

## GALATIANS 1:23 -2:3

A. Galatians 1:23-24 - Gal 1:23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. Gal 1:24 And they glorified God in me.

1. These Jews did not know Paul **personally**, they had never met him. They only knew what they had heard about Paul. They had heard of Paul's **past** in his persecuting of the Messianic Church. Lately, they **shockingly** became aware that Paul was preaching the faith he once was trying to **destroy**.
2. These Jews glorified **God** for working in Paul's life to trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.  
Acts 9:20 - And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God  
\*\*These believing Kingdom Jews got "in Christ" through faith in the Jewish Prophetic Kingdom Program. But Paul was placed "into Christ" by **grace** alone because of Christ's finished work (DBR); however, it is the **same** God - same Christ.
  - a. Paul's message was not in opposition, but a **difference** in God's program. Paul is not under Law, but it is the same God-Christ. Paul is agreeing with them that Jesus was the Christ, and he no longer was persecuting them for believing **that** truth.
  - b. These Jews believed Jesus was risen from the dead, the prophesied Messiah King of which Paul agreed. But Paul's message **extended** that truth with further revelation of how God deals with the Gentiles, the **Body**.
  - c. So these believing Jews in verses 23-24 accept that Paul's conversion was true and his message genuinely from **God**...though different.

B. Galatians 2:1 - Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

1. Now Paul tells of an event that took place in Acts 15. The setting shows Paul and Barnabus working together, led by Paul. Paul had already started churches with a large Gentile Church at Antioch.
2. Evidently some of the Jews at the Jerusalem Church were **afraid** of Paul's churches growth. Paul's law**less** message made some upset and even mad.  
**\*They were asking:** "How could this be of **God**? The Gentiles ignore God's law and wonder why all the dissension **if** Paul preached the same as the 11. So Paul takes Barnabus and Titus with him up to the Jerusalem Church to **defend the pure grace gospel** and the churches that had been established. \*\*The Judaizers were opposing Paul at every turn. Why?  
Acts 13:38-39 - Act 13:38 Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.  
Ephesians 1:7 - In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;
3. Remember, some of the Jews would go into the Jewish-Gentile churches and say, "You cannot be saved by Paul's gospel **alone**. In addition, you have to keep the Law, be circumcised, or you cannot be saved!"

Acts 15:1-2, 5-6 - And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. Acts 15:2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. Acts 15:5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses. Acts 15:6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

**\*\*These are Jewish Kingdom believers of the 12 and were still keeping the Law. It came to a crisis point! Think, 1500 years of Law and circumcision versus Paul who preached neither! The Jewish believers continued keeping the Law.**

Acts 21:20-21 - And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: Acts 21:21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children, neither to walk after the customs.

4. This is Paul's third visit to Jerusalem: in Acts 9:26, where God said get out of Jerusalem; when seeing Peter for 15 days; and now here in Acts 15 at the Council. Since Paul had talked to Peter and James, this is likely 17 years after his conversion in Acts 9. That is a long period of time without contact with the 12. This shows again that the 12 had nothing to do with his message.
5. [Barnabas] was a good go-between and he had helped Paul earlier with the Jews when Paul was first saved (Acts 9:26-28). Barnabas had helped Paul with raising money for relief of the Jewish Kingdom Church (had sold most all of what they had - Acts 11:28-30). Barnabas accompanied Paul on his first missionary-evangelistic journey, and helped salvage John Mark to become usable once again (Col. 4:10, II Tim. 4:11)

\*Now Barnabas is with Paul at the Jerusalem Council to help Paul defend the pure grace gospel and even Paul's Apostleship.

6. [Titus] also goes with Paul. Titus was a living object lesson of the grace of God and that God could even save Gentiles! \*Titus was at the Church at Antioch and was a full Greek Gentile. He was a convert of Paul's gospel and was willing to be exhibited as the test case.

