother of our Lord.

Galatians 2:9 (DAV)

And having perceived the grace which was given to me; James and Cephas and John those who were of recognized eminence to be pillars gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship in order that we should go unto the Gentiles and they to the circumcision.

Here the Apostle Paul cites the **REASON** for opposing Peter in Antioch.

Peter was withdrawing himself because he was afraid that James would not approve of what he was doing.

I have chosen verse 12 as the **KEY VERSE** in this particular study:

You Were Running Well UNTIL: Peer Pressure Postponed Progress.

The Scripture places a high premium upon personal conviction and stemming the tide of sin and apostasy by standing for what you believe.

One is reminded of **JOSEPH** in Genesis 39 as he was faithful to stand for the Lord in the midst of temptation.

Genesis 39:6-10 (NIV)

So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

Daniel 1:8 (NIV)

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

Daniel 6:10 (NIV)

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Peter had gotten his eyes off the Lord and he had started to sink in the winds and the waves of compromise.

Proverbs 29:25 (NIV)

Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.

2 Timothy 1:7 (DAV)

For God did not give to us a spirit of fearfulness (cowardice) but of power and of love and of self-discipline (good judgment).

1 John 4:18 (DAV)

Fear is not in love; but perfect love is casting out fear, because this fear is having to do with punishment. And the one who is fearing has not been brought to completion in this love.

Matthew 10:32-33 (NASB)

“Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

This is the real reason oftentimes that we do not take the opportunities to witness to our friends. It is because we are fearful of what people might think.

Acts 10:28 (DAV)

And he said to them, “You yourselves are understanding how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate or to visit with a foreigner. And yet to me God showed that I am not to be calling any man unholy or unclean.

Acts 11:1-3 (DAV)

Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also received the word of God. And when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision were taking issue with him, saying, “You entered the house of men who were uncircumcised and ate with them.”

Acts 15:13-21 (DAV)

And after they stopped speaking, James answered, saying, “Men, brethren, listen to me. Simeon explained how God first concerned Himself about winning a people from among the Gentiles for His name. And with this the words of the Prophets are agreeing, just as it has been written: ‘After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen. And I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, in order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name has been called, says the Lord, who is making these things known from of old.’ Therefore it is my judgment that we are not to be troubling those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they be abstaining from the pollutions of the idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations is having in every city those who are preaching him, since he is being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

Calvin points out:

This shews us how cautiously we ought to guard against giving way to the opinions of men, lest an immoderate desire to please, or an undue dread of giving offence, should turn us aside from the right path.

p. 63

“BUT” forms the **CONTRAST**:

“WHEN THEY CAME.”

There are **THREE VERBS** here that describe what took place as Peter began to act differently:

1. **“DRAWING BACK,”**
2. **“SEPARATING HIMSELF,”** and
3. **“FEARING THOSE OF THE CIRCUMCISION.”**

The word for **“DRAWING BACK”** here is the word used for trimming the sails on a boat. It is the imperfect tense that Peter is gradually trimming his sails, even as he did at the trial of Christ. The three denials were working up to his departure from the scene. In other words, he is slowly pulling out.

Hebrews 10:38-39 (DAV)

But my righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, my soul is having no pleasure in him. But we are not of the shrinking back kind to destruction, but of those who are having faith to the preserving of the soul.

The **REASON** Peter got himself into this predicament in the first place was because he still felt that living the Christian life was abiding by a lot of different laws of conduct. This is the most subtle form of legalism there is.

“How many times shall I forgive . . . 7 times!”

We know we cannot do anything to save ourselves. We must come to Christ by faith.

Then there comes the living of the Christian life, and at this point we feel like there is something we can do to gain merit before God by the life we live. And so we put ourselves on a performance basis with the Lord.

Even as we have come to know Christ our Savior by faith, so daily step by step we must by faith recognize the fact that God expects nothing from us but failure. And as by faith I accepted Him as my Savior, so by faith I must allow Him to live that life through me that He wants to live.

Colossians 2:6 (DAV)

In like manner, therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, be living (walking around) in Him

Christian living is not a set standard of do's and don'ts. Our spirituality does not depend on what we do or do not do. It is dependent upon our relationship with the living Christ.

Spiritual giants of the past would unite in unanimous testimony that they were men who qualified for the school of failure and despair. They were men who came to the end of themselves and recognized the fact that apart from God they were nothing.

Peter still was not sure of his own personal convictions in this matter and he had confusion over what part rules and regulations still had to play in his life as a Christian. He seemed to be living by a **DOUBLE STANDARD:**

Grace for salvation, but law in the Christian life.

Because the house of his conviction was built upon shifting sand, it fell:

“And great was the fall of it.”

These actions of:

DRAWING BACK,

SEPARATING HIMSELF, and

FEARING

were the same actions that were involved in the denial of Christ in his earlier experiences.

Anders says:

2:12. Peter, a Jew, was eating and fellowshiping with the Gentiles. When some of the Judaizers (**the circumcision group**) arrived, Peter **began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles.** He was afraid of what the Judaizers would think. Peter thought by avoiding the Gentiles he would not offend James’s legalistic, judaizing friends. By identifying with them, Peter was promoting their false, legalistic beliefs. Peter by his actions was compromising grace. These men were probably not *sent* by James, an apostle and the half brother of Jesus, but were probably part of his church in Jerusalem.
pp. 22-23

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

After a time, some influential Jews arrived in Antioch from Jerusalem, claiming to represent James. They were the legalists, and Peter's practice shocked them. Not only was his conduct not required by the Jerusalem agreement, they might have argued, it was actually contrary to it. These persons brought such pressure to bear on Peter that he gradually detached himself from the Gentile fellowship and began to eat with Jews only. Moreover, his conduct drew others away with him, so that when Paul returned to Antioch from wherever he had gone, he found a church divided and the Gentiles under an unwarranted pressure either to accept the division or to conform to the legalistic standards of Judaism as the means of avoiding it. pp. 716-17

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

12 Here is the reason why Peter stood condemned. He was not simply making an honest mistake. The Peter who had received a vision prior to going to the house of Cornelius (Ac 10) and who had defended Paul at the council (Ac 15:7-11) was not fooled by the arguments of the legalizers. Instead, he had gradually given in to the pressure exerted by the legalizers. In other words, Peter played the hypocrite. p. 717

Bickel & Jantz say:

Just as things are going well in Antioch, those meddling Judaizers show up and spoil the party. (Paul refers to them as “Jewish friends of James,” but they were probably not sent by James.) These are likely the same guys who were kicked in the gut by Paul in Jerusalem. Their circumcision tactic didn’t work, so they decide to play a new hand—and it works with at least one influential individual. Afraid of what these “legalists” would say, Peter decided he can no longer share a meal with the Gentile believers.

Why did Peter cave in to the Judaizers? Well, we know from past history that Peter has trouble standing up to peer pressure (remember his three denials?). Maybe Peter was afraid he would offend the Jewish community in Jerusalem. Whatever the motivation, Peter’s action is wrong for three reasons:

- By refusing to share a meal, Peter turns the table of unity into a table of separation;
- By his action, Peter is teaching that there are two bodies of Christ; and
- Peter’s action of hypocrisy (believing one thing and doing another) causes others—including Barnabas—to act hypocritically.

p. 57

Dunnam says:

Peter is caught. Bless him! There is a sense in which the weak inconsistency of his relationship to Christ is again revealed. In one moment he had declared his willingness to lay down his life for Christ, had even drawn his sword in defense of his Master and cut off the ear of a man. But when they came to arrest his Lord, within hours, he denied Christ three times before being brought to repentance at the crowing of a rooster by memory of Jesus' word.

Is not the same impulsive courage followed by shrinking timidity illustrated again here? Paul's account doesn't say so, but it would be only consistent with his record that when brought to his senses, Peter would be ashamed and repentant of his denial of Christ in the presence of these Gentile converts.

We must not be too hard on Peter. It was a severe test to which he was exposed, and none of us say how well we may stand in the fire. The beautiful thing to see is that in this instance, as in his attitude toward Cornelius, Peter's initial response is a readiness for fellowship with Gentiles. At the outset his course of action is dictated by Christian love. His heart carried him farther than his later judgment was prepared to go. Was he guilty then of weak vacillation? Yes, to a degree. But was this willful temporizing? No, not for Peter. What is apparent dishonor is rooted in honor. He simply found himself in the midst of an ordeal with baffling complications and implications, and he did not know what was right or wrong.
pp. 40-41

Fergusson says:

2. So weak and inconstant are the best of men, that, being left to themselves, the least blast of temptation will make them break off the course of doing well in the very midst, and, without respect had either to conscience or credit, openly to desert it: for Peter having begun well in the use of Christian liberty, by eating with the Gentiles, giveth evidence of great levity, in that for fear of man's offence he did presently slip from it; "Before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew."

p. 36

Henry says:

. . . (1) The weakness and inconstancy of the best of men, and how apt they are to falter in their duty to God, out of an undue regard to the pleasing of men. (2) The great force of bad examples, especially the examples of great men and good men.
p. 1840

Hogg & Vine say:

but when they came, he drew back—*hupostellō*, continuous tense, 'he was drawing back', suggesting a vacillating course. The same word is used of reluctance to proclaim the whole truth, Acts 20. 20, 27, and of apostasy from the faith, Heb. 10. 38; the corresponding noun occurs in v. 39.
p. 83

Ironside says:

We now find Peter troubled by that same old besetment that had brought him into difficulty before, afraid of what others will say of him, and when he saw these legalists he forgot all about Pentecost, all about the blessing that had come, all about the marvelous revelation that he had when the sheet was let down from heaven and the Lord said, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (Acts 10:15). He forgot how he himself had stood in Cornelius' household and said, "It is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to . . . come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). He forgot that at the council in Jerusalem it was he who stood before them all and after relating the incidents in connection with his visit to Cornelius, exclaimed, "We (we who are Jews by nature) believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *we* shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11). That was a wonderful declaration. We might have expected him to say, "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *they* shall be saved, even as we," that is, "these Gentiles may be saved by grace even as we Jews are saved by grace." But no; he had had a wonderful revelation of the real meaning of Pentecost and this glorious dispensation of the grace of God. What made him forget all this? The scowling looks of these men from Jerusalem.
pp. 79-80

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

We recognize the same old nature in him as led him, after faithfully witnessing for Christ, yet for a brief space, to deny Him. “Ever the first to recognize, and the first to draw back from great truths” [ALFORD].
p. 1263

Luther says:

Paul does not accuse Peter of malice or ignorance, but of lack of principle, in that he abstained from meats, because he feared the Jews that came from James. Peter’s weak attitude endangered the principle of Christian liberty. It is the deduction rather than the fact which Paul reproves. To eat and to drink, or not to eat and drink, is immaterial. But to make the deduction “If you eat, you sin; if you abstain you are righteous”—this is wrong.
p. 58

Luther says:

It is surprising that Peter, excellent apostle that he was, should have been guilty of such vacillation. In a former council at Jerusalem he practically stood alone in defense of the truth that salvation is by faith, without the Law. Peter at that time valiantly defended the liberty of the Gospel. But now by abstaining from meats forbidden in the Law, he went against his better judgment. You have no idea what danger there is in customs and ceremonies. They so easily tend to error in works.
p. 59

MacArthur says:

Peter, knowing the decision the Jerusalem Council had made (Acts 15:7-29), had been in Antioch for some time, eating with Gentiles. When Judaizers came, pretending to be sent by James, they lied, giving false claims of support from the apostles. Peter had already given up all Mosaic ceremony (Acts 10:9-22) and James had at times held only to some of it (Acts 21:18-26). ***withdrew***. The Greek term refers to strategic military withdrawal. The verb's form may imply that Peter's withdrawal was gradual and deceptive. To eat with the Judaizers and decline invitations to eat with the Gentiles, which he had previously done, meant that Peter was affirming the very dietary restrictions he knew God had abolished (Acts 10:15) and thus striking a blow at the gospel of grace. ***fearing those . . . of the circumcision***. This was the true motivation behind Peter's defection. He was afraid of losing popularity with the legalistic, Judaizing segment of people in the church, even though they were self-righteous hypocrites promoting a heretical doctrine.
pp. 1662-3

MacArthur says:

Yet when the Judaizers came to Antioch, Peter **began to withdraw and hold himself aloof** from the Gentiles, **fearing the party of the circumcision**. **Withdraw** is from *hupostellō*, a term used for strategic military disengagement. Polibius used it to describe troops drawing back from the enemy in order to secure shelter and safety. The imperfect tense may indicate that Peter's withdrawal was gradual and, if so, suggests the idea of sneaky retreat. Acquiescing to both the ritualism and racism of the Jews, he began to drift away from his Gentile brethren and stopped accepting their invitations to dinner. He found excuses not to join with them in other activities and finally held **himself aloof** from them altogether.
pp. 50-51

MacArthur says:

The old Peter—weak, fearful, and vacillating—had come to the fore again. Here was the same Peter who under divine inspiration declared Jesus to be “the Christ, the Son of the living God” but who a short while later rebuked his Lord for saying that He must suffer and die (Matt. 16:16, 22). Here is the same Peter who boldly declared he would die rather than deny his Lord but who, before the night was out, had denied Him three times (Mark 14:29-31, 66-72). Here was the same Peter who was called to preach but who disobediently went back to fishing even after he had encountered the resurrected Christ (John 21:3).

p. 51

MacArthur says:

Peter was afraid of just that—losing popularity and prestige with a group of self-righteous hypocrites whose doctrines were heretical and whose tactics were deceitful.

Peter was not unlike most Christians in finding it difficult to be consistent in spiritual commitment. He would show great courage and conviction and then stumble. He would staunchly defend the faith and then succumb to compromise. When he did that in Antioch he played into the hands of the Judaizers, who must have been elated to have drawn this great apostle into their camp, by practice if not by precept.

p. 51

McGee says:

Now this is probably what happened. When the time came to eat, Simon Peter went over to the kosher table, while Paul went over to the gentile table. Peter noticed that there was pork roast on the gentile table. After dinner Peter joined Paul and they went outside for a little walk. Peter said, "I noticed that you ate at the gentile table." "Yes," Paul said. "And I noticed that you ate pork tonight. Is it good? I never have tasted it." "Yes," Paul said, "it's delicious." Then Peter asked, "Do you think it would be all right if I ate over there?" And Paul said, "Well, it is my understanding that we are going to have some nice pork chops in the morning for breakfast. Why don't you try it?" So in the morning when he came to breakfast, he went over to the gentile table, sat down gingerly and rather reluctantly took a pork chop. After he had tasted it, he said to Paul, "It is delicious, isn't it!" Paul said, "Yes. After all, under grace you can either eat it or not eat it. It makes no difference. Meat won't commend you to God." So Simon Peter said, "I'll be here tonight and I understand you are having ham tonight. I want to try that." So at dinner time he starts rushing for the gentile table when he looks over and sees some of the elders from the Jerusalem church who had come to visit also. So Simon Peter went all the way around that gentile table, went over to the kosher table, and sat down like a little whipped puppy. Paul saw him do that, and this is what happened: . . .
pp. 159-60

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

Paul confronted Peter because refusing to **eat with the Gentiles** contradicted what Peter had long since recognized, that the gospel was for the Gentiles too. **Certain men came from James** indicates that they came with the authority of James, one of the leaders of the Jerusalem church (v. 9). However, it is unlikely that they accurately represented the views of James (vv. 7-10). Whatever they said to Peter caused a strong reaction in which he **withdrew and separated himself** from table fellowship with Gentiles. Apparently Peter was **fearing** damage to his reputation as apostle to **the circumcision** (2:7, 8).
pp. 1520-21

Vos says:

An outbreak of factionalism, contributed to by Peter, therefore drew fire from Paul. No such disturbance could be permitted, especially when it threatened Christian liberty. Acts 15 records no visit of Peter to Antioch and the altercation to which Paul refers in Galatians 2:11-14. Some have accounted for this omission on the basis of its transitory nature; it had no permanent effect on church history.

When Peter became involved in this breach of fellowship, Paul opposed him openly. A private conference might have changed Peter's course of action, but it would not clearly enunciate the principle of Christian liberty. Peter was condemned (Gk) not by observers but by the act itself. When Peter first came to Antioch he ate with Gentiles, probably even partaking of the love-feast with them. But when some came "from James" (2:12) the situation changed radically. It is difficult to know how to understand "from James." That these men came from the Jerusalem church of which James was leader is undisputed. James may even have sent them, but certainly not with a special message concerning doctrine or practice so soon after his dictum issued by the Jerusalem council. Possibly he sent out a group to raise funds for the poor. If this was an official delegation, they may have expressed on the side James' personal view that Jewish Christians should keep the law, even if Gentiles did not. Or they may simply have expressed their own view on the subject. At any rate, as a result of a visit by Jews from the Jerusalem church, pressure was exerted on Jews at Antioch not to eat with Gentiles and to be more scrupulous about law-keeping. Peter, who had taken such a forceful stand for Jewish fellowship with Gentiles (Ac 11:1-18), buckled under social pressure—"fearing them which were of the circumcision." He "began to withdraw" and finally "separated himself" in a complete severance.

pp. 44-45

Wiersbe says:

How do we account for this fear? For one thing, we know that Peter was an impulsive man. He could show amazing faith and courage one minute and fail completely the next. He walked on the waves to go to Jesus, but then became frightened and began to sink. He boasted in the upper room that he would willingly die for Jesus, and then denied his Lord three times. Peter in the book of Acts is certainly more consistent than in the four gospels, but he was not perfect—*nor are we!* Peter's fear led to Peter's *fall*. He ceased to enjoy the "love feast" with the Gentile believers and separated himself from them.

