

Trinity Lutheran Church

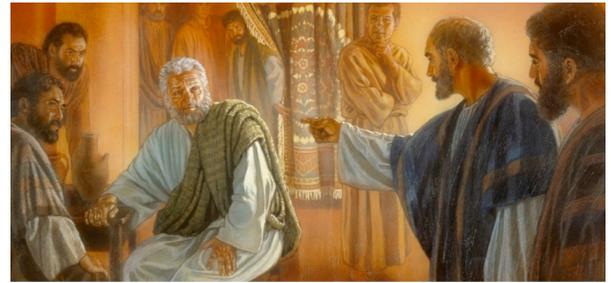
Norman, Oklahoma – www.tlcnorman.org

The Book of Galatians

Theme: “The True Gospel You Have Received”

Date: 5-22-22

Lesson: 12 - Chapter 2:11-21



Paul confronts Peter in Antioch
Galatians 2:11-14

TEXT AND STUDY

(11) But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. (12) For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. (13) And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. (14) But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with **the truth of the gospel**, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

(Job 21:31; Mt 23:28; Lk 12:1; 15:2; 20:20;

Acts 4:36; 10:28,45; 11:2,3,19-26; 13:1-3,39; 14:26; 15:1,10-13,35;

Rom 4:5,12; 1 Cor 1:9; 1 Tim 5:20; Heb 12:13; 1 Pet 2:1; 1 Jn 1:9)

(15) We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; (16) yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in **Jesus Christ**, so we also have believed in **Christ Jesus**, in order to be justified by faith in **Christ** and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. (17) But if, in our endeavor to be justified in **Christ**, we too were found to be sinners, is **Christ** then a servant of sin? Certainly not! (18) For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor.

(1 Sam 15:18; Ps 143:2; Lk 24:7; Rom 3:20-28; 7:4,6,12; 9:30; 11:6;

Eph 2:3,8,9,12-18; Php 3:4-9)

(19) For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to **God**. (20) I have been crucified with **Christ**. It is no longer I who live, but **Christ who lives in me**. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in **the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me. (21) I do not nullify **the grace of God**, for if justification were through the law, then **Christ died** for no purpose.

(Mt 4:3; Lk 20:38; Jn 17:23; Rom 6:2,6-14; 8:10,37; 14:7,8;

2 Cor 5:15; 13:5; 1 Th 5:10; 1 Tim 2:6; Titus 2:14; Heb 7:11; 9:14; 1 Pet 4:2)

Luther's Commentary - Vol. 26

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

Paul continues his refutation and says not only that he has the testimony of Peter and the other apostles at Jerusalem on his side, but also that he opposed Peter on this issue before the entire church at Antioch. He tells that this took place in the presence of the entire church, not in a corner. This is a marvelous account...

For the issue here is nothing trivial for Paul; it is **the principal doctrine of Christianity**. When this is recognized and held before one's eyes, everything else seems vile and worthless. For what is Peter? What is Paul? What is an angel from heaven? What is all creation in comparison with **the doctrine of justification**? Therefore if you see this threatened or endangered, do not be

afraid to stand up against Peter or an angel from heaven. For this cannot be praised highly enough.

But those men look at Peter's high prestige; they admire his social position and forget **the majesty of this doctrine**. Paul does the opposite. He does not attack Peter sharply; he treats him with due respect. But because he sees that the prestige of Peter is endangering **the majesty of the doctrine of justification**, he ignores the prestige, in order to keep **this doctrine pure and undefiled**. And we do the same thing, for it is written (Matt. 10:37): "He who loves father or mother or his own soul more **than Me** is not worthy of **Me**."

When it comes to the defense of **the truth of the Gospel**, therefore, we are not embarrassed to have the hypocrites accuse us of being proud and stubborn, the ones who think that they alone have **the truth**, those who refuse to listen or to yield to anyone. Here we have to be stubborn and unbending. The cause for whose sake we sin against men, that is, trample underfoot the majesty of someone's social position or of the world, is so great that the sins that are the worst in the eyes of the world are the highest virtues in **the eyes of God**.

I am saying this in order that you may carefully consider **the issue** with which Paul is dealing; for he is dealing with **the Word of God**, which no one can praise worthily enough... the text clearly states that Peter was deserving of attack and had erred from **the truth**, and that other Jews carried on the same pretense that he did, with the result that even Barnabas was led astray into this pretense by them.

Luke testifies in Acts 15:39 that there was such sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, who had been set aside for **the ministry of the Gospel** among the Gentiles and had traveled through many areas and announced **the Gospel** to them, that they parted company. Here there was a fault either in Paul or in Barnabas; it must have been a very sharp disagreement to separate such close companions, and this is what the text suggests. Such examples are written for our comfort. For it is a great comfort for us to hear that even such great saints sin—a comfort which those who say that saints cannot sin would take away from us.

Samson, David, and many other celebrated men who were full of **the Holy Spirit