Titus 1:4 - To Titus, *mine* own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Galatians 2:3 - But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

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| C. | <u>Galatians 2:2</u> - And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. |
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1. Paul did not go up to the Jerusalem Church because he was summoned by the 12. Paul was told by God (by revelation) to go to this meeting to settle the dispute over circumcision - law message to the Gentiles. **\*\* If the same message, why would God send Paul up to Jerusalem?**

Colossians 1:25-26 - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Col. 1:26 *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

2. Throughout the centuries, men of God have risen to recover and defend this truth. But sadly, again and again their voices have been stilled because traditions, denominations, and opinions have made void the WORD. \*\*To defend their incorrect positions, they have attacked and attacked with vengeance and often cruelty.
  - a. They try - use little dividing comments like, "Who is the greater, Jesus or Paul?" Of course, Jesus is the answer. They use this because we honor Paul as the Apostle to us today.
  - b. When excluding Paul of much significance, they continue to take their flocks back to the earthly program of Israel and follow Jesus' ministry.  
  
\*\*So they focus on the Sermon on the Mount; the Great Commission; baptismal regeneration or membership; baptism for remission of sins; Commandments of the Law to obey; and back to Pentecost with signs and wonders.
  - c. There is even a large segment of Protestantism that removes Israel completely and believe that the Body Church has replaced Israel. \*\*This is a big reason they hate Pauline division of scripture that shows Israel does have a future kingdom with Christ reigning. Confusion remains!  
  
I Corinthians 14:37-38 - If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. I Cor. 14:38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.
  - d. So today, few know or understand rightly dividing truth. When Israel rejected Jesus as the Christ -Messiah and rejected the Kingdom offer in early Acts 1-7, Israel's program was temporarily set aside. God raised up another Apostle, Paul, with a new program, a new man called the Body of Christ. Paul's message demonstrates pure grace. Salvation is by grace through faith alone in the DBR of Christ. That only is what saves today!
3. [communicated unto them] This literally means to lay out the information for one to consider. Paul explained his message - ministry point by point.
4. [that gospel] Paul unveils what he had been preaching to the Gentiles. He did not go up to Jerusalem to tell them he was preaching their message. Later, Paul carefully explains his gospel of grace, not needing circumcision or anything else. Paul's was simply believe, and that was a new concept.  
  
Acts 13:39 - And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.
5. Paul started with a private meeting. He (wisely) was not going to risk his ministry or his message with an immediate public forum. He knew the general public in Jerusalem was not ready for his new revelation from Christ. Remember, they had been under the nation's law system for 1500 years!
  - a. [to them which are of reputation] Paul knew that if he got Peter, James, and John's support, it would greatly help when he would go before the congregation publically.
  - b. [lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain] Paul knew his gospel was true and he was willing to put it under the 12's scrutiny. He did not want his already accomplished work hindered by the Judaizers.

D. Galatians 2:3 - But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

1. Titus was Paul's **proof** of the gospel of grace changing one's life (even Gentiles) and of standing **firm** for the faith. Evidently some had tried to convince him to be circumcised through intimidation. He **refused**! Imagine the tension.
2. Titus, Paul's test case, was to allow the Jewish believers to observe the truth of salvation **apart** from Law, circumcision, and Israel. Titus' spirit, life change, doctrine, Holy Spirit's presence was **undeniable**.
3. There were two types of legalism at this event.
  - a. The legalism of **sal**vation by works:
 

Acts 15:1 - And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

\*They said one cannot be saved without some kind of religious activity. You have to be circumcised to be saved. Where did they get **that** idea?

Genesis 17:14 - And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.
  - b. The legalism of **sanc**tification by works:
 

Acts 15:5 - But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.

\*Like these Jewish believers, some churches are notorious for establishing rules, and if the people **keep** them, they will be holy.

\*\*Paul said: Galatians 3:3 - Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?
4. Remember, we are holy because we are "**in** Christ," and accepted. We are not holy because we keep a list of rules.
 

I Corinthians 1:30 - But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:
5. The Jerusalem 12 had **never** met a man (saved Gentile) like Titus. That is why Paul took him. He wanted the Jewish believers to **ex**amine, evaluate his claim of being a believer under grace.
 

\*Can you imagine as Paul introduces Titus to give his testimony about **Christ** and the sufficiency of His **DBR**?
6. The council's decision on the question, "Was it necessary for one to be circumcised to be saved" - they **over**whelmingly agreed that for Paul's Gentile ministry...**No**!