There are two tragedies to Peter's fall. First, it made him a hypocrite (which is the meaning of the word *dissembled*). Peter pretended that his actions were motivated by faithfulness, when they were really motivated by fear. How easy it is to use "Bible doctrine" to cover up our disobedience.

The second tragedy is that *Peter led others astray with him*. Even Barnabas was involved. Barnabas had been one of the spiritual leaders of the church in Antioch (Acts 11:19-26), so his disobedience would have a tremendous influence on the others in the fellowship.
pp. 56-57

Wuest says:

God had made clear to Peter that this legislation was set aside at the Cross, by the visit He gave him while he was on the housetop of Simon the tanner, with the result that Peter was willing to go to the home of Cornelius (Acts 10). This occurred before the incident to which Paul refers in these verses.
p. 69

Make no mistake about it, these **THREE UGLY ACTIONS** are the ones that Satan uses in every arena of temptation:

1. to **DRAW BACK**,
2. to **SEPARATE**, and
3. to **FEAR**.

In Psalm 1 the blessed man does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, vacillate with counsel that is in error, or loiter in the way of sinners, separating himself from the godly support and making the decision to sit in the seat of the scornful.

Satan always wants to get us to rationalize and to deny the truth of the Word of God and the path of righteousness. It is his desire to isolate, to separate from the support group, then trying to dull the fears of everything that's going to be lost in taking the contemplated action.

You can definitely see Satan's fingerprints on everything here in verse 12 to try to frustrate and to destroy the impact of the early church on the lives of others by going after one of the big leaders.

(Morning and Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon) Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson. Copyright – Unknown.

Follow the right at all hazards. When you see no present advantage, walk by faith and not by sight. Do God the honour to trust Him when it comes to matters of loss for the sake of principle. See whether He will be your debtor! See if He doth not even in this life prove His word that "Godliness, with contentment, is great gain," and that they who "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, shall have all these things added unto them." Should it happen that, in the providence of God, you are a loser by conscience, you shall find that if the Lord pays you not back in the silver of earthly prosperity, He will discharge His promise in the gold of spiritual joy. Remember that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of that which he possesseth. To wear a guileless spirit, to have a heart void of offence, to have the favour and smile of God, is greater riches than the mines of Ophir could yield, or the traffic of Tyre could win.

p. 353

On Being Reactors, Not Actors

In our lives in the world, the temptation is always to go where the world takes us, to drift with whatever current happens to be running strongest. When good things happen, we rise to heaven; when bad things happen, we descend to hell. . . . I know this to be true of no one as well as I know it to be true of myself. I know how just the weather can affect my whole state of mind for good or ill, how just getting stuck in a traffic jam can ruin an afternoon that in every other way is so beautiful that it dazzles the heart. We are in constant danger of being not actors in the drama of our own lives but reactors.

—Frederick Buechner, U.S. writer and preacher (1926 —)

*Frederick Buechner, The Longing for Home: Recollections and Reflections, p. 109;
submitted by David Schleusener, Cary, North Carolina*

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

(Fear Not: For I Am With You Always by Max Lucado) Nashville, TN:
Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Max Lucado, 2009.

Fear never wrote a symphony or poem, negotiated a peace treaty, or cured a disease.

Fear never pulled a family out of poverty or a country out of bigotry.

Fear never saved a marriage or a business.

Courage did that. Faith did that.

People who refused to consult or cower to their timidities did that. But fear itself? Fear herds us into a prison and slams the doors.

Wouldn't it be great to walk out?

FEARLESS

p. 23

The Limits of the Human Will

Many of us act as if repentance is a matter of the will. [But] we can't "will" ourselves into change. We can't "will" ourselves into feeling contrition or remorse. Repentance isn't doing something about our sin; rather it means admitting that we can't do anything about our sin. We cannot woo ourselves into anything but the most external form of repentance.

All our effort, striving, and willpower have only momentary, external value when it comes to fighting an opponent as crafty, intentional, persistent, powerful, and experienced as sin. . . .

Understand this: The *intention* not to sin is not the same as the *power* not to sin. God did not design us to conquer sin on our own. To think we can is an incalculable *undervaluing* of sin's power combined with a huge *over* valuing of our own willpower!

Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John S. Lynch, TrueFaced (NavPress, 2004), pp. 152-153; submitted by Bill White, Paramount, California

© 2010 PreachingToday.com & Christianity Today International

(PreachingToday.com)

v. 13 And the rest of the Jews also played the role with him. So that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

The NET Bible translates verse 13:

And the rest of the Jews also joined with him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray with them by their hypocrisy.

Peterson paraphrases verse 13:

That's how fearful he was of the conservative Jewish clique that's been pushing the old system of circumcision. Unfortunately, the rest of the Jews in the Antioch church joined in that hypocrisy so that even Barnabas was swept along in the charade.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Like falling dominoes the defection of Peter brought the defection of **the other Jews** and finally **even Barnabas**. The pressure must have been great for Barnabas to succumb because he was from Cyprus, a Gentile center, and was involved in a missionary program with Paul to reach Gentiles with the gospel. All of them—Peter, the other Jewish Christians, and Barnabas—were guilty of **hypocrisy** because while confessing and teaching that they were one in Christ with Gentiles, they were denying this truth by their conduct.

Here we see the area of influence when, in a position of leadership someone begins acting like this, it affects those who are watching.

The rest of the Jews that were there also played the role with Peter and the **RESULT** was that:

“EVEN BARNABAS WAS CARRIED AWAY WITH THEIR HYPOCRISY.”

They were saying one thing and doing another as far as Paul was concerned.

I wonder if the mention of Barnabas being shaky in this regard had anything to do with the interpersonal conflict that both Barnabas and Paul had when it was time to go on the second missionary journey and they were divided over their feelings about John Mark.

It was a sad moment when Paul watched these Jews and even Barnabas, his close friend and associate, following the cowardly Peter.

It is perhaps true that the average person is much more likely to be influenced by his environment than he ever is to change it. Many people are tempted to do things in a crowd that they would never do if they were alone.

It is one thing to make a commitment that we are going to stand faithful to the Lord, then when we actually get into the situation we see how easy it is to play the hypocritical role again because we are afraid of what people might think of us.

Gutzke points out:

He [Peter] seems to have changed his practice because of social pressure. This may have been a human characteristic of Peter. The record shows that when he followed the Lord into Pilate's judgment hall a young girl accused him, "You're one of them that was with Jesus of Nazareth." And he replied, "No, I don't know the man." Later another said, "I know that you're one of them." Again he answered, "No, I don't know the man!" Then when a soldier said to him, "You are a Galilean, you talk like one. I know you're one of them," Peter began to swear that he did not know Jesus. This action in the church at Antioch could have been just a recurrence of his old human tendency—being so sensitive to what people thought of him that he actually faltered in living out his convictions.

pp. 39-40

It is amazing how others are influenced by the actions of key leaders. It points up here that Peter was not alone in this defection but that the rest of the Jews were looking for an excuse to do this, and so they were affected by Peter and even Barnabas, a very close friend of the apostle who had been a faithful companion in the ministry, was carried away with their hypocrisy.

What you are doing speaks so loudly, I cannot hear what you say. What Peter said was all right, but what he was doing was wrong.

You can be sure if you find one playing the role, you are going to find plenty who will follow.

(When Being Good Isn't Good Enough by Stephen Brown) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers. Copyright - Stephen Brown, 1990.

One time D. L. Moody went to meet Charles Spurgeon at Spurgeon's home in London. Spurgeon had been Moody's hero and, from a distance, his teacher. When Spurgeon answered the door with a cigar in his mouth, Moody practically fell down the stairs in shock. Looking up at Spurgeon, he gasped, "How could you, a man of God, smoke that?"

Spurgeon took the stogie out of his mouth and walked down the stairs to where Moody was still standing in confusion. Putting his index finger on Moody's rather rotund stomach, he smiled. "The same way you, a man of God, could be that fat."

Moody's culture considered smoking a major sin, and Spurgeon's culture considered obesity a major sin. Much to Spurgeon's credit, he pointed it out.

p. 87

Anders says:

2:13. The other Jew, including **Barnabas**, joined Peter in standing with the Judaizers and ostracizing the Gentiles. They were guilty of **hypocrisy** because they were professing to be one with the Gentiles, yet by their actions they denied their oneness. The pressure must have been intense because even Barnabas, who was from Cyprus—a Gentile center—succumbed. He had been with Paul on a missionary journey to reach the Gentiles.

p. 23

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Unfortunately, conduct such as Peter's is not inconsequential, neither in his day nor now, for he was a pillar apostle. Thus one is not surprised to read that other Jews, including Barnabas, were led away by his hypocrisy. If Peter had been a lesser man or less prominent, the defection would have seemed less serious. The greater one's position or responsibility, the more important one's actions become.

p. 717

Dunnam says:

"Even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy" (v. 13). The KJV renders that "Barnabas also," but that misses the impact of Paul's assertion, *"even Barnabas."* All the New Testament notices of Barnabas reveal an attractive, effective Christian. None are exempt from temptation. All of us are potential victims of the pressures that would deceive, convince, lead astray, diminish our witness.

p. 41

Gaebelein says:

The leaven of the Pharisee, hypocrisy, is manifest in Peter's action. He wanted to appear before those who were still Jewish in their customs and sentiments as being in sympathy with them, and therefore he gave up his liberty in Christ, which he knew was according to the truth of the gospel. Paul rebuking Peter in public shows that Peter had no the least authority over Paul.
p. 211

Gutzke says:

Here we find that the issue was one of social appearance between the Jews and Gentiles. There is no indication that Peter did not know the truth—that the Gentiles were acceptable to God. The problem was that though he had known that, and had acted toward the Gentile Christians as if they were Christians and not Gentiles, then when these Jewish Christians from Jerusalem came to Antioch he changed his practice. He seems to have changed his practice because of social pressure. This may have been a human characteristic of Peter. The record shows that when he followed the Lord into Pilate's judgment hall a young girl accused him, "You're one of them that was with Jesus of Nazareth." And he replied, "No, I don't know the man." Later another said, "I know that you're one of them." Again he answered, "No, I don't know the man!" Then when a soldier said to him, "You are a Galilean, you talk like one. I know you're one of them," Peter began to swear that he did not know Jesus. This action in the church at Antioch could have been just a recurrence of his old human tendency—being so sensitive to what people thought of him that he actually faltered in living out his convictions.
pp. 39-40

Hendriksen says:

Whether or not Peter had understood the full implications of the decisions of the Jerusalem Council, one thing at least is certain: he knew that in separating himself from the believing Gentiles he was acting contrary to his own inner convictions. He was hiding his real beliefs, just as an actor conceals his real face under a mask.
p. 94

Hendriksen says:

Accordingly, when Paul accuses Peter of insincerity or hypocrisy he is not using too strong a word. Peter's conduct was all the more reprehensible because he was a recognized leader. His example was prone to be followed by others. So it was also in the present case. When the courage of Cephas was oozing out, faint-heartedness also took possession of "the rest of the Jews" (that is, all the other Jewish Christians who were present). Even Barnabas, whom we would never have accused of narrow-mindedness (see on Gal. 2:1), who had co-operated heartily with Paul in the establishment of several churches in Gentile regions, and who must have enjoyed many a meal with the young converts from the heathen world, now meekly went along with Peter in the latter's insincere behavior: **so that even Barnabas was carried along by their hypocrisy.**

p. 95

Hogg & Vine say:

It is difficult to avoid suspecting that this incident prepared the way for the ultimate separation of these two who had been so long, so honourably and so successfully yoked together in the service of Christ. Even Barnabas, "good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" though he was, Acts 11. 24, failed in this crisis.

p. 84

Ironside says:

And what must have cut Paul to the quick, his own intimate companion, his fellow-worker, the man who had understood so well from the beginning the work that he should do, "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." How much he puts into those words! Barnabas who knew so much better, Barnabas who had seen how mightily God had wrought among the Gentiles, and who knew that all this old legalistic system had fallen never to be raised again, even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.

p. 81

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

. . . . “joined in hypocrisy,” viz., in living as though the law were necessary to justification, through fear of man, though they knew from God their Christian liberty of eating with Gentiles, and had availed themselves of it already (Acts 11:2-17).

p. 1263

Lange says:

. . . How cautiously we ought to guard against giving way to the opinions of men, lest we turn aside from the right path! If this happened to Peter, how much more easily to us.

p. 57

Lenski says:

But is Paul not too severe when he labels their acts hypocrisy? Note that he deliberately uses the word twice, once the verb (an aorist at that!) and then the noun. This duplication serves notice that Paul means just what he says. These men acted as if they believed one thing when at heart they believed another. They all believed as Paul did, that all outward observances were unimportant as far as Christianity is concerned, but here they acted as if, after all, outward observances in regard to meat and drink were an essential, at least a very important thing in Christianity.

p. 98

Lightfoot says:

. . . ‘*even Barnabas* my own friend and colleague, who so lately had gone up to protect the interest of the Gentiles against the pressure of the Pharisaic brethren.’ It is not impossible that this incident, by producing a temporary feeling of distrust, may have prepared the way for the dissension between Paul and Barnabas which shortly afterwards led to their separation: Acts xv. 39.

From this time forward they never again appear associated together. But on the other hand, whenever St Paul mentions Barnabas, his words imply sympathy and respect.

p. 113

Luther says:

It is marvelous how God preserved the Church by one single person. Paul alone stood up for the truth, for Barnabas, his companion, was lost to him, and Peter was against him. Sometimes one lone person can do more in a conference than the whole assembly.

p. 59

MacArthur says:

hypocrite. This Greek word refers to an actor who wore a mask to depict a mood or certain character. In the spiritual sense, it refers to someone who masks his true character by pretending to be something he is not (cf. Matt. 6:1-6). They were committed to the gospel of grace, but pretended to accept Jewish legalism.

p. 1663

MacArthur says:

Peter not only withdrew from the Gentile believers himself but, by example, indirectly induced **the rest of the Jews** to join **him in hypocrisy**. The separation became so widespread and influential **that even** the godly **Barnabas**, who at this time was one of the pastors at Antioch, **was carried away** into the sin. Paul and **Barnabas** had recently been on a fruitful missionary journey together, had gone with each other to the Jerusalem Council (see the previous chapter), and were now co-pastors at Antioch. They had taught together, prayed together, ministered together, and suffered together. They were the closest of friends and loved each other deeply. It was **Barnabas** who had first befriended and defended Paul when he went to Jerusalem shortly after his conversion (Acts 9:27). Many times **Barnabas** had heard Paul preach the gospel of salvation by faith alone and had preached it many times himself. But even he **was carried away by** the legalistic **hypocrisy** of Peter and the others. It may have been Barnabas's hypocrisy on this occasion that began the eventual rift with Paul that a short while later resulted in their separation over taking John Mark on the next journey (Acts 15:37-40).
pp. 51-52

McGee says:

It was all right for Peter to eat at either table, kosher or Gentile. But after he had been eating at the gentile table and for fear of the brethren from Jerusalem goes back to the kosher table, he is saying by his action that the gentile table is wrong and the kosher table is right.
p. 160

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

Peter's example was so decisive that **the rest of the Jews** in the church of Syrian Antioch, including **Barnabas**, followed suit. However, Peter's actions did not represent conviction, but **hypocrisy**.
p. 1521

Ridderbos says:

Of these Barnabas is specifically named. So strong was the tug of this hypocrisy that even he who had, together with Paul, founded so many churches among the Gentiles, and certainly had eaten with them, now withdrew himself from eating with Gentile believers.
p. 97

Vos says:

Even Barnabas ultimately fell before the social pressure. This is hard to believe, because his home (Cyprus) was a Gentile center, he had had widespread ministry among Gentiles, and he was now ministering in a large Gentile Christian stronghold. The pressure must have been enormous. Of course it was also true that Barnabas was a member of the Jerusalem church (Ac 4:36-37; 9:26-27) and their delegate to Antioch (Ac 11:22); thus there could have been pressure on him in that connection.
p. 45

Wuest says:

Verse thirteen. This verse gives the result of Peter's action in the church at Antioch. The Jewish Christians there refused to eat anymore with their Gentile brethren in the Lord. The church was split wide open on the issue. The love-feast, that bond of fellowship expressive of Christian love amongst the brethren, was divided into two groups. The friendly groups of Jews and Gentiles in the fellowship of the homes were discontinued. The fact that the Jews of the Antioch church followed Peter in his withdrawal from the Gentiles, shows that the entire group had eaten with the latter.
p. 72

Wuest says:

Our word *hypocrite* comes from this Greek word. It usually referred to the act of concealing wrong feelings or character under the pretense of better ones.

But in the present case, the knowledge, judgment, and feelings which were concealed, were worse only from the viewpoint of those who had come from Jerusalem of whom Peter and the Antioch Jews were afraid. From Paul's viewpoint, it was their better knowledge which they covered up by their misconduct, the usual type of hypocrisy that proceeds from fear. Paul, by characterizing their actions as hypocrisy, implied that there had been no real change of conviction on the part of Peter and the rest of the Jews, but only conduct that misrepresented their true convictions.
p. 73

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

BETRAYAL*21

Reproaches from those who have been intimate with us, and trusted by us, cut us to the quick; and they are usually so well acquainted with our peculiar weaknesses that they know how to touch us where we are most sensitive, and to speak so as to do us most damage. TD55:12
p. 28

(The Barbarian Way: Soul Cravings by Erwin Raphael McManus) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Erwin Raphael McManus, 2005.

The problem, of course, is that we are all hypocrites in transition. I am not who I want to be, but I am on the journey there, and thankfully I am not whom I used to be.

A healthy community is not a place of perfect people.

That place just doesn't exist. We all are flawed. If there was a perfect community, it would be ruined the moment I joined it. And it's easier to be patient with people when you realize they're being patient with you. When we don't come clean up front, it creates an unhealthy environment that leads to pretension and hypocrisy.

p. (Entry #16)

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson) San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson, 2006.

Thank you for this parable, Jesus: now I know that everything counts. I will never again suppose that what I do is insignificant. I will look for your presence in every person I meet and serve you through them. Amen.
p. 207

v. 14 But when I saw that they were not walking straight in relation to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of everybody. “If you being a Jew are living as the Gentiles and not as the Jews, how are you constraining the Gentiles to live as Jews?”

The NET Bible translates verse 14:

But when I saw that they were not behaving consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, “If you, although you are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you try to force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

Peterson paraphrases verse 14:

But when I saw that they were not maintaining a steady, straight course according to the Message, I spoke up to Peter in front of them all: “If you, a Jew, live like a non-Jew when you’re not being observed by the watchdogs from Jerusalem, what right do you have to require non-Jews to conform to Jewish customs just to make a favorable impression on your old Jerusalem cronies?”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The response of Paul was electric. What Peter had initiated created a public scandal and therefore deserved a public rebuke. Further, the defectors **were not acting** according to **the truth of the gospel**, that is, they were denying by their actions the truth that on the basis of Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection Jews and Gentiles who believe are accepted equally by God. Paul therefore asked Peter before them all, “If you, who are a Jew, do not live like a Jew but like a Gentile, why on earth do you try to make Gentiles live like Jews?” (PH) It was a stinging rebuke. Peter’s response is not recorded. He stood condemned. He was acting contrary to his own convictions, was betraying Christian liberty, and was casting a slur on fellow believers. Such behavior needed this severe reprimand.

Paul is saying here that the **PROBLEM** was:

“THAT THEY WERE NOT WALKING STRAIGHT IN RELATION TO THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.”

Galatians 2:5 (DAV)

To whom not even for an hour did we yield to the submission demanded, in order that the truth of the gospel might remain (continue for you).

(The Agony of Deceit edited by Michael Horton) Chicago, IL: Moody Press.
Copyright - The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1990.

Keeping a clear conscience means that we are regularly examining our lives and confessing our sins to God and others if we have offended them. Also involved is refusing to compromise our conscience. The recent moral lapses on the part of some televangelists raises the question of conscience and character. It could be that the message of easy solutions is too superficial to deal with the deep struggles in our lives. We must recapture a wholeness in our lives, which may be summed up in the word integrity. In order to do that, we must recapture the profound relationship between knowing, feeling, and doing.

p. 59

Someone has said:

It is better to go straight than to move in the best of circles.
(source unknown)

The Apostle Paul says that he recognized that Peter was:

“NOT WALKING STRAIGHT IN RELATION TO THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.”

That is, Christ died for the sins of the whole world and that anyone who comes to faith in the Lord Jesus becomes a child of God, no matter who he is.

Paul records here in verse 14 that he spoke to Peter:

“IN THE PRESENCE OF EVERYBODY.”

His recorded statement is:

“IF YOU BEING A JEW ARE LIVING AS THE GENTILES AND NOT AS THE JEWS, HOW ARE YOU CONSTRAINING THE GENTILES TO LIVE AS JEWS?”

In the form of a **QUESTION**, the apostle:

CONFRONTS and

CONDEMNS Cephas for his conduct.

In other words:

“Peter, you are a little inconsistent here.”

The **QUESTION** which he raises is:

“If you, as a Jew, live as the Gentiles like you have been doing before, how can you turn around and ask the Gentiles to live as Jews when it comes to the issue of the law?”

“Peter, your **TALK** is all right, but it is your **WALK** that is inconsistent.”

1 John 2:6 (DAV)

The one who is saying he is abiding in Him, he himself is morally obligated to be walking around just as that one also walked around.

To have walked straight in this situation would have been for Peter to have been consistent with his convictions, and to have conducted himself in light of what he had spoken earlier.

Colossians 2:6 (DAV)

In like manner, therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, be living (walking around) in Him,

What a **POWERFUL QUESTION** comes from the lips of the Apostle Paul:

“IF YOU BEING A JEW ARE LIVING AS THE GENTILES AND NOT AS THE JEWS, HOW ARE YOU CONSTRAINING THE GENTILES TO LIVE AS JEWS?”

Wiersbe says:

Bible students are not sure just where Paul's conversation with Peter ends and where his letter to the Galatians continues in the passage. It does not really matter, since the entire section deals with the same topic: our liberty in Jesus Christ. We will assume that the entire section represents Paul's rebuke of Peter. It is interesting to note that Paul builds the entire rebuke on doctrine. There are five basic Christian doctrines that were being denied by Peter because of his separation from the Gentiles.

- (1) **The unity of the church (v. 14).** . . .
- (2) **Justification by faith (vv. 15-16).** . . .
- (3) **Freedom from the law (vv. 17-18).** . . .
- (4) **The very gospel itself (vv. 19-20).** . . .
- (5) **The grace of God (v. 21).** . . .

Peter had experienced God's grace in his own salvation, and he had proclaimed God's grace in his own ministry. But when he withdrew from the Gentile Christian fellowship, he openly denied the grace of God.
pp. 57-60

Anders says:

The Correction by Paul (vv. 14-21)

2:14. Paul knew he had to confront Peter before his actions damaged the church. Therefore, Paul reprimanded Peter publicly **in front of them all** for supporting division between the Jews and Gentiles. Such segregation went against **the truth of the gospel** that Jew and Gentile were equal and one in Christ. Paul uses a rhetorical question in this verse to reprimand Peter: **"You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile.** Now you want the Gentiles to live like Jews. What kind of inconsistency is that?"
p. 23

Bartlett says:

. . . they did not steer a straight line in relation to the gospel; they wavered and wobbled. We are prone to try to bend the Bible into agreement with human opinion. We lack a mastery of the Word that reveals seemingly insignificant deviations from its teachings. Unwittingly we multiply points of harmony between worldly wisdom and gospel truth where none exist. We need keener discernment of basic differences between the gospel and other spheres of thought and practice.
p. 46

Eadie says:

. . . in other compounds leads to the correct apprehension of its meaning here, which is “to foot it straight,” to walk straight, that is, in no crooked paths—to conduct one’s self uprightly or honestly.
p. 155

Hendriksen says:

The courage and firmness of Paul’s reaction to this inexcusable hypocrisy merit profound admiration: **14. But when I saw that they were not pursuing a straight course in accordance with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas, in everybody’s presence, “If you, though a Jew, can live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you (now) force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”**

Paul saw that Peter and all those who followed his example “were not straight-footing *toward*, or in *accordance with*, the truth of the gospel,” thus literally. In the New Testament the verb *they are straight-footing* occurs only here. The meaning is probably either that, as Paul saw it, these people were not advancing *toward*, i.e., *in the direction of*, the gospel-truth, or that they were not pursuing a straight course *in accordance with* that truth.
p. 95

Hogg & Vine say:

Paul charges them with nothing less than robbery of God, for to deny explicitly, or implicitly as Peter and the Judaizers were doing, that men are saved by faith in Christ alone, which is “the truth of the gospel”, is to deny to God the glory of His grace, and to rob the Christian of “our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus” . . .
p. 85

Lange says:

. . . Paul shows him the self-contradictoriness of his behavior, by a kind of ironical address. “Thou thyself a Jew, livest as a Gentile—and how comes it, then, that thou constrainest Gentiles to live Jewishly? Is not that an utter contradiction?” It is true Peter does not *constrain* the Gentiles directly; it is a turn which sharpens the censure; in reality, it was only an indirect constraining through the authority of the example of Peter.
p. 47

Lenski says:

We see why Peter made no defense. It would have been preposterous for him to make even the attempt. To deny or to contradict the finding of the conference would have included a denial of the central part of the gospel. Peter was erring. But his greatness is evident: he accepted public rebuke in all humility, he mended his ways. How many men, high in the church, have done the same when they were in the wrong?
pp. 93-94

Lightfoot says:

. . . ‘Seeing that they had left the straight path and abandoned the true principles of the Gospel, I remonstrated with Cephas publicly. Thou thyself, though born and bred a Jew, dost nevertheless lay aside Jewish customs and livest as the Gentiles. On what plea then dost thou constrain the Gentiles to adopt the institutions of the Jews?’
p. 113

Luther says:

Paul reproved Peter for no trifle, but for the chief article of Christian doctrine, which Peter's hypocrisy had endangered. For Barnabas and other Jews followed Peter's example. It is surprising that such good men as Peter, Barnabas, and others should fall into unexpected error, especially in a matter which they knew so well. To trust in our own strength, our own goodness, our own wisdom, is a perilous thing. Let us search the Scriptures with humility, praying that we may never lose the light of the Gospel. "Lord, increase our faith."

p. 60

McGee says:

The nature of Paul's rebuke shows, first of all, the inconsistency of lawkeeping. If it was right for Simon Peter to live as the gentile believers lived, why should he desire the Gentiles to live as the Jews? That is what he was saying when he left the gentile table for the kosher table. If gentile living under grace apart from the Law was good enough for Peter, was it bad for the Gentiles themselves? If Simon Peter was free to live outside the Law, was it not lawful for the Gentiles to do the same?

p. 160

Patrick & Lowth say:

. . . *They walked not uprightly, &c.*] By this action Peter is charged with a sinful fear, ver. 13, "not walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel," ver. 14, with hypocrisy and dissimulation against his own knowledge and practice elsewhere, ver. 13, with "building again what he had pulled down," ver. 18, and with "compelling the gentiles to live as do the Jews," ver. 14; where observe, that he is said to "compel," in scripture, not only who doth violently force, but who, being of authority, provokes by his example, as here; as also they who lay a necessity on others to do any thing, either by their deportment, as the Corinthians who "compelled" Paul to glory, 2 Cor. xii. 11, or by their doctrine, as did the Judaizers, "compelling the gentiles to be circumcised," Gal. vi. 12, and in this sense our Saviour says to his disciples, "Compel them to come in," Luke xiv. 23.

p. 728

Pinnock says:

Even great ministers of the gospel make serious mistakes. We should never idolize one of God's servants. It is important that our faith rest on God's Word and not on any fallible human authority. This incident stands as a warning against crediting any office, even the "Petrine office," with infallibility. From Peter's experience we learn that it is not enough to believe the gospel if we do not practice it. Peter's offense was in the area of behavior, not creed. Our evangelical principles need to be fleshed-out in concrete situations. It would have been easy for Peter to have said, "It was such a small thing to get worked up about." It may have seemed small, but its true significance was profound. It is an affront to God and destructive to the church when we are slow to accept all those whom God has already accepted in Christ.
p. 32

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

2:14 Peter's hypocritical example implied that Gentiles had to behave like Jews in order to receive God's grace. Thus, Peter was **not** being **straightforward about the truth of the gospel** of God's grace. It had already been decided (vv. 1-5) that it was not proper to **compel Gentiles to live as Jews** because salvation was through faith alone.
p. 1521

Wuest says:

... "But when I saw that they walked not orthopedically," that is, in a straightforward, unwavering, and sincere way.
p. 74

Wuest says:

The idea is, "He did not pursue a straight course in relation to the truth of the gospel." He did not deal honestly and consistently with it. His was an attitude that led him to juggle with its sacred truth, to warp it, to misrepresent it, to deal crookedly with it. What an indictment of Peter.
p. 74

(If God Is Good: Faith in the Midst of Suffering and Evil by Randy Alcorn)
 Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah. Copyright– Eternal Perspective Ministries, 2009.

Had we been in Adam's place, no doubt we would have made the same evil decision he did; whether months earlier or years later is irrelevant. Remember, it takes only a single sin along the way to become eternally separated from an infinitely holy God.
 p. 70

We demonstrate our evil not just by what we do, but by what we fail to do and what we stand by and allow others to do.
 p. 74

(Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright - Brennan Manning, 1994.

With a graciousness and an understanding of human weakness that only God can exhibit, Jesus liberates us from alienation and self-condemnation and offers each of us a new possibility. He is the Savior who saves us from ourselves. His Word is freedom. The Master says to us:

Burn the old tapes spinning 'round in your head that bind you up and lock you into a self-centered stereotype. Listen to the new song of salvation written for those who know that they are poor. Let go of your fear of the Father and your dislike of yourself. Remember the play "Don Quixote"? The Knight of the Mirrors lied to him when he said, "See yourself as you really are. Discover that you are not a noble knight, but an idiotic scarecrow of a man." And the Enchanter lies to you when he says, "Thou art no knight but a foolish pretender. Look in the mirror of reality. Behold things as they really are. What dost thou see? Naught but an aging fool." The Father of Lies twists the truth and distorts reality. He is the author of cynicism and skepticism, mistrust and despair, sick thinking and self-hatred. I am the Son of compassion. You belong to Me and no one will tear you from My hand.

p. 42

(Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright - Brennan Manning, 1994.

As the Cambridge classicist F. M. Cornford once said, "The only reason for doing the right thing is that it is the right thing to do; all other reasons are reasons for doing something else."
p. 115

Scripture records that Peter recognizing what he had done to our Lord, went out and wept bitterly. I believe that left the dining room doing the same thing, recognizing the seriousness of what he has just done with regard to the unity and oneness of Jews and Gentiles being in Christ.

(Morning and Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon) Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson. Copyright – Unknown.

A HEART of flesh is known by its *tenderness concerning sin*. To have indulged a foul imagination, or to have allowed a wild desire to tarry even for a moment, is quite enough to make a heart of flesh grieve before the Lord. The heart of stone calls a great iniquity nothing, but not so the heart of flesh.

"If to the right or left I stray,
That moment, Lord, reprove;
And let me weep my life away,
For having grieved thy love."

p. 457

(American Soldier by General Tommy Franks with Malcolm McConnell) New York, NY: Regan Books. Copyright – Tommy Franks, 2004.

When we left the tent, I hopped up on the back of a Humvee to congratulate the Marines. "In my entire life," I said, as the vehicle surged forward, "I have never seen anything like you. You're taking care of the mission. You're taking care of each other. You're acting like Marines. I won't make a long speech here. I just want you to know that if I had a son I'd want him to be a Marine."
p. 521

v. 15 As for us we are Jews by nature and not sinners of Gentile origin (the Gentiles).

The NET Bible titles this last section from verses 15-21:

Jews and Gentiles are Justified by Faith

The NET Bible translates verse 15:

We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners,

Peterson paraphrases verse 15:

We Jews know that we have no advantage of birth over “non-Jewish sinners.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

But how far did the rebuke extend? Considerable discussion has centered on the question as to whether Paul’s direct remarks to Peter were limited to verse 14 or whether, as in the NIV, they continued to the end of the chapter. While it is impossible to determine, it would seem that Paul uttered more than one sentence in reproving Peter. The remaining verses of the chapter develop, then, the inconsistency between Peter’s behavior and his beliefs. At the same time they form a superb transition and introduction to chapters 3 and 4 in which Paul defended the key doctrine of justification by faith.

Paul’s argument was addressed to those who were **Jews by birth**, including Peter and himself, who in spite of their superior advantages were saved by faith. Why then bind the Law on **Gentile sinners** (said in irony because of Peter’s actions), who likewise were saved by faith in Christ?

“Peter, if you are going to make a separation here, you and I are of Jewish origin and not Gentile.”

“Peter, if you are going to make this separation, then you have no right to be associating with the Gentiles. **YOU HAVE JUST TERMINATED MY MINISTRY BY THIS ACTION.**”

Peter and the rest of the Jews were acting like the Pharisees here. One is reminded of the parable that Jesus told in:

Luke 18:9-13 (DAV)

And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they are righteous, and who are utterly despising the rest of mankind: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘God, I am thanking you that I am not like the rest of mankind: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I am fasting twice a week; I am paying tithes of my whole income.’ But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to me, the sinner!’”

Anders says:

2:15. It is inconsistent and illogical for privileged **Jews by birth**, who rejected the keeping of their very own law as the way to salvation, to now burden the Gentiles with the keeping of that very same law. The phrase **Gentile sinners** was probably spoken in irony. Quite often, the Jews could not mention Gentiles without calling them “Gentile sinners.” Yet, in Paul’s eyes, the sinners were the Judaizers, not the Gentiles, Christian believers in his church.

p. 23

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The verses that conclude this chapter contain capsule statements of some of the most significant truths of Christianity. In particular, Paul clearly states the doctrine of “justification” (GK 1467-1470) by grace through faith and depends it over against the traditional objection that justification by faith leads to lawlessness. This message is central to the letter, to his Gospel, and indeed to Christianity generally. This statement flows out of the situation at Antioch and anticipates the fuller argument of the same doctrine in chs. 3-4.

p. 717

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

In v.14, he speaks of “you” (meaning Peter) and in v.15 “we” (meaning himself, Peter, and other Jews), undoubtedly with the situation at Antioch in mind. Later he is probably thinking of the broader situation that faced the Gentile churches.

p. 718

Bartlett says:

It is a bit uncertain as to whether verses 15 to 21 are a continuation of Paul’s rebuke of Peter in the hearing of the church at Antioch or whether they constitute an enlargement for the benefit of the Galatians of what he said to Peter. The former is the more likely, for verse 14 would not be enough to convince the Galatians that he had really come to grips with Peter on the matter at issue.

p. 46

Lange says:

Vers. 15-21. That this is a continuation of the address to Peter, is self-evident to every unprejudiced reader, and the assumption that an address to the Galatians suddenly comes in here is so utterly at variance with the context that it is unnecessary to refute it.

p. 47

Patrick & Lowth say:

. . . *Sinners of the gentiles*.] This word in the scripture phrase signifies a great and habitual sinner; and because the gentiles were by the Jewish nation still esteemed such, and generally were so, therefore the word is used to denote the gentiles that knew not God.
p. 728

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

2:15-21 This section may represent the continuation of Paul's confrontation with Peter, or it may represent a statement of the central point of his letter: that Christians are justified by faith in Jesus Christ alone.
p. 1521

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

2:15-17 Paul is not denying that those who are **Jews** by birth are **sinners**, as are all **Gentiles** (Rom. 3:23). Rather, he is implying that Jews enjoy spiritual privileges (Rom. 9:4, 5) that should make them more knowledgeable about how to be justified before God (3:6; Gen. 15:6). The Jews should have been aware that no person can be declared righteous or justified by obedience to the Law of Moses (3:10-21).
p. 1521

v. 16 And knowing that a man is not justified (made righteous) by the works of the law only through faith in Christ Jesus. We also believed in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be made righteous by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law because by the works of the law there shall no flesh be made righteous.

