

## GALATIANS

### CHAPTER TWO

1. How much time lapsed until Paul revisited Jerusalem?

*“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem”* (Galatians 2:1). This further solidifies the idea that Paul was not at all reliant on his fellow apostles to certify his authority.

It also gives insight on the timeline from Acts 9:30 to Acts 15:1. Cross-referencing always improves our perception.

This is not to say that Paul made no visits to Jerusalem in the meantime (Acts 11:28-30), only that none involved face-to-face visits with the apostles.

2. Who accompanied him?

*“I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me”* (Galatians 2:1). This agrees with Acts 15:2 and provides the detail concerning Titus.

3. Did Paul confer with the brethren in Jerusalem using his own wisdom and discretion?

*“I went up by revelation”* (Galatians 2:2). He was guided by the Holy Spirit, as were the others (Acts 15:28).

4. What did he inform the church at Jerusalem of?

He *“communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles”* (Galatians 2:2). His and Barnabas’s contribution to the circumcision question in Jerusalem consisted of giving examples of preaching among the gentiles (Acts 15:12).

5. How was the meeting in Jerusalem conducted?

He communicated *“privately to those who were of reputation”* (Galatians 2:2).

After he had been received by the church (Acts 15:4), certain Pharisees got involved and heated up the controversy (5), so a private meeting was held with the elders and apostles (6).

6. What would have caused Paul to have *“run in vain?”*

*“Lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain”* (Galatians 2:2) refers to the gospel he had preached to the gentiles, which he reported on to the Jerusalem church, meaning that gospel would have been pointless if the people he preached to had needed circumcision.

7. What was the outcome of the meeting?

*“Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised”* (Galatians 2:3). The Jerusalem conference settled the matter: circumcision was not to be imposed (Acts 15:22-29).

8. How did Titus differ from Timothy?

There was zero cause to compel Titus, a Greek man, to be circumcised, whereas Timothy, who was half Jewish, would have lost all credibility preaching to Jews if he

wasn't (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy didn't need circumcision to please God but to be effective in preaching God's gospel to feeble men (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 9:19-23).

9. What was the origin of this controversy?

*"And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage)"* (Galatians 2:4). This was not a matter of confusion or a sincere inquiry reaching an incorrect conclusion, but was rooted in malicious intent, meaning to tie souls down to a burdensome load.

10. How did "false brethren" gain access to the church at Antioch?

They practiced "stealth" in order "to spy" (Galatians 2:4), meaning they were dishonest and not straightforward, which is what Jesus warned about when identifying Himself as "the Door" (John 10:1-10).

11. What made them "false brethren?"

The element he contended with in Antioch, whom he called "false brethren," were either the same people who opposed him in the Jerusalem meeting or were their allies, and those in Jerusalem were described as "some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed" (Acts 15:5). Thus, it was not their brotherhood that was false, but their beliefs. They were real brethren who believed falsely.

12. What goal were they pursuing?

They meant to "to spy out our liberty" and "bring us into bondage" (Galatians 2:4). Peter referred to it as "a yoke on the neck... we were unable to bear" (Acts 15:10),

while the apostles and elders of Jerusalem called it “trouble” and “unsettling” (24), implying it was a “burden” (28).

The liberty under consideration is, particularly, freedom from the Law of Moses. That is what was being imposed. Nothing else fits the context.

13. How tolerant was Paul toward the “false brethren?”

*“We did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you”* (Galatians 2:5). While it is good to “become all things to all men,” that is done to accommodate the uninformed and not lose influence. Being coerced into unnecessary restrictions is an altogether different matter, so Paul didn’t put up with that at all. Nor should we.

14. What did Paul gain by associating with fellow apostles during this meeting in Jerusalem?

Nothing. *“From those who seemed to be something — whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man — for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me”* (Galatians 2:6).

He went to serve the cause of Christ by sharing what had been revealed to him, so that others could be settled on this matter. He was not served in any way by being there. Their clout did not enhance his own.

15. What did the “pillars” of the Jerusalem congregation perceive about Paul?

*“They saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me”* (Galatians 2:7) and *“perceived the grace that had been given to me”* (9). Rather than

Paul gaining something from them, they came to recognize him as no less than an equal.

16. To whom were Paul and Peter especially sent?

*“The gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)” (Galatians 2:7-8).*

These were not exclusive spheres of influence as Peter was the one who first took the gospel to the gentiles (Acts 10:1-11:18; 15:7-11), and Paul consistently began preaching in the synagogue of whatever city he went to (13:14; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4; 19:8). Nevertheless, they recognized the fields in which they were most fruitful. Thus, if a preacher finds himself most effective among a certain demographic, then it is not sinful discrimination to focus on winning those souls.

17. How did the “pillars” manifest their approval of Paul?

*“They gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship” (Galatians 2:9).* Although kisses were common greetings among brethren at the time (Romans 16:16), they weren’t the only method of showing acceptance. Laying hands on a person is an indication of approval.

18. What did they request of him?

*“They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do” (Galatians 2:10).* The poor in question were the destitute brethren in Jerusalem who were depending on gentiles to relieve their needs (Romans 15:25-27).

19. Why did Paul stand up to Peter?

*“Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision” (Galatians 2:11-12).*

Paul’s authority is on full display when even another apostle is rebuked by him, and face to face, at that!

This shows that no man is infallible. Peter had impetuous tendencies while Christ was on earth, and, many years removed, he still let fear control his behavior at times.

20. How far did this hypocrisy extend?

*“And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy” (Galatians 2:13).* Barnabas was, easily, one of the most encouraging characters in the New Testament (Acts 4:36), and made a habit of including the excluded (9:27; 15:36-39). Still, even this man got *“carried away!”* Past good behavior is not a valid excuse for current bad behavior.

21. In which setting did Paul confront Peter?

*“But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?’” (Galatians 2:14).* He did this publicly, not privately. It is widely thought that all rebukes must be initiated in private before escalating to a public censure (Matthew 18:15-17), however such a procedure is for sins which were private to begin with. Apollos was confronted

privately for something he did in public (Acts 18:24-28), but he was not a Christian at the time and what he taught was merely incomplete, not inaccurate. When error is taught publicly, it deserves to be corrected in the same setting.

22. Which “works” are contrasted to “faith” in the matter of justification?

*“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified”* (Galatians 2:15-16).

Twice, Paul specifically mentioned “works of the law,” thereby indicating obedience to the Law of Moses was being considered, which fits the contextual discussion of circumcision. Works of obedience to Christ are not part of the conversation (cf. James 2:14-26).

23. What premise would force the conclusion that Christ is “a minister of sin?”

*“But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!”* (Galatians 2:17). Paul is saying that if circumcision or any aspect of the former covenant remains in place, then turning sinners to Christ only keeps them in their sin, which is absurd.

Within a few verses, he concluded: *“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain”* (Galatians 2:21).

24. What two analogies were employed to demonstrate Paul’s separation from the Old Law?

*“For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God”* (Galatians 2:18-19). He refers to it as a destroyed building and as something he died to. No one respecting such words from the New Testament can presently regard the Old Testament as a valid system to obey.

25. What became of Paul’s personal identity?

*“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me”* (Galatians 2:20). It was surrendered to the will of Jesus cf. Colossians 3:3.

26. When does one become *“crucified with Christ?”*

This text alludes to what Paul taught elsewhere concerning the efficacy of baptism (Romans 6:3-6; Colossians 2:12).