The NET Bible translates verse 16:

yet we know that no one is justified by the works of the law but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

Peterson paraphrases verse 16:

We know very well that we are not set right with God by rule-keeping but only through personal faith in Jesus Christ. How do we know? We tried it—and we had the best system of rules the world has ever seen! Convinced that no human being can please God by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right before God by trusting in the Messiah, not by trying to be good.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

In this verse, one of the most important in the epistle, the word *justified* occurs for the first time. It is a legal term, borrowed from the law courts and means “to declare righteous.” Its opposite is “to condemn.” But since people are condemned sinners and God is holy, how can people be justified? In answer, the apostle made a general declaration that negatively **man is not justified by observing the Law**, but positively, justification is **by faith in Jesus Christ**. This is a strong affirmation of Paul, Peter, and the rest—introduced by **We . . . know**. It is followed by a statement in which Paul explained that he had put this doctrine to the test and validated it in his own experience (v. 16b). Finally, in verse 16c the apostle reaffirmed that justification is by faith and not by works (cf. Gen. 15:6).

Here the Apostle Paul states the condition of salvation. A man is not made righteous by the works of the law, only through faith in Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:20 (DAV)

because by the works of the Law there shall not be declared righteous any flesh in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Peter and Paul had both entered into this new relationship with Christ on the basis of faith and not **“BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW.”**

(Knowing God by J. I. Packer) Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
 Copyright – J. I. Packer, 1973.

Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* has been almost a modern Bible, and a whole technique of business relations has been built up in recent years on the principle of putting the other man in a position where he cannot decently say 'no'. This has confirmed modern man in the faith which has animated pagan religion ever since there was such a thing—namely, the belief that we can repair our own relationship with God, by putting God in a position where He cannot say 'no' any more. Ancient pagans thought to do this by multiplying gifts and sacrifices; modern pagans seek to do it by churchmanship and morality. Conceding that they are not perfect, they still have no doubt that respectability henceforth will guarantee God's acceptance of them in the end, whatever they may have done in the past. But the Bible position is as stated by Toplady:

*Not the labours of my hands
 Can fulfil Thy law's demands.
 Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my tears for ever flow,
 All for sin could not atone*

—leading to the admission of one's own helplessness, and the conclusion

Thou must save, and Thou alone.

'By the deeds of the law (i.e., morality and churchmanship) shall no flesh be justified in his sight,' declares Paul (Romans 3:20). To mend our own relationship with God, regaining God's favour after having once lost it, is beyond the power of any one of us. And one must see and bow to this before one can share the biblical faith in God's grace.
 pp. 118-19

The apostle says that the one way that a man is made righteous or justified before God is:

“ONLY THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS.”

Then the apostle points up the fact that he and Peter both have **“BELIEVED IN CHRIST JESUS”** with the express **PURPOSE** that:

“WE MIGHT BE MADE RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH IN CHRIST AND NOT BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW, BECAUSE BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW THERE SHALL NO FLESH BE MADE RIGHTEOUS.”

In verse 16 the apostle begins with a **NEGATIVE**:

“AND KNOWING THAT A MAN IS NOT JUSTIFIED (MADE RIGHTEOUS) BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW.”

He then states the **POSITIVE**:

“ONLY THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS.”

As a **RESULT** of this great revelation, Paul says to Peter:

“WE ALSO BELIEVED IN CHRIST JESUS.”

The **PURPOSE** behind that belief was:

“IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE MADE RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH IN CHRIST.”

This is the **WHOLE GOSPEL IN A NUTSHELL**:

“WE ALSO BELIEVED IN CHRIST JESUS, IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE MADE RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH IN CHRIST.”

Romans 5:1 (DAV)

Therefore, having been made right by faith, we are having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 1:16-17 (DAV)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith; even as it has been written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."

Paul **BEGINS** and **ENDS** verse 16 in a very similar way. In his argument he says:

"WE ALSO BELIEVED IN CHRIST JESUS, IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE MADE RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH IN CHRIST."

Then he returns to the **NEGATIVE** again:

"AND NOT BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW."

He then gives the **REASON**, which is a capsule statement of how he began verse 16:

"BECAUSE BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW THERE SHALL NO FLESH BE MADE RIGHTEOUS."

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NIV)

There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.

Anders says:

2:16. Verse 16 is one of the most important verses in Galatians because in it Paul states the content of the gospel of grace. This is the first time Paul uses the word *justified* which means “to declare righteous.” Justification is the act of God, whereby he declares the believing sinner righteous in Jesus Christ. Negatively, Paul says **a man is not justified by observing the law**. Stated positively, justification is **by faith in Christ Jesus**. Negatively, Paul has rebuffed the false teachings of the Judaizers which Peter had supported by his behavior in Antioch. Positively, he has presented the true, grace path to righteousness.

p. 23

Arthur says:

Keeping your set of “laws” can’t change you and give you an inner sense of being right with God, can it, my friend? No matter how hard you try, no matter how much you go through your form of worship (whatever it is), no matter how much you try to obey the laws of your religion or try only to do good deeds instead of bad ones, there is no peace inside nor victory over your own flesh, is there? There is no freedom from your flesh and its desires, is there?

Only faith in Jesus Christ has set you free or can set you free. And since that is true, why then do you think you can do what you couldn’t do before? Why do you think you can make yourself perfect, pleasing, acceptable to God by the strength of your flesh?

If you have truly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, then you are under a new covenant—a covenant that gives you the Spirit of God to live within you.

Don’t allow yourself to come under bondage again!

p. 32

Barclay says:

There are two great temptations in the Christian life, and, in a certain sense, the better a man is the more liable he is to them. First, there is the temptation to try to earn the favour of God, and to God man can never give; from God he must always take. Second, there is the temptation that the man who has some little achievement to show will compare himself with his fellow men to his advantage and to their disadvantage. The Christianity which has enough of self left in it to think that by its own efforts it can please God and that by its own achievements it can show itself superior to the normal run of men, is not true Christianity at all.

p. 22

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

This is one of the most important verses in the letter. It contains the first mention of the word “justify” and “law” (GK 3795), and is also the first place in which “faith” (GK 4411) is brought forward as the indispensable channel of salvation.

p. 718

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The threefold reputation of the doctrine of justification by faith in this one verse is important, because it shows the importance the apostle gives to the doctrine. Besides, the three phrases increase in emphasis. The first is general: “A man is not justified by observing . . . law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.” “A man” is anyone. The second phrase is particular and personal. “We, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing . . . law.” This phrase involves Paul himself, as well as all who stand with him in the faith. The final statement is universal: “By observing the law no one will be justified.” The words are literally “all flesh,” i.e., all humankind without exception. This final statement quotes Ps 143:2 (cf. Rom 3:20), adding the stamp of biblical principle.

p. 718

Henry says:

II. He takes occasion to speak of that great fundamental doctrine of the gospel—That justification is only by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law. This was the doctrine which Paul had preached among the Galatians, to which he still adhered, and which it is his great business in this epistle to confirm.
p. 1840

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

but by—Translate, “But only (in no other way save) *through* faith *in* Jesus Christ,” as the MEAN and instrument of justification.
p. 1263

Lucado says:

LIFE LESSONS

Trying to get right with God by keeping a bunch of religious rules is a formula for frustration and failure. First problem, whose rules? Such requirements vary from religion to religion, person to person, and generation to generation. What if you're working from the wrong list? Second problem, how do we define what it means to “keep” those rules? Do we have to follow them perfectly? Or are we allowed a reasonable number of mistakes and missteps? And what is considered “reasonable”? The gospel of Christ eliminates all this confusion by stating categorically that no one but Christ is good enough. Only through faith in him, only by relying on his efforts on our behalf, do we qualify for heaven.
p. 29

Luther says:

The true way of becoming a Christian is to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the Law.
p. 67

MacArthur says:

Paul's rebuke of Peter serves as one of the most dynamic statements in the NT on the absolute and unwavering necessity of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith (*see note on Rom. 3:24*). Peter's apparent repentance acknowledged Paul's apostolic authority and his own submission to the truth (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15, 16).
p. 1663

MacArthur says:

Three times in this verse Paul declares that salvation is only through faith in Christ and not by law. The first is general, "a *man* is not justified"; the second is personal, "*we* might be justified"; and the third is universal, "no *flesh* shall be justified." ***justified***. This basic Greek word forensically describes a judge declaring an accused person not guilty and therefore innocent before the law. Throughout Scripture, it refers to God's declaring a sinner not guilty and fully righteous before Him by imputing to him the divine righteousness of Christ and imputing the person's sin to his sinless Savior for punishment . . .
p. 1663

McGee says:

This is a clear-cut and simple statement of justification by faith. Believe me, the legalist has trouble with this verse. I once heard a legalist preach on it, and it was certainly a travesty of interpretation. This verse will upset every legal system there is today. To say that you have to add *anything* to faith in Christ absolutely mutilates the gospel.
p. 160

McGee says:

Notice what Paul says here. If a Jew had to leave the Law behind—that is, forsake it—in order to be justified by faith, Paul’s question is, “Why should the Gentile be brought under the Law?” That was the great argument at the council of Jerusalem in Acts 15: “Should the Gentile be brought under the Law?” Thank God, the answer, guided by the Spirit of God, was that the Gentile was not under the Law for salvation—not for his daily living, as he was called to a much higher plane.

Could the Gentile find justification under the Law when the Jew had already proven that it was impossible? The Jews had had the Law for almost fifteen hundred years and had not been able to keep the Law at all. Why force the Gentile under that which had not saved even one Israelite? Gentile believers were already justified by grace. It would be folly for the Gentiles to turn from grace to the Law which had been unable to justify the Jew.
p. 160

McGee says:

This verse is so clear it is impossible to misunderstand it. “Knowing that a man [any human being—man or woman, black or white, rich or poor, Roman, American, Chinese] is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.” It is not faith plus something; it is faith plus *nothing*.
p. 161

Pinnock says:

What is the truth Peter “knows” and is in danger of allowing to slip? It is the doctrine of justification by faith.
p. 33

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

By the grace of God (v. 21), the only way to be **justified** (declared righteous or pardoned) is through **faith in Jesus Christ**. Any other way allows **works**, whether keeping **the law** of Moses or performing good deeds in general, to play a role in justification. This is the main point of Paul's letter to the Galatians: salvation or righteousness cannot be obtained by obeying the law. Salvation is only through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:20).
p. 1521

(Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright - Brennan Manning, 1994.

Whenever we place blame, we are looking for a scapegoat for a real dislocation in which we ourselves are implicated. Blame is a defensive substitute for an honest examination of life that seeks personal growth in failure and self-knowledge in mistakes. Thomas Moore stated, "Fundamentally, it is a way of averting consciousness of error."
p. 85

v. 17 But if while seeking to be made righteous in Christ we ourselves also were found to be sinners, therefore is Christ a minister of sin? May it not happen (perish the thought).

The NET Bible translates verse 17:

But if while seeking to be justified in Christ we ourselves have also been found to be sinners, is Christ then one who encourages sin? Absolutely not!

Peterson paraphrases verse 17:

Have some of you noticed that we are not yet perfect? (No great surprise, right?) And are you ready to make the accusation that since people like me, who go through Christ in order to get things right with God, aren't perfectly virtuous, Christ must therefore be an accessory to sin? The accusation is frivolous.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul's opponents argued, however, that since justification by faith eliminated the Law, it encouraged sinful living. A person could believe in Christ for salvation and then do as he pleased, having no need to do good works. Paul hotly denied the charge, especially noting that this made **Christ** the promoter of **sin**.

If to eat with the Gentiles was sin, then **JESUS CHRIST** coming to permit it was the **INSTIGATOR OF SIN**. Paul's conclusion is that if in Jesus Christ we are not completely made righteous but are still in our sin, then Jesus Christ is the minister of sin.

Calvin says:

... “If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we are not yet perfectly righteous, but still unholy, and if, consequently, Christ is not sufficient for our righteousness, it follows that Christ is the minister of the doctrine which leaves men in sin:” ...
p. 71

And the Apostle Paul then uses his **STRONG NEGATIVE** when he says:

“MAY IT NOT HAPPEN (PERISH THE THOUGHT).”

C. S. Lovett points out:

Paul’s argument is brilliant. He asks Peter: was Jesus wrong in leading us Jews from our legal righteousness to come to Him as sinners? And because we have forsaken the Law to see ourselves as sinners like the Gentiles, does that mean Christ has led us into sin? The idea is blasphemous, utterly repulsive to the Christian mind. But Paul doesn’t hesitate to use it to shock Peter to his senses. By withdrawing to eat with the Jewish Christians, he was indicating that the Jewish Law of meats was still obligatory, when in fact it was observed purely for the sake of its benefits. On the surface at least, his action suggested one should not abandon his legal righteousness to trust Christ completely. Peter was demonstrating that one must not trust Christ fully, but maintain some spiritual safety under the Law. This is why Paul had to rebuke him so sternly.
pp. 28-29

Vos points out:

... If we seek to be justified by Christ alone and no longer put ourselves under the restraints of the law, perhaps we are in this way giving license to sin. If free grace in Christ encourages men to continue in sin, then He is made a minister of sin. Paul finds such a view utterly repulsive and retorts with his characteristic “God forbid” (“perish the thought”).
p. 46

God's love and grace and acceptance of us is not doled out, or restrained because of a performance or a lack of it. God's longing is for a relationship based on unconditional love and acceptance. He has provided the adequate foundation for that relationship in dealing with our sin problem by the death of His Son on Calvary's cross. Nothing can be added to that adequate sacrifice.

Calvin says:

. . . "If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we are not yet perfectly righteous, but still unholy, and if, consequently, Christ is not sufficient for our righteousness, it follows that Christ is the minister of the doctrine which leaves men in sin:" . . .
p. 71

Henry says:

. . . *"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ the minister of sin? Will it not follow that he is so, if he engage us to receive a doctrine by which we are so far from being justified that we remain impure sinners?" But he rejects it with abhorrence: "God forbid,"* says he, "that thereby he should direct us into a way of justification that is defective and ineffectual."
p. 1840

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

(Are we to admit the conclusion, in this case inevitable, that Christ having failed to justify us by faith, so has become to us the minister of sin, by putting us in the position of "sinners," as the Judaic theory, if correct, would make us, along with all others who are "without the law," . . .
p. 1263

Lovett says:

GOD FORBID. Paul's argument is brilliant. He asks Peter: was Jesus wrong in leading us Jews from our legal righteousness to come to Him as sinners? And because we have forsaken the Law to see ourselves as sinners like the Gentiles, does that mean Christ has led us into sin? The idea is blasphemous, utterly repulsive to the Christian mind. But Paul doesn't hesitate to use it to shock Peter to his senses. By withdrawing to eat with the Jewish Christians, he was indicating that the Jewish Law of meats was still obligatory, when in fact it was observed purely for the sake of its benefits. On the surface at least, his action suggested one should not abandon his legal righteousness to trust Christ completely. Peter was demonstrating that one must not trust Christ fully, but maintain some spiritual safety under the Law. This is why Paul had to rebuke him so sternly.
pp. 28-29

MacArthur says:

If the Judaizers' doctrine was correct, then Paul, Peter, Barnabas, and the other Jewish believers fell back into the category of sinners because they had been eating and fellowshiping with Gentiles, who according to the Judaizers were unclean, *minister of sin*. If the Judaizers were right, then Christ was wrong and had been teaching people to sin because He taught that food could not contaminate a person (Mark 7:19; cf. Acts 10:13-15). He also declared that all who belong to Him are one with Him and therefore with one another (John 17:21-23). Paul's airtight logic condemned Peter, because by his actions he had in effect made it appear as if Christ was lying. This thought is utterly objectionable and caused Paul to use the strongest Greek negative . . .
p. 1663

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

2:17-19 Paul strongly rejects the erroneous conclusion that being **justified by faith in Christ** actually made Jews **sinner**s, thus painting Christ as a promoter of **sin**. Those who attempt to be justified through “the works of the law” are “cursed” (3:10). If anyone attempts to reassert the “works of the law” as having any part in justification before God, **the law** itself convicts that person of being **a transgressor** (3:19-25). The law itself is not sinful; its purpose is to convince individuals of their personal spiritual deadness in sin outside of faith in Christ (Rom. 7:7-13).
p. 1521

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)
San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,
2006.

Lord, you know how I am always coming up with a new scheme for self-improvement, and reducing my role in the spiritual life to that of charwoman, scrubbing and dusting and polishing my moral image. What I need is you, your presence. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus! Amen.
p. 125

v. 18 For if the things I tear down these things I build again I am showing myself a transgressor.

The NET Bible translates verse 18:

But if I build up again those things I once destroyed, I demonstrate that I am one who breaks God's law.

Peterson paraphrases verse 18:

If I was "trying to be good," I would be rebuilding the same old barn that I tore down. I would be acting as a charlatan.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

On the contrary, if a believer would return to the Law after trusting Christ alone for salvation, that Law would only demonstrate that he was a sinner, **a lawbreaker**. Though Paul used the first person here, he clearly had in mind Peter, who by his act of withdrawing from Gentile fellowship was returning to the Law

Ephesians 2:13-16 (DAV)

But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, the One who made us both one, and has broken down the barrier formed by the dividing wall between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the Law of the commandments in ordinances, in order that of the two He might create in Himself one new man, making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, having put to death the enmity by it.

Paul now states **TWO REASONS** here in verses 18 & 19 for asking the **QUESTION** in verse 17:

“Therefore is Christ a minister of sin?”

Vos points out:

“If I build again the things which I destroyed” (v. 18) involves restoring to the believer the whole system of legal righteousness overthrown by the faith of Christ. Though Paul uses the first person, he is clearly referring to Peter. If he restored the law, Peter would be a transgressor or sinner in the sight of the law, because he had set it aside and lived as a Gentile; therefore he could not be justified by the law. He would also be a transgressor in the light of the true gospel because in reestablishing the system of legal righteousness he would deny the sufficiency of justification by faith in Christ alone.
pp. 46-47

Lovett points out:

The man who tears down a bridge and then rebuilds it, admits he made an awful mistake in tearing it down in the first place. Again, returning to legal bondage after receiving the grace of Christ, is like a man who has been pardoned, returning to prison to serve out the balance of a life sentence. Such an act is stupid for it cancels the effect of the pardon. The very turning back to Law indicates there is no salvation in Christ. Imagine the effect of these words, though addressed to Peter, on the Galatians who were in danger of doing this very thing!
p. 29

Peter was trying to erect the wall between the Jews and the Gentiles once again. By his actions in so doing he is showing himself a transgressor. Living as a Gentile, you tore down the law; and living like a Jew, you are tearing down the grace of God.

Peter is **CAUGHT ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA.**

On a chessboard, he has been put in **CHECKMATE.**

Christians, many times, are brought to a point of real blessing when they recognize some of the truth about allowing Jesus Christ to live out His life in them and the utter futility of trying in themselves to live a life pleasing to God.

Anders says:

2:18. A person who rebuilds (that is, returns to) the law after believing in Christ will find himself a **lawbreaker**. No one except Jesus can keep the law perfectly. So to put one's relationship with God on a legalistic basis is to make oneself a lawbreaker.

p. 23

Barclay says:

HERE Paul speaks out of the depths of personal experience. For him to re-erect the whole fabric of the law would have been spiritual suicide. He says that through the law he died to the law that he might live to God. What he means is this—he had tried the way of law; he had tried with all the terrible intensity of his hot heart to win God's favour, to put himself right with God, by a life that sought to obey every single item of the law. He had found that such an attempt left him with nothing but a deeper and deeper sense of failure, and nothing but a deeper and deeper sense that all he could do could never put him right with God.

pp. 22-23

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

If there is sin, as Paul acknowledges indirectly in the next verse, human beings themselves are responsible.
p. 719

Henry says:

. . . “*if I build again the things which I destroyed I make myself a transgressor; I own myself to remain under the guilt of sin, notwithstanding my faith in Christ.*”
p. 1840

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

. . . “For if the things which I overthrew (by the faith of Christ), those very things I build up again (viz., legal righteousness, by subjecting myself to the law), I prove myself (lit., ‘I commend myself’) a transgressor.” Instead of commending yourself as you sought to do (vs. 12, end), you merely commend yourself as a transgressor.
p. 1264

Lange says:

Ver. 18. STARKE:—Teachers should take good care, that what they tear down with one hand, that they may not build up again with the other.
p. 58

MacArthur says:

For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, he said, **I prove myself to be a transgressor**. In other words, if anyone, including **myself**, tries to **rebuild** a system of legalism after he has **once destroyed** it by believing and preaching the gospel of God's powerful grace and man's sinful helplessness, he proves *himself*, not Christ, to be **a transgressor**. He proves himself to be a hypocrite and a sinner by abandoning grace for law.
pp. 58-59

Wuest says:

His argument is to the effect that instead of committing sin by abandoning the law for grace, one becomes a transgressor by returning to the law which he has abandoned.
p. 79

v. 19 For I through the law died to the law in order that I might live unto God.

The NET Bible translates verse 19:

For through the law I died to the law so that I may live to God.

Peterson paraphrases verse 19:

What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man. Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul then distinguished himself from Peter, contrasting what he did with the Law with what Peter did with the Law. Paul described the transformation in a person who has come to God by faith in Christ in terms of a death and a resurrection. The concept is repeated in both verses and the reference in both cases is to a believer's union with Christ in His death and resurrection. First, Paul stated that **through the Law** he **died to the Law**. The Law demanded death for those who broke it, but Christ paid that death penalty for all sinners. Thus the Law killed Him and those joined to Him by faith, freeing them to be joined to another, to **live for God** (cf. Rom. 7:4).

This verse reminds me of **ENOCH** in:

Genesis 5:24 (NIV)

Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Vos points out:

All the law could do was condemn. Its standard of ethical and moral righteousness was so demanding that no mere human being could fulfill it. The law demanded death for lawbreakers; so all stood condemned to death for their sins. The Lord of glory became incarnate and paid the death penalty for our sins. Once any law has exacted the death penalty it cannot do so again. In fact it becomes inoperative in relation to the one it has executed. If we are joined to Christ by faith in His finished work, we share in His fulfillment of the righteous demands of the law. The law has killed Him and us and we are therefore no longer subject to the law. Just as a woman whose husband dies is no longer bound to him but is free to marry another, so we being freed from the law by the interposition of death are freed to be joined to another. With this orientation, "I through the law am dead to the law" takes on profound significance.

p. 47

Romans 7:1-6 (DAV)

For do you not know, brethren, for I am speaking to those who are knowing the law, that the law is ruling over the individual as long as he lives? For the married woman has been bound by law to her living husband; but if her husband dies, she has been released from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also were put to death to the Law through the body of Christ, resulting in your being joined to another, to the One who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions were at work in our members through the Law to bear fruit for death. But now we having been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were being bound, so that we are serving in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

NO MASTER CAN GIVE ORDERS TO A DEAD SLAVE.

“I THROUGH THE LAW DIED TO THE LAW.” The law tried me and found me guilty and executed me. The law cannot go beyond the grave. The law does not anticipate resurrection.

Say for instance, I was guilty of committing murder and the jury found me guilty and the judge pronounced sentence that I was to die in the electric chair. And I was put in the chair and electrocuted. Some days later you see me walking on the street so you run to the judge and say that I am alive. The judge looks up in his records and sees that I have been duly executed and says, “I am sorry, he has paid his penalty by death. The law cannot go beyond the grave. Justice has been completely satisfied.”

The last phrase in verse 19 expresses the **ULTIMATE PURPOSE** in Paul’s argument that we are dead to the demands of the law:

“IN ORDER THAT I MIGHT LIVE UNTO GOD.”

What is the purpose in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

“THAT I MIGHT LIVE UNTO GOD.”

How do I do this? I do it through:

FELLOWSHIP,

COMMUNION,

SUBMISSION, and

OBEDIENCE to Him.

2 Corinthians 5:15 (DAV)

and He died for all, in order that those who are living no longer are living for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Anders says:

2:19. In verses 19-20 Paul teaches about the transformation that occurs in believers. He is continuing to correct Peter for cowering to a legalistic system that is powerless to change lives. Paul uses the death and resurrection motif in each verse. First, Paul states **through the law I died to the law**. Paul may have meant by this that, when he tried to live up to the law, he saw that it was impossible. He saw that the penalty for failing to live up to the law was death. Seeing his clear condemnation according to the law drove him into the arms of grace, to rely on Jesus to save him.
pp. 23-24

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The “we” of v.17 (which included both Paul and Peter) has changed to the “I” of v.18. This personal form of expression continues as Paul begins to unfold the full nature of the justification that is his because of his being “in Christ.” In this verse “I” is emphatic by being in the first position in the sentence. It contrasts with the similar position given to “in Christ,” which (in the Greek text) begins v.20.
p. 719

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Paul has argued that if he should return to law after having come to God through faith in Christ, he would make himself a transgressor. But this is not what he does. On the contrary, the opposite is true, for in coming to God in Christ he died to the law so completely that he could not possibly return to it. The law cannot bring life, for no one has ever fulfilled it. Law brings death, for by it all stand condemned. Nevertheless, the law does perform a good function, for in the very act of destroying all hope for salvation by human works, the law actually opens the way to discovering new life in God . . .

p. 719

De Haan says:

What a tremendous statement! Paul does not say the law is dead. Far from it, but he says, "I am dead to the law." He is speaking of God's holy, inviolable law, including the Commandments written upon the tables of stone, and says, as far as that law is concerned, I am dead. In the eyes of the law, I don't even exist any more. The law does not even recognize my existence. So little power, so little application has that law to me. Let me repeat, Paul does not say, "the law is dead." It is very, very much alive. It still curses, it still condemns the sinner, it still is the ministration of death. It still demands the death of the transgressor. But says Paul: as far as I am concerned the law cannot touch me any more. I am beyond its reach forever, for "I through the law am dead to the law."

pp. 64-65

De Haan says:

The law cannot try a dead man. It applies only to living men. The man is dead. He is beyond the reach of the law, and so the judge raps his gavel, and solemnly announces the case dismissed and the court adjourned. The man is dead, dead in the eyes of the law. The law cannot try a dead man.

p. 67

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

19. Here Paul seems to pass from his *exact words* to Peter, to the *general purport* of his argument on the question. However, his direct address to the Galatians seems not to be resumed till ch. 3:1, "O foolish Galatians . . ." p. 1264

MacArthur says:

died to the law. When a person is convicted of a capital crime and executed, the law has no further claim on him. So it is with the Christian who has died in Christ (who paid the penalty for his sins in full) and rises to new life in Him. Justice has been satisfied, and he is forever free from any further penalty. pp. 1663-4

(The Expositor's Bible: The Book of Psalms-Volume I- Psalms I-XXXVIII by A. Maclaren, D.D.) New York, N.Y.: A.C. Armstrong and Son. Copyright – 1899.

So the guest of Jehovah is safe, can claim asylum from every foe and a share in all the bountiful provision of His abode. p. 134

Then the inward sweetness of his faith fills his soul, as is ever the reward of brave avowal, and he buries himself, bee-like in the pure delights of communion with Jehovah (vv. 5–8). p. 140

(The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism by Timothy Keller) New York, NY: Dutton / Penguin Group. Copyright— Timothy Keller, 2008.

I would catch a glimpse of the cross—and suddenly my heart would stand still. In an instinctive, intuitive way I understood that something more important, more tumultuous, more passionate, was at issue than our good causes, however noble they might be. . . . I should have worn it. . . . It should have been my uniform, my language, my life. I shall have no excuse; I can't say I didn't know. I knew from the beginning, and turned away.

—Malcolm Muggeridge, *Jesus Rediscovered*

p. 186

v. 20 With Christ I have been crucified and I no longer am living but Christ is living in me and that life which now I am living in the flesh I am living by faith, which faith is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself on my behalf.

The NET Bible translates verse 20:

I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Peterson paraphrases verse 20:

Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not “mine,” but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

In Galatians 2:20 Paul enlarged on the meaning of verse 19. He “died to the Law” because he was **crucified with Christ**; he was able “to live for God” because **Christ** lived in him. Basic to an understanding of this verse is the meaning of union with Christ. This doctrine is based on such passages as Romans 6:1-6 and 1 Corinthians 12:13, which explain that believers have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ and into the church, the body of all true believers. Having been thus united to Christ, believers share in His death, burial, and resurrection. Paul could therefore write, **I have been “crucified with Christ”** (lit., “I have been and am now crucified with Christ”). This brought death to the Law. It also brought a change in regard to one’s self: **and I no longer live**. The self-righteous, self-centered Saul died. Further, death with Christ ended Paul’s enthronement of self; he yielded the throne of his life to Another, to Christ. But it was not in his own strength that Paul was able to live the Christian life; the living Christ Himself took up His abode in Paul’s heart: **Christ lives in me**. Yet Christ does not operate automatically in a believer’s life; it is a matter of living the new life **by faith in the Son of God**. It is then faith and not works or legal obedience that releases divine power to live a Christian life. This faith, stated Paul, builds on the sacrifice of Christ **who loved us and gave Himself for us**. In essence Paul affirmed, “If He loved me enough to give Himself for me, then He loves me enough to live out His life in me.”

Paul, when did you die? When did the execution take place?

“I through the law died to the law.”

The **ANSWER** to that is:

“WITH CHRIST I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED.”

Romans 6:6-8 (DAV)

knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that the sinful body may be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for the one who died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we are believing that we shall also live with Him,

“WITH CHRIST I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED AND I NO LONGER AM LIVING BUT CHRIST IS LIVING IN ME.”

Romans 5:10 (DAV)

For if while being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Someone has said:

A Christian's life should be nothing but a visible representation of Christ.
(source unknown)

Someone else said:

We live in faith; and faith lives by exercise.
(source unknown)

John Hunter points out:

The secret of a changed life is an exchanged life. Jesus Christ does not want my dedication. He wants my death. A dead man cannot do anything, he can only decay.
(source unknown)

John 12:24-25 (NIV)

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.

The Christian life in a sense is the reincarnation of Jesus Christ.

Whereas Christ dwelt:

in the Old Testament **TABERNACLE**,

then in the **TEMPLE**, and

THE WORD BECAME FLESH, John tells us, and tabernacled
AMONG US.

NOW CHRIST RESIDES IN THESE BODIES OF OURS.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (DAV)

Or are you not knowing that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you are having from God, and that you are not your own? For you were purchased with a price. Now therefore glorify God in your body.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (DAV)

But we are having this treasure in earthenware vessels, in order that the extraordinary [quality of the] power may be of God and not from ourselves.

The idea in Christian living is the full cooperation of the believer with the in-living Christ.

Gutzke points out:

Think of a pianist sitting down at a piano to play. Anyone hitting a key can make a sound. Some can hit the keys and produce only noise. But some can sit down to that piano and by touching the right chord, playing the right notes together in certain combinations, can make sweet sounds. Suppose a person sits down to a piano with his hands over the keys. Now picture a master pianist inside that person. The master can put his hands on the hands of that person, his fingers on those fingers so that by some means he can guide the fingers to the right keys at the right time, so that it would appear that the person sitting on the stool was playing the piano. This is how a Christian lives. Christ Jesus is in him, moving the Christian as to what to do and how to do it, when to say it and how to say it. A Christian person in the home acts the way he is inwardly led; the Christian woman in the community acts the way she is inwardly led; a Christian young person in school acts the way he or she is led. This is because the Christian is led from within by the Holy Spirit of God, who makes the things of Christ real to him. "Christ liveth in me." "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

p. 48

Richard Halverson says:

Christian growth is not the struggle to become the kind of person we think God wants us to be, but a surrender of our bodies, all our faculties, our right to ourselves, to God—that He may make us and mold us into the image of His Son, that through us His life and love and grace might flow.

(source unknown)

(Finding God's Best by John Hunter)

John 12 records how the Lord had come to Jerusalem for the last time in His earthly life. Ahead of Him lay all the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary. In verse 24, the Lord spoke of this coming tragedy in an unusual way: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

He told of the basic rule for reproduction in the vegetable kingdom: unless a seed dies it can never reproduce itself. He saw Himself as the heavenly corn of wheat which was to die so that the glorious harvest might appear. In one sense the Lord Jesus died so that He might never be alone. This we know, and this we believe.

Then in verse 26 the Lord continues, "If any man serve me, let him follow me . . ." Make sure you really understand this basic pattern for service. If I want to serve Him, then I must follow Him. But notice where I first follow Him: into the grave. This is the whole point of this amazing illustration. If life is to come through me, in my service for Him, then I, too, must be willing to follow Him into the grave. This is what Paul says in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ," not "I was," or "I will be," but a continuing present tense experience of identification with Christ in the place of death. He saw himself as dead for Christ's sake, but then he continued: "Nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

There was a special purpose in Paul seeing himself dead with Christ. He wanted the indwelling Christ to take over in his life so that the life of Christ might be made manifest in his mortal flesh. In this way the power would be released, fulfilling the power for service. In this way Paul would be a witness for the Living Christ—in thought, and word, and deed—thus fulfilling the plan for service.

(source unknown)

Halverson again points out:

Actually that which a man does to help God's redemptive work results in hindering it. To try to help God is as much a hindrance as to try to resist Him.

The surgeon's glove serves to illustrate this. It is almost transparent as he puts it on for the operation. That glove may hinder the surgeon in two ways: First of all, it must not resist the slightest movement of his finger. It must be almost as if the glove is not there at all, as he works through it in his delicate surgery. If there is the least rigidity, the slightest inflexibility, the trace of resistance to his touch, the glove must be discarded. But what would happen if that rubber glove would say, "I have some original ideas about this operation. I am going to contribute my own efforts." For the glove to initiate its own efforts would be as disastrous as if it were to refuse to yield to the surgeon's movements. Either way the work of the surgeon is hindered, whether the glove resists or assists.

The life God requires is not difficult—it is impossible to live. There is no man or woman who can by their own efforts live the Christian life. The only one who is able to live the life required by God is the Son of God Himself. And the whole point of Christian faith is that He will live this life in and through the man who consents to Him. But by the farthest reach of the imagination, by all the struggle and effort of which man is capable, he will never come close to living the life or following the example of Jesus Christ. In fact, the man who is trying to live the Christian life is failing by the very fact that he is trying. We shall see a bit later that there is an effortlessness that ought to characterize the Christian life.

Not I, but Christ my every need supplying,
 Not I, but Christ my strength and health to be.
 Christ, only Christ for body, soul, and spirit;
 Christ, only Christ live Thou Thy life in me.

My body is just covering under which another lives, even Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ through you is fully adequate to do everything. Oh that the Holy Spirit might impress upon our minds the fact that Christ is fully capable of meeting all of my needs, and in living through me that life which is pleasing to God.

(source unknown)

(Lord, Make My Life a Miracle by Raymond C. Ortlund)

God is so patient. Think how many times He has flashed lightning across the sky. Through the ages it would splinter huge trees. It would run a cow down a path, while men watched and wondered. All the time God was trying to tell men something. One stormy day a man finally went out with a kite and a key. All heaven was probably bending over saying, "All these years we've been trying to tell them about electricity. Look, look, he's got it! At last, he's got it!" And soon the world lit up.

How long, how long you and I have been vaguely aware—theoretically aware—of God's presence with us! I think all heaven's waiting, and perhaps saying, "I think they might get it. Look, look, maybe at last they're going to get it!"

Christian, you may have been saved for 15, 30, 40 years. Maybe at last you're going to get it! The Christian life is to be lived from the center out, with God. How could you have missed it? Live from the center out. At the center is Jesus Christ and all His glory in you.
(source unknown)

Begin the sweet discipline of acknowledging Him, moment by moment. Live with Him, have a running conversation going with Him, rejoice in Him.

Why did Hudson Taylor love that great old hymn “Jesus I am Resting, Resting”? The reason being he had found the secret.

Jesus I am Resting, Resting

Jesus, I am resting, resting,
 In the joy of what Thou art;
 I am finding out the greatness
 Of Thy loving heart.

Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee,
 And Thy beauty fills my soul,
 For by Thy transforming power,
 Thou hast made me whole.

O, how great Thy loving kindness,
 Vaster, broader than the sea!
 O, how marvelous Thy goodness,
 Lavished all on me!

Yes, I rest in Thee, Beloved,
 Know what wealth of grace is Thine,
 Know Thy certainty of promise,
 And have made it mine.

Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
 I behold Thee as Thou art,
 And Thy love, so pure, so changeless,
 Satisfies my heart;

Satisfies its deepest longings,
 Meets, supplies its every need,
 Compasseth me round with blessings:
 Thine is love indeed!

Ever lift Thy face upon me
 As I work and wait for Thee;
 Resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus,
 Earth's dark shadows flee.

Brightness of my Father's glory,
 Sunshine of my Father's face,
 Keep me ever trusting, resting,
 Fill me with Thy grace.

Refrain

Jesus, I am resting, resting,
 In the joy of what Thou art;
 I am finding out the greatness
 Of Thy loving heart.

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/j/i/jiamrest.htm>

Yes, begin the sweet discipline of acknowledging Him moment by moment.
 Live with Him, having a running conversation going with Him, rejoice in Him.

John Hunter says:

This is how we are complete in Christ. Whether or not we realize it we as believers are indwelt by the risen Christ. He indwells us so that He can continue in our daily lives what He began through His death on the cross. By the saving death of Christ, He is the sin-bearer. Through the saving life of Christ, he is the burden-bearer. There are so many Christians today struggling hard to live the Christian life, facing problems, and bearing burdens God never intended them to bear.
 (source unknown)

Halverson goes on to point out:

But what is even more tragic is represented by the person who takes Christianity seriously, and then allows himself to be hopelessly enslaved by a futile struggle to please God according to standards that are impossible of attainment and were never intended by God to be reached by a struggle. To these deluded and frustrated people the Christian life becomes a dogged, slavish observance of hard and inflexible rules with all the joy and spontaneity removed. This too is totally unlike the virile Christianity of the New Testament. The divine record portrays a life that is singularly free from this awful, impossible endless struggle to be good or to do good. This was neither the letter nor the spirit of the primitive church. There was an exhilaration and dynamic, a freshness, an aliveness, a drive and thrust about those first century Christians that is inescapable when one reads the New Testament with even a slight degree of understanding.

They were not struggling to be something or to do something. They were not counting on human resources; they were channels for Divine resources. God had invaded their lives and was at work in them, for them, through them. They were simply letting God do His work, using them as the tools. Their bodies were the “temple of the living God,” and their faith was manifested by consent, submission and obedience. They suffered for this faith, to be sure, but even in their suffering and martyrdom there was a quality that could be explained on no other ground than that God was doing a superhuman work in them. The joy of their hearts was the supreme fact that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.”

Certainly no one would dare to assume, by the farthest stretch of the imagination, that these early Christians were willing to lay down their lives simply for the privilege of struggling to be good. They were not martyrs for an ethical standard or for a set of religious rules and regulations. They had been given life through Jesus Christ, and death for His sake simply meant the inheritance of this life of which present peace and joy were but the foretaste. To die meant gain!

The joy, the power, the vitality, the drive of those Christians will only be repeated when we learn to renounce the fruitless struggle and allow the life of God in Christ to fill us, possess us and use us in the Divine program. When we forsake our confidence in human resources and yield to the reign of God in our lives, the world will see a demonstration of true Christianity that will command itself to thoughtful men.

(source unknown)

Paul goes on to say in verse 20:

“AND THAT LIFE WHICH NOW I AM LIVING IN THE FLESH I AM LIVING BY FAITH, WHICH FAITH IS IN THE SON OF GOD WHO LOVED ME AND GAVE HIMSELF ON MY BEHALF.”

Paul describes the life which he is now living as a Christian as a **LIFE OF FAITH**. The faith that saved him is the faith that he is exercising daily in the sufficiency of Christ for all of his needs.

It is not by his **FEELINGS** but by his **FAITH**.

This life which is now being lived in the flesh is being lived on the principle of faith.

Hebrews 11:6 (DAV)

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who is coming to God must believe that He is, and that He proves Himself a rewarder of those who are seeking Him.

(The Saving Life of Christ by Ian Thomas)

Israel lived in self-imposed poverty for 40 years because they would not believe that the God who brought them out was the God who could bring them in. Forty years it took before God was able through Joshua to teach His people that to get in takes precisely the same kind of faith that it takes to get out. When once they stood by faith in the waters of the Jordan, the river parted even as the Red Sea.
(source unknown)

“WHO LOVED ME AND GAVE HIMSELF ON MY BEHALF.”

When we look at this phrase in reference to the **PAST**, it refers to our **SALVATION**.

When we look at it in view of the **PRESENT**, it focuses on our **SANCTIFICATION**, or being made holy.

This takes us **BACK** to:

Galatians 1:4 (DAV)

who gave himself in behalf of our sins so that He might rescue us out from this present evil age according to the will of our God and father.

Before the Throne of God

Because the sinless Savior died
 My sinful soul is counted free.
 For God the just is satisfied
 To look on Him and pardon me.

<http://nethymnal.org/htm/b/e/beforetg.htm>

John 3:16 (NASB)

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

This same point Paul now repeats in greater detail, with the name of Christ prominent. He has died to law so that he might live for God, but this is true only because he has been joined by the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus died; so did Paul. Jesus rose again; so did Paul. The resurrection life he is now living he is living through the presence of the Lord Jesus within him. By having died and come to life in Christ the believer actually participates in Christ's death and resurrection, conceived on the basis of the mystical union of the believer with the Lord . . .
p. 719

Bartlett says:

"I am crucified with Christ . . ." It is hardly necessary to say that Galatians 2:20 is one of the pre-eminently great texts of Scripture. (Memorize it.) Better, perhaps, than any single verse, it summarizes Paul's philosophy of life. And for untold numbers of believers it has been a polestar of faith, the very essence of what Christ means to them.
p. 51

Eadie says:

. . . "I have been crucified with Christ." Wondrous words! I am so identified with Him, that His death is my death. When He was crucified, I was crucified with Him. I am so much one with Him under law and in suffering and death, that when He died to the law I died to the law. Through this union with Him I satisfied the law, yielded to it the obedience which it claimed, suffered its curse, died to it, and am therefore now released from it—from its accusations and its penalty, and from its claim on me to obey it as the means of winning eternal life. By means of law He died; it took Him and wrought its will on Him. As our Representative in whom we were chosen and in whom we suffered, He yielded Himself to the law, which seized Him and nailed Him to the cross. When that law seized Him, it seized at the same time all His in Him, and through the law they suffered and died to it. Thus it is that by the law taking action upon them as sinners they died to the law.
p. 184

Gutzke says:

This truth is even more clearly stated in verse 20, where Paul writes, "I am crucified with Christ." He means that by faith he belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, and he accepts in the Lord Jesus Christ death to himself even as it came to Him. The believer joins Him on Calvary's cross and reckons himself indeed to be dead. He reckons himself to be dead by faith; it is an exercise of faith. "I am crucified with Christ" in the flesh; "nevertheless I live." He was Paul the apostle. He was a missionary. He was a teacher and a preacher. But he says, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "Yet not I," in the sense of his human ego. He was not the old Saul the Pharisee, "but Christ liveth in me." There is a new life in him, and it is the life of Christ. p. 47

Harrison says:

These amazing words of the apostle we conceive to contain the finest, clearest statement in a single sentence anywhere to be found of how the Christian life is really to be lived. But why is it here this early in the epistle, before the exposition has even begun? And why is it in the first person singular, when it gives the great essentials of Christian living for all believers?

Many time I have quoted these words and spoken from them, but never until now have I seen them in their true light. They are the clincher to Paul's claim for the Gospel he preaches. It works. It is authoritative, authenticated as it is by the presence and power of the Author Himself.

It is as though Paul said, "The Christ-centered Gospel I preach is all-sufficient. I am demonstrating its sufficiency in my own experience. Since I met Christ on the Damascus road my life-principle is entirely changed. I no longer depend upon self-effort, much less law regulation. Christ lives in me. The life I *now* live is Christ-controlled. His control is perfect and complete." p. 35

Hendriksen says:

Paul starts out by saying: **I have been crucified with Christ.** What a startling assertion! Here is the great apostle to the Gentiles at this love-feast of the Antiochian church. He is addressing an audience the bulk of which consisted of believers both of Gentile and Jewish origin. Peter and Barnabas are in this audience. Undoubtedly some of the men who had come from Jerusalem and who, though nominally confessing Jesus as their Savior, were always making trouble by stressing salvation by obedience to law far more than salvation by grace through faith, had also tarried in Antioch long enough to cause their presence at this particular meeting to be felt.

Now in this meeting-place that day there was a situation which at many a get-together would be considered improper, but which without any doubt is highly objectionable in a *church*, and most emphatically at a *love-feast*, a religious-social meeting characterized by all or most of the following elements: prayers, sacred songs, the reading and brief exposition of Scripture, eating and drinking together, and partaking of the Lord's Supper. That deplorable condition was this, that *the church-members were cliquing*. Segregation was being practiced, yes, right here in the church meeting: Jews eating *exclusively* with Jews, leaving the Gentile believers no other choice than to eat with other Gentiles. This violation of the principle of the oneness of all believers "in Christ" occurred because undue respect was being accorded to the Judaizers. Peter, who previously had been freely eating with the Gentile believers, had allowed himself to be scared into withdrawing himself from them. He was now seen sitting or reclining in the company of Jews; Barnabas, ditto; and the same was true with respect to the rest of the Jews, as if *the cross of Christ* had been of no avail in taking down the barrier that had divided Jews and Gentiles!

pp. 103-4

Henry says:

He is crucified, and yet he lives; the old man is crucified, but the new man is living. Sin is mortified, and grace quickened. *I live, and yet not I.* He has the comforts and the triumphs of grace; and yet that grace is not from himself, but from another. *He is crucified with Christ*, and yet *Christ lives in him*. He is interested in the death of Christ, so as to die unto sin; and yet interested in the life of Christ, so as to live unto God. *He lives in the flesh*, and yet *lives by faith*; to outward appearance he lives as other people do, yet he has a higher and nobler principle that supports him, that of faith in Christ. Those who have true faith live by that faith.

p. 1840

Ironside says:

We are not trying to work for our salvation, we are saved through the work that He Himself accomplished. We can look back to that cross upon which He hung, the bleeding Victim, in our stead, and we can say in faith, "I am crucified with Christ." It is as though my life had been taken, He took my place; "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live." As I was identified with Him in His death on the cross now I am linked with Him in resurrection life, for He has given me to be a partaker of His own glorious eternal life. "Nevertheless I live; yet not I." It is not the old I come back to life again, "but Christ liveth in me." He, the glorious One, is my real life, and that "life which I now live in the flesh," my experience down here as a Christian man in the body, "I live"—not by putting myself under rules and regulations and trying to keep the law of the Ten Commandments but—"by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." As I am occupied with Him, my life will be the kind of life which He approves.

p. 86

Lange says:

I have been crucified with Christ.— . . . "I have come into fellowship with Christ's death on the cross, through faith, so that what happened to Christ has also happened to me." The Apostle declares thereby in what way the dying to the law through the law has been effected. Christ died "through the law," for in the crucifixion the curse of the law was fulfilled upon Him. Whoever therefore is "crucified with Christ," has also died "through the law"—the curse of the law is fulfilled on him too.

pp. 51-52

Lange says:

Yea the life which now I live in the flesh.—But while Paul has declared of himself, that Christ Himself lives in him, Christ as the risen and glorified One, he, on the other hand, knows well that even yet there appertains to him as before, a life "in the flesh," i.e. a life of terrestrial corporeality, and so far, therefore, a yet imperfect life, which of itself stands in conflict with the life of Christ in him . . .

p. 52

Lenski says:

Verse 20 is an expanded and elucidative parallel to v.19. **With Christ have I been crucified; and there is living no longer I, but there lives in me Christ. Moreover, what I am now living in flesh, in faith I am living, the (faith) in the Son of God who did love me and did give himself up in my stead.** In this way Paul died to law and become alive to God.
p. 115

Lightfoot says:

... *'I have been crucified with Christ.'* A new turn is thus given to the metaphor of death. In the last verse it was the release from past obligations; here it is the annihilation of old sins. The two however are not unconnected. Sin and law loose their hold at the same time. The sense of feebleness, of prostration, to which a man is reduced by the working of the law, *the process of dying* in fact, is the moral link which unites the two applications of the image: see Rom. xii. 5, 9-II. Thus his death becomes life. Being crucified with Christ, he rises with Christ, and lives to God.
p. 119

MacArthur says:

2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. See notes on Romans 6:2-6. When a person trusts in Christ for salvation, he participates spiritually with the Lord in His Crucifixion and His victory over sin and death. **no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.** The believer's old self is dead (*see note on Eph. 4:22*), having been crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:3, 5). The believer's new man has the privilege of the indwelling Christ empowering him and living through him (*see notes on Rom. 8:9, 10*). **gave Himself for me.** The manifestation of Christ's love for the believer through His sacrificial death on the Cross ...
p. 1664

MacArthur says:

Legalism's most destructive effect is that it cancels the effect of the cross. **I have been crucified with Christ**, Paul testifies, **and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**. To go back under the law would be to cancel one's union with Christ's sacrifice on the cross and therefore to go back under sin.

p. 60

MacArthur says:

The true Christian life is not so much a believer's living for Christ as Christ's living through the believer. Because in Christ "all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (Col. 2:9), the fulness of God also dwells in every believer, as "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4).

I do not have such a divine life and the magnanimous privilege of being indwelt with the living, powerful son of God because of anything I have done or merited, but only because He **loved me, and delivered Himself up for me**.

p. 60

McGee says:

There are many people today who talk about wanting to live the "crucified" life. That is not what Paul is talking about in this verse. We are not to seek to be crucified with Christ. We have already been crucified with Him. The principle of living is not by the Law which has slain us because it found us guilty. Now we are to live by faith. Faith in what? Faith in the Son of God. You see, friend, the death of Christ upon the cross was not only penal (that is, paying the penalty for our sins), but it was substitutionary also. He was not only the *sacrifice* for sins; He was the *substitute* for all who believe.

Paul declares, therefore, that under the Law he was tried, found guilty, was condemned, and in the person of his Substitute he was slain. When did that take place? It took place when Christ was crucified. Paul was crucified with Christ.

p. 162

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

Paul and every believer were **crucified with Christ** in order to die to sin, the law, and “this present evil age” (1:4). While believers live on physically, **Christ** also **lives** within them spiritually. Christ’s resurrection power through the Spirit is worked out through the Christian (Rom. 6:4-11) who chooses to **live by faith in the Son of God**.
p. 1521

Simpson says:

This is the end to which the Spirit is always working, not to develop in us a character, a set of human virtues and high qualities that we can call our own, but to form Christ in us and teach us to live in constant dependence upon Him. It is not a state, but a relation, a union with a Person, a living Presence who carries in Himself all the forces and resources of our new life.
p. 25

Simpson says:

He expresses it in that incomparable passage which is the very essence of the Gospel of the deeper Christian life. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). Here the substitution is so complete that not only is the old I of the natural self left out and crucified with Christ, but even the new I that has risen with Him is suppressed, and Christ, as a personal Presence, takes its place. Even the very faith by which this life is maintained in union with Jesus is not our faith, but the faith of the Son of God actively manifested in us by virtue of that substitution through which He gave Himself to be instead of us.
pp. 26-27

Spurgeon says:

We should also by faith desire such a calling as Providence evidently has arranged and intended for us. Some persons have never had a free choice of what vocation they would follow; for from their birth, position, surroundings, and connection they are set in a certain line of things, like carriages on the tram lines, and they must follow on the appointed track, or stand still. Faith expects to hear the voice behind it saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Trusting to your own judgment often means following our own whims; but faith seeks direction from infallible wisdom, and so it is led in a right way. God knows your capacity better than you do; entreat Him to choose your inheritance for you.
p. 278

Spurgeon says:

How many personal pronouns of the first person are there in this verse? Are there not as many as eight? It swarms with *I* and *me*. The text deals not with the plural at all; it does not mention some one else, nor a third party far away, but the apostle treats of himself, his own inner life, his own spiritual death, the love of Christ to *him*, and the great sacrifice which Christ made for *him*.
p. 283

Spurgeon says:

Blessed be God, before the mountains uplifted their snow-crowned heads to the clouds, Christ had set His heart upon us. His "delights were with the sons of men."
p. 287

Vos says:

Verse 20 is one of the most magnificent verses in all of Scripture. It makes abundantly clear the fact that Christianity is not a matter of some legalistic form—of carefully checking off a list of dos and don'ts. It is a life. Moreover, it is not human effort trying to bring off a superior kind of morality but divine life surging through the individual. "Old things are passed away . . . all things are become new" (2 Co 5:17). Verse 20 expands on the meaning of verse 19; Paul died to the law because he had been crucified with Christ; he lives to God because Christ lives in him. "I am crucified with Christ." The tense is perfect in the Greek with the resultant meaning: "I have been and remain crucified." This is how one dies to the law (v. 19) Romans 6:1-6 linked with 1 Corinthians 12:13 explains how one may be reckoned as crucified with Christ. By means of the Holy Spirit we are baptized into one body and into Christ. The Holy Spirit joins us to the church (the body of true believers) and to Him and causes us positionally to participate in His substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection. The old man or old nature with all its affections was crucified (Rom 6:6).

Because I have been raised to newness of life, *I live*. But in a sense it is not *I* that live. It is not I in my own strength that achieves in this business of living the Christian life. *Christ lives in me*. How stupendous! A member of the divine Trinity living in me!

p. 48

Wuest says:

With Christ I have been crucified, and it is no longer I who live, but there lives in me Christ. And that life which now I live in the sphere of the flesh, by faith I live it, which faith is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself on my behalf.

p. 204

Wuest says:

The verb is in the perfect tense which speaks of a past completed action having present finished results. Paul uses it to show that his identification with Christ at the Cross was a past fact, and that the spiritual benefits that have come to him through his identification are present realities with him. By this statement he also shows how he died to the law, namely by dying with Christ who died under its penalty. The law's demands were satisfied and therefore have no more hold on Paul. But thus being crucified with Christ, meant also to Paul, death to self. When Paul died with Christ, it was the Pharisee Saul who died. What he was and did up to that time passed away so far as he was concerned. Saul was buried, and the old life with him. The dominating control of the Adamic nature had its power over him broken.
p. 81

(The Best of A. W. Tozer by A. W. Tozer, compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe)
Camp Hill, PA: Wing Spread Publishers. Copyright– Zur Ltd., 1978,
2000.

The problem is not to persuade God to fill us, but to want God sufficiently to permit Him to do so. The average Christian is so cold and so contented with his wretched condition that there is no vacuum of desire into which the blessed Spirit can rush in satisfying fullness.
p. 38

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)
San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,
2006.

I want my life, Lord, to be an answer to your love for me: my actions and my words, my thoughts and my dreams—all a response to the great reality of your presence in Jesus, that calls into question my selfishness and my pride. Amen.
p. 179

(A Lifetime of Wisdom: Embracing the Way God Heals You by Joni Eareckson Tada) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright— Joni Eareckson Tada, 2009.

When God denies your dearest desire, get ready to open up your heart even wider, for He will become that desire Himself.
p. 122

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)
San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright— Eugene H. Peterson, 2006.

Lord, I get so caught up in my own plans—my childish fancies and private disappointments—that I fail to see the grand design you are working out. And then, by your grace, I see it again—a design that makes my life far richer than what I planned, more joyful than what I anticipated. Hallelujah! Amen.
p. 354

(Not I, But Christ by Stephen F. Olford) Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.
Copyright - Stephen F. Olford, 1995.

*Crucified with Christ, my Savior,
I am dead to sin and shame;
Now HIS LIFE rules my behavior—
To the glory of His Name! Amen.*

Stephen F. Olford

p. 41

(Not I, But Christ by Stephen F. Olford) Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.
Copyright - Stephen F. Olford, 1995.

This is the liberating truth of *identification* with Christ.

*I'm dead to sin through Christ my Lord,
For in His death I also died;
It's written clear in God's own Word,
And, praise His name, I'm justified!*

*I'm dead to sin, thus I must live,
To Christ alone who gave His all;
And for His love I can't but give
My life and gifts, both great and small.*

*I'm dead to sin, so I must serve
My God and King each day and hour;
What He commands I must observe,
And seek to do with heav'nly pow'r.*

*I'm dead to sin, O blessed thought!
I now can rest from care and strife;
My fight He has forever fought,
And now I live His risen life.*

Stephen F. Olford

p. 51

Paul had to state, "Christ lives in me," (Gal.2:20) before he could declare, "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). In that phrase he sums up the whole of Christian experience. In that one comprehensive utterance is gathered up life FROM Christ, life WITH Christ, life IN Christ, and life FOR Christ. Paul, in effect, is affirming that "living IS Christ," which parallels the statement that "Christ . . . is our life" (Col. 3:4).

p. 78

(Christ/Life by Ruth Myers) Sisters, OR: Multnomah. Copyright – Ruth Myers, 2005.

AS BELIEVERS we are spiritually one with Christ, and He is one with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. So the Bible speaks of all three members of the Trinity living within every believer.

Regarding God the Father, the apostle John wrote, “If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us” (1 John 4:15–16, NIV).

Regarding the Holy Spirit, we’re assured that “God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians 4:6, NASB).

The Scriptures also teach us that Christ the Son lives in us. “This is the secret: Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in his glory” (Colossians 1:27, NLT). “Christ lives in me, “Paul proclaimed with confidence (Galatians 2:20)—and so can we.

Just think: We are indwelt by the fullness of God Himself—the triune God! As we simply choose to trust Him, He is revealed in us, magnified in our bodies.

p. 101

In a vital way, in our true inner self, the qualities that are true of Christ are also true of us. We share His love, His holiness, and His submission to and reliance on His Father.

p. 100

That fall I experienced an inner dawning as I was reading a book that a Bible teacher recommended. I came across the following statement, based on Colossians 3:4: “It’s not only true that my life is Christ’s, but my life is Christ.” Not only does my life belong to Christ, but also He *is* my life. He is living *His life* in and through me as I simply depend on Him. For Him to use me, I no longer need to depend on my ability. Instead I can depend on His working through me in such a way that at any given time He’s using me (or not using me) as He sees best.

Time and again I still find release by simply praying, “Thank You, Lord, that Christ is my life!” And I pray for more and more depth and constancy in continuing to live by *His* life.

p. 96

(Christ/Life by Ruth Myers) Sisters, OR: Multnomah. Copyright – Ruth Myers, 2005.

“God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus” (1 Corinthians 1:30, NLT), and in doing this for you He has also made Jesus to be your wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30, ESV). Therefore you can say, “Christ is *my* wisdom, *my* righteousness, *my* sanctification, *my* redemption. I’m wise with His wisdom and righteous with His righteousness. By Him—by all that He is—I am sanctified and redeemed.”

Christ and all that He is represents the only reason for the radical change in your identity. Therefore God gives you this thrilling invitation: “From now on you must grow stronger through union with the Lord and through His mighty power” (Ephesians 6:10, Williams). As you deepen and develop in this union, Jesus promises that your life will bear spiritual fruit: “It is the man who shares my life and whose life I share who proves fruitful” (John 15:5, Phillips).

p. 98

v. 21 I am not nullifying the grace of God. For if through law comes righteousness then Christ died uselessly (without a cause).

The NET Bible translates verse 21:

I do not set aside God's grace, because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing!

Peterson paraphrases verse 21:

I am not going to go back on that. Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God's grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Summing up his case against Peter, Paul declared, **I do not set aside the grace of God.** The clear implication is that Peter and the others who followed him were setting aside God's grace. The essence of grace is for God to give people what they have not worked for (cf. Rom. 4:4). To insist on justification or sanctification by works is to nullify the grace of God. Further, such insistence on legal obedience also means **Christ died for nothing.** If righteousness comes by keeping the Law, the Cross was a futile gesture, the biggest mistake in the universe.

“Peter, if you want to live again as the Jews under the law, you are **NULLIFYING THE GRACE OF GOD,**’ not me.”

If God thought you could do it for a moment, Jesus would not have died upon the cross.

The **REASON** given for this statement that he is **“NOT NULLIFYING THE GRACE OF GOD”** by going back under the law is seen in that next phrase:

“FOR IF THROUGH LAW COMES RIGHTEOUSNESS THEN CHRIST DIED USELESSLY (WITHOUT A CAUSE).”

Christ was nothing more than a martyr or a political victim. His death was to no avail if righteousness can be gained by the keeping of the law.

Separating himself from the Gentiles brings about a **TWO-FOLD RESULT:**

1. It made Christ a **MINISTER OF SIN** and
2. His death was **USELESS.**

Peter put himself in this position simply because he was fearing what people might think and he was afraid to stand for his convictions.

May we not compromise or withdraw ourselves because of fear and may we stand true with great courage for Christ.

1 Corinthians 16:13 (DAV)

Be on the alert, be standing fast in the faith, be showing yourselves to be men, be strong.

(Welcome to the Family by Stephen Brown) Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1990.

I had a German shepherd whose name was Barnabus. (Barnabus is in doggie heaven now, and if you don't believe in doggie heaven, please keep your spurious theological views to yourself.) Barnabus once bit the veterinarian and it was not one of my happier moments. The vet had to give him two shots. Barnabus took the first shot surprisingly well. He didn't whine or try to move. But as the vet went back to the table to prepare the second shot, Barnabus watched him out of the corner of his eye. As the vet came back with the needle prepared, my dog seemed to be saying, "Buddy, I can take one of those, but you only get away with it once." And as the vet's hand moved toward Barnabus, he turned and, without warning, bit him. Someday, maybe soon, Jesus is coming back to our planet. His promise is that although He was humiliated once, we will only get away with it once. Man was able to do with God's Son what he willed the first time. He was beaten, scorned, hung on a cross.

That won't ever happen again. The next time it will be different. The next time Jesus comes back, He will come in power and glory, and He will come back to receive the Church unto Himself.
pp. 150-51

(When Being Good Isn't Good Enough by Stephen Brown) Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. Copyright - Stephen Brown, 1990.

Do you remember the process I described before? (Law leads to guilt; guilt leads to struggle, struggle leads to failure; failure leads to more guilt; more guilt leads to antinomianism; antinomianism leads to apostasy; and apostasy leads to anger and hardness of heart.) There is another process, and this process doesn't begin with law, but with freedom and love. Let me share it with you. Love that makes you free leads to guilt. Guilt leads to confession. Confession leads to more forgiveness. Total forgiveness leads to worship. Worship leads to faithfulness.

Do you see it? Faithfulness is the result of a process that begins with love and freedom. Hardness of heart is the result of a process which begins with the law.
pp.74-75

Someone has said:

The law says DO, grace says DONE.
(source unknown)

Anders says:

2:21. Now Paul presents his conclusion. The false-teaching Judaizers were voiding the grace of God by adding the works-oriented law to the work of Christ. Therefore, Paul says **I do not set aside the grace of God** (as the legalists did), **for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!** If humans could be right with God by obeying the law, why would he send his Son to suffer and die on a cross? Paul concludes his correction of Peter by showing the utter absurdity of turning back to the law. The very reason Christ died on the cross to pay for sin was because the law could not remove sin or impart righteousness. Grace provides what the law was powerless to provide—righteousness.
p. 25

Arthur says:

There is nothing more debilitating in your relationship with God than to think you please God only when you keep your own little spiritual list of do's and don'ts or someone else's list which has been imposed on you. When you feel God will only bless you when you don't cross any of your man-made religious boundaries, you live in bondage to legalism or to the law.

If you belong to God through faith in Jesus Christ, then, my friend, you are a beloved child of God. You are His heir forever. You are the child of the free woman. Jerusalem is your home. You are not under condemnation. God's blessing for you is that of grace, not performance. You are an heir according to God's unchangeable promise. The Holy Spirit dwells within you and will never leave you nor forsake you. You will live with God forever and ever. You will never be cast out. So cast out the bondwoman and her son. You are under grace not law, and when you walk in that grace you will be all you should and can be. Grace doesn't make you lawless; it simply sets you free from bondage God's way, so you can live a life that is pleasing to God.
pp. 35-36

Barclay says:

When Paul took God at His word the midnight of law's frustration became the sunshine of grace.

p. 24

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

21 This last sentence of ch. 2 is introduced abruptly and from a new point of view. In the preceding verses Paul has answered the objections of his critics. Now he objects to their doctrine, showing that if they are right, then Christ has died in vain. The heart of Christianity lies in the grace of God and in the death of Jesus Christ. To insist on justification by works undermines the foundation of Christianity by nullifying God's grace.

Paul's logic is incontrovertible. Yet many still pursue the fallacious logic of the legalizers. They suppose that to earn their salvation is somehow praiseworthy and noble, when actually it is vainglorious and ignoble. True nobility (and humility) is to accept what God offers.

p. 720

Baxter says:

To Paul the issue was as vivid as it was absolutely vital—the very Cross of Christ itself was imperiled by this plausible legalism of the Judaizers: for “IF RIGHTEOUSNESS COME BY THE LAW, THEN CHRIST IS DEAD IN VAIN” (Gal. ii. 21).

p. 144

Bickel & Jantz say:

We need to live our life the way
Jesus would live our life if He had our life to live.

—Dallas Willard

p. 61

Calvin says:

There is great emphasis in this expression; for how dreadful is the ingratitude manifested in despising the grace of God, so invaluable in itself, and obtained at such a price! Yet this heinous offence is charged against the false apostles, who were not satisfied with having Christ alone, but introduced some other aids towards obtaining salvation. For, if we do not renounce all other hopes, and embrace Christ alone, we reject the grace of God. And what resource is left to the man, who “puts from him” the grace of God, “and judges himself unworthy of everlasting life?”
p. 76

Calvin says:

Christ is dead in vain. There would have been no value in the death of Christ; or, Christ would have died without any reward; for the reward of his death is, that he has reconciled us to the Father by making an atonement for our sins. Hence it follows, that we are justified by his grace, and, therefore, not by works.
p. 76

Dunnam says:

So in these concluding verses of chapter 2 (vv. 15-21), Paul has preached the whole gospel again as he did in 1:1-5. It is the gospel of grace, faith, and freedom—a gospel he will now seek to vindicate in the next section of his letter by appeal to the facts of Christian history and experience.
p. 50

Fergusson says:

If we are justified by the law, or works done in obedience to the law, then those two absurdities would follow: 1. God's free grace and favour should be rejected, despised, frustrated and made useless, (for the word signifieth all these,) and the reason of the consequence lieth in this, that if justification be by works, then it cannot be by grace, Rom. xi. 6. 2. Christ's death had been in vain without any necessary cause or reason, if the justification of sinners would have been attained by works or by any other means.

p. 43

Gaebelein says:

The concluding verses of this chapter give the truth of the position of a believer in Christ who is justified by faith. It is Paul's individual testimony which every believer in Christ may repeat, for what was the apostle's position is ours also. "For I through the law died to the law, that I might live unto God." The law had pronounced the sentence of death and condemnation upon him and, through the law he had died to the law. But the sentence of the law was executed upon him in the person of Christ, who took the curse of the law, the condemnation, upon Himself, and believing in Christ he had died as to the old man. The law had slain him, but Christ had died in his stead, and thus he had died to the law, for the law only has dominion over a man as long as he lives. Death, the death of Christ, had freed him from the dominion of the law. As having died with Christ, he was dead to the law. And all this is true of every believer. The great and precious truth of being dead with Christ and living unto God is blessedly stated in Paul's triumphant declaration, "I was crucified with Christ."

p. 212

Henry says:

Lastly, By the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, without the works of the law, he avoided two great difficulties. 1. *He did not frustrate the grace of God. If it be of works, it is no more of grace.* 2. He did not frustrate the death of Christ; for, if we look for salvation by the law of Moses, then we render the death of Christ needless.

p. 1840

Hogg & Vine say:

The teaching of the Judaizers certainly did set it aside, for if salvation is by grace it is no more of works, and, conversely, if it is of works it is no more of grace; works and grace are incompatibles, they are mutually exclusive . . .
p. 105

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

21. I do not frustrate the grace of God—I do not *make* it *void*, as thou, Peter, art doing by Judaizing. **for**—justifying the strong expression “frustrate,” or “make void.” **is dead in vain**—*Greek*, “Christ died needlessly,” or “without just cause.” Christ’s having died, shows that the law has no power to justify us; for if the law can justify or make us righteous, the death of Christ is superfluous [CHRYSOSTOM].
p. 1264

Lange says:

Ver. 21 is a simple conclusion from what immediately precedes. Men cannot now say, that **I frustrate the grace of God**, for this manifested itself in the atoning death of the Son of God. But precisely in this do I believe, yes, my whole life is a life in faith thereon. Exactly the reverse: **if righteousness come through the law, then Christ died without cause**, needlessly, and if I through the law sought justification, I should then declare the death of Christ to have taken place in vain, and should thus reject the grace of God: but now this latter is precisely what I did not do, and therefore not the former; I cannot be reproached with this.
p. 52

Lange says:

Ver. 21. STARKE:—The rejection of the grace of God, may take place: 1. by a denial of the perfect satisfaction of Christ; 2. by setting along side of it our own merits, worthiness and righteousness, as Popery does in doctrine, and many even in our churches do in fact; 8. by abusing this grace to favor presumption, and to supersede sanctification; 4. when even sincere souls, in the feeling of their unworthiness, are much too timorous to appropriate grace to themselves, and think they must first have arrived at this or that degree of holiness, before grace can avail them any thing; 5. when tempted ones from a lack of feeling conclude that they have fallen out of grace again.
pp. 59-60

Lenski says:

The closing statement clinches all that precedes. **Not nullifying am I the grace of God. For if by means of law (there is) righteousness, then did Christ die for nothing.**
p. 119

MacArthur says:

2:21 Paul concluded that Peter, by taking his stand with the Judaizers and thus against Christ, was in effect denying the need for God's grace and thereby nullifying the benefit of Christ's death. ***righteousness***. See note on *Romans 1:17*. ***Christ died in vain***. This can be better translated, "Christ died needlessly." Those who insist they can earn salvation by their own efforts undermine the foundation of Christianity and render unnecessary the death of Christ.
p. 1664

MacArthur says:

All of this saving work is the gift of God's sovereign grace. Consequently, Paul concludes, **I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.** In effect he was saying to Peter, "By withdrawing from fellowship with your Gentile brothers you take your stand with the Judaizers and against Christ. You **nullify the grace of God** by denying the need for Christ's death, just as you did when you rebuked the Lord for declaring it was necessary for Him to suffer, be killed, and raised on the third day (see Matt. 16:21-22).

The two pillars of the gospel are the **grace of God** and the death of **Christ**, and those are the two pillars that, by its very nature, legalism destroys. The person who insists that he can earn salvation by his own efforts undermines the very foundation of Christianity and nullifies the precious death of Christ on his behalf.

p. 60

McGee says:

The main thought in this verse is simply that if there had been any other way to save sinners, then God would have used that method. If a law or a religion could have been given that would save sinners, God would have given it. The only way that an infinite God could save you and me was to send His Son to die. He was willing to make the supreme sacrifice.

p. 163

Pinnock says:

In a closing remark, Paul connects grace and the death of Christ. If we can justify ourselves, we nullify grace and declare the cross of Christ to have been redundant. This is the true character of works-religion. It robs Christ of His glory and negates the free grace of God. Paul, for his part, will have none of this. The twin hinge on which the Christian religion turns is the grace of God and the death of Christ. Anyone who claims he can earn salvation by his own efforts is undermining the foundation of the gospel. Grace and atonement count for nothing if we are the masters of our destiny and can save ourselves.

pp. 34-35

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

If righteousness is attainable **through** keeping **the law** of Moses, then God's gracious act of sending **Christ** to die on the Cross to pay for sin was unnecessary and useless (Rom. 3:4-26).

p. 1521

Ridderbos says:

Those last words redirect our thoughts to the subject of whether there is room for anything else alongside of this faith. Verse 21 excludes that possibility: I do not make void the grace of God. Whatever others may want to do . . . not *I*. And that is precisely what I should be doing if I again began to rely on the works of the law. Then Christ would not have had to die (*cf.* 5:11). His death on the cross is at stake. At its profoundest that was the essence of the controversy with Peter. And that is the consequence of what the Galatians are doing also, if they again permit themselves to be brought under the law. That, too, is the thing that will be sharply and forcefully said in the sequel, beginning immediately at 3:1.

pp. 106-107

Wuest says:

I do not thwart the efficacy of the grace of God. For if through law comes righteousness, then Christ died without a cause.

p. 204

(Morning and Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon) Peabody, Massachusetts:
Hendrickson. Copyright – Unknown.

All, blessed be God, were safe in the ark, no ruin entered there. From the huge elephant down to the tiny mouse all were safe. The timid hare was equally secure with the courageous lion, the helpless cony as safe as the laborious ox. All are safe in Jesus. My soul, art thou in Him?
p. 613

What a battle He had in us before we would be won! How long he laid siege to our hearts! how often He sent us terms of capitulation! but we barred our gates, and fenced our walls against Him. Do we not remember that glorious hour when He carried our hearts by storm? when He placed His cross against the wall, and scaled our ramparts, planting on our strongholds the blood-red flag of His omnipotent mercy? Yes, we are, indeed, the conquered captives of His omnipotent love.
p. 640

(A Continual Feast by Jan Karon) New York, NY: Viking / Penguin Group.
Copyright – Jan Karon, 2005.

In general those who have nothing to say
Contrive to spend the longest time in doing it.

James Russell Lowell

Work is not always required . . . there is such a thing as sacred idleness, the cultivation of which is now fearfully neglected.

George Macdonald

(Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright - Brennan Manning, 1994.

From the first moment of our existence our most powerful yearning is to fulfill the original purpose of our lives—"to see Him more clearly, love Him more dearly, follow Him more nearly." We are made for God, and nothing less will really satisfy us. C. S. Lewis could say that he was "surprised by joy," gripped by a desire that made "everything else that had ever happened . . . insignificant in comparison." Our hearts will ever be restless until they rest in Him.

pp. 38-39

(My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers) Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House. Copyright- Oswald Chambers Publications Association, 1992.

My Unstoppable Determination for His Holiness.

"Whether it means life or death—it makes no difference!" (see 1:21). Paul was determined that nothing would stop him from doing exactly what God wanted. But before we choose to follow God's will, a crisis must develop in our lives. This happens because we tend to be unresponsive to God's gentler nudges. He brings us to the place where He asks us to be our utmost for Him and we begin to debate. He then providentially produces a crisis where we have to decide—for or against. That moment becomes a great crossroads in our lives. If a crisis has come to you on any front, surrender your will to Jesus absolutely and irrevocably.

(January 1)

All our promises and resolutions end in denial because we have no power to accomplish them. When we come to the end of ourselves, not just mentally but completely, we are able to "receive the Holy Spirit." "*Receive the Holy Spirit*"—the idea is that of invasion. There is now only One who directs the course of your life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

(January 5)

(Singleness of Heart: Restoring the Divided Soul by Clifford Williams)

Vancouver, British Columbia: Regent College Publishing. Copyright – Clifford Williams, 1994.

In exploring the genuineness of contrition and acceptance of love, I shall be dealing with matters that go to the root of human existence. Both contrition and acceptance of love collide with the motives that undercut singleness of heart, and these motives, as we have seen, permeate every area of our lives, both secular and religious. With them we have built up a sense of worth, and through them we have carved out an identity, both of which must crumble and be remade when we become open to God's grace.

p. 89

(Brokenness: The Heart God Revives by Nancy Leigh DeMoss) Chicago, IL:

Moody Press. Copyright – Nancy Leigh DeMoss, 2002.

When Melanie Adams finally came to the end of herself and was broken before God and her husband, God began to increase her capacity for love and for worship. Several months after that initial point of brokenness, Melanie wrote to tell some of the changes that had taken place in her life as a result:

I have fallen in love with my husband more deeply than ever. It was quite a rude awakening to realize the chasm in our marriage was my fault, born of an unforgiving heart. My husband has forgiven me and I smile at the future.

I have developed the somewhat frustrating habit of crying all the time—not a normal response for me. In church, a song of worship or a meaningful message finds me borrowing my husband's handkerchief as he gently pats my hand.

God's Word jumps off the page every time I open His Holy Book—it is personal now. I enjoy a sweet communion with the Lord and have heartfelt gratitude for His love and sacrifice that I never knew before. I have peace and joy, and He has given me a new song.

pp. 116-117

(Grace Notes: Daily Readings with a Fellow Pilgrim by Philip Yancey) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright— Someone Cares Charitable Trust, 2009.

AUGUST 25

Grace in Action

Grace means that no mistake we make in life disqualifies us from God's love. It means that no person is beyond redemption, no human stain beyond cleansing. We live in a world that judges people by their behavior and requires criminals, debtors, and moral failures to live with the consequences. Even the church finds it difficult to forgive those who fall short.

Grace is irrational, unfair, unjust, and only makes sense if I believe in another world governed by a merciful God who always offers another chance. "Amazing Grace," a rare hymn that in recent times climbed the charts of popular music, holds out the promise that God judges people not for what they have been but what they could be, not by their past but by their future. John Newton, a gruff and bawdy slave trader, "a wretch like me," wrote that hymn after being transformed by the power of amazing grace.

When the world sees grace in action, it falls silent. Nelson Mandela taught the world a lesson in grace when, after emerging from prison after twenty-seven years and being elected president of South Africa, he asked his jailer to join him on the inauguration platform. He then appointed Archbishop Desmond Tutu to head an official government panel with a daunting name, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Mandela sought to defuse the natural pattern of revenge that he had been in so many countries where one oppressed race or tribe took control from another.

For the next two-and-a-half years, South Africans listened to reports of atrocities coming out of the TRC hearings. The rules were simple: if a white policeman or army officer voluntarily faced his accusers, confessed his crime, and fully acknowledged his guilt, he could not be tried and punished for that crime. Hard-liners grumbled about the obvious injustice of letting criminals go free, but Mandela insisted that the country needed healing even more than it needed justice.

[Continued on August 26]

Rumors of Another World (222-23)

p. 277

(The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You by John Ortberg)
Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright— John Ortberg, 2010.

We go through this life one time. Some wonderful things will happen to us; some dreams will come true. Some terrible things will happen to us, bringing with them pain, problems, and disappointment. Of that we can be certain. But we can go through this life worried—or we can go through it at peace.

*Life is too short,
joy is too precious.
God is too good,
our soul is too valuable,
we matter too much
to throw away a single moment of our one and only life on anxious
striving.
For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid.*

On belay.

p. 127

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: God blesses those who have courage enough to stand for their convictions.

LESSON #2: Job said: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:25-27 NIV).

LESSON #3: Esther said: "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16 NIV).

LESSON #4: Daniel stood for his convictions. "But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. . . . Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before" (Dan. 1:8; 6:10 NIV).

LESSON #5: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood for their convictions. "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up'" (Dan. 3:16-18 NIV).

LESSON #6: No one is made righteous by the works of the Law.

LESSON #7: “The fear of man brings a snare but whoso puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe” (Prov. 29:25 NIV).

LESSON #8: Our responsibility is to “walk straight in relationship to the truth of the Gospel.”

LESSON #9: A man is made righteous only through faith in Christ Jesus.

LESSON #10: When I keep on trying to perform the works of the Law after I become a Christian, I am telling Jesus that His death was not adequate.

LESSON #11: “If righteousness comes through the law, then Jesus Christ died to no purpose” (Gal. 2:21).

LESSON #12: The living Christ is waiting to live out His life through us.

The title of this study was called:

You Were Running Well UNTIL: Peer Pressure Postponed Progress.

In this particular study we have seen Peter in action in failing to be consistent with his convictions in his conduct.

Dr. Alexander McLaren says:

Men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel. For if they did, either the candle would go out or it would burn up the bushel.
(paraphrase)

How descriptive this is of Peter in this situation as he begins to compromise his convictions. How often this happens with so many who “were running well” in their Christian lives until they began to doubt or until they began to question, and as a result their convictions were no longer stable.

Anders gives the following principles from the passage and applications:

PRINCIPLES

- When you affirm others, you give them wings to fly!
- One of the greatest needs of your family, friends, and coworkers is appreciation.
- Submission to authority is a sign of spiritual maturity.
- Confrontation is hard but often necessary.

APPLICATIONS

- Look for opportunities to affirm others.
- Express your gratitude to God and others for the good they do.
- Submit to spiritual authority which God places over you.
- Have the courage to confront someone over his sin if God shows you it is necessary.

pp. 25-26

Eadie says:

What reply Peter made, or how his subsequent conduct at Antioch was shaped, we know not. Nor know we how the crisis ended—whether the believing Jews recovered their earlier freedom, or whether any compromise was brought about. Yet in spite of this misunderstanding and rebuke, evincing the superior consistency of one of the apostles, tradition, with the exception of the *Clementines* has placed Peter and Paul on a similar level in many points.

p. 196

Lenski says:

Paul says nothing about the effect produced by his action in opposing Peter face to face. He does not need to. Peter dropped his wrong course. His mistake was one of the moment, one of conduct and not one of principle. If Peter had rebelled, Paul would be compelled to say so. Paul is not lowering Peter's standing in the eyes of the Galatians. But he *is* proving that he has the old, genuine gospel, proving it by showing that he had at one time to maintain it even against the Peter whom the Judaizers tried to make their patron. Now Judaizers, men who on principle nullified grace and Christ's death, were trying to sweep the Galatians away to join in this nullification. Peter swiftly recovered from the first step in his wrong course. The Galatians would surely do the same.

p. 120

It is our prayer that God will raise up an army of people who will purpose in their hearts to stand true for their convictions in these difficult days and that God will bless and use them because they are willing to stand alone if necessary for that which they believe. And that they will not allow society or friends to divert them from the challenge of walking close to Jesus Christ and to be glorifying in nothing save in His cross.

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)
 San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,
 2006.

Save me, Lord Jesus Christ; expose my sin and lead me to the place of forgiveness. Heal my faithlessness and make me healthy with love; convert my rebellion and train me in persevering discipleship. Amen.
 p. 312

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press.
 Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

The Lord knows how, without violating the human will (which he never does), so to influence the heart that the man will full consent, against his former will, yields to the will of God, and is made willing in the day of God's power. 1279.103
 p. 50

(Each New Day by Corrie ten Boom) Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell.
Copyright – Corrie ten Boom, 1977, 2003.

How Blunders Make Beauty

I once visited a weaver's school, where the students were making beautiful patterns. I asked, "When you make a mistake, must you cut it out and start from the beginning?"

A student said, "No. Our teacher is such a great artist that when we make a mistake, he uses it to improve the beauty of the pattern.

That is what the Lord does with our mistakes. He is the greatest artist, but we must surrender. Surrender your blunders to the Lord. He can use them to make the pattern of your life more beautiful.

Faith came singing into my room,
And other guests took flight.
Grief, anxiety, fear and gloom,
Sped out into the night.

I wondered that such peace could be,
But Faith said gently, "Don't you see,
That they can never live with me?:"
Elizabeth Cheney

Thy faith has made thee whole.
Matthew 9:22 KJV

Lord, we can be so depressed when we blunder. It is wonderful to know that our mistakes can be useful to you, because you are our master artist.
p. 174

(In God We Still Trust by Dr. Richard G. Lee) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
Copyright – Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2009.

YES, THERE IS HOPE

On September 14, 2001, in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, Dr. Billy Graham led a national prayer and remembrance service at Washington National Cathedral in which he reminded every American:

This event reminds us of the brevity and the uncertainty of life. We never know when we too will be called into eternity. I doubt if even one of those people who got on those planes or walked into the World Trade Center or the Pentagon last Tuesday morning thought it would be the last day of their lives. It didn't occur to them. And that's why each of us needs to face our own spiritual need and commit ourselves to God and His will now.

Here in this majestic National Cathedral we see all around us symbols of the Cross. For the Christian, I'm speaking for the Christian now, the Cross tells us that God understands our sin and our suffering, for He took upon Himself in the person of Jesus Christ our sins and our suffering. And from the Cross, God declares, "I love you. I know the heartaches and the sorrows and the pains that you feel. But I love you."

The story does not end with the Cross, for Easter points us beyond the tragedy of the Cross to the empty tomb. It tells us that there is hope for eternal life, for Christ has conquered evil and death, and hell. Yes, there is hope.
p. 77

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)
San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins. Copyright– Eugene H. Peterson,
2006.

*Released from the tyranny of condemnation—by critics and by conscience—
I find all things new, O Lord. Instill now strong habits of virtue in place of
the sins to which I have become accustomed. Amen.*
p. 277

(Christ/Life by Ruth Myers) Sisters, OR: Multnomah. Copyright – Ruth Myers, 2005.

*Lord Jesus, thank You that I have inner oneness
with You in the core of my being.*

*How grateful I am that You demonstrated in Your life on earth a
constant dependence on Your Father—and that I am to live and
serve with complete dependence on You as my indwelling Lord.*

*Open my eyes as I focus on Your life as You walked on earth.
May I in fresh ways behold Your glory, “the glory of the One and Only,
who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, NIV).*

*What a delight to know that, as I fix my heart and eyes on You,
You continue by Your Holy Spirit to transform me into Your
image through my inner union with You.*

*And Father, I rejoice that, because of Your gift of life through Christ,
the impossible goal of being holy and acceptable to You has become a
reality in my life. How I rejoice that in the core of my being I’ve been
made righteous with Your righteousness and alive with your life.*

*Thank You again, Father, that both now and forever I’m united
with Your Son Jesus by Your indwelling Spirit. Blessed Trinity!*

p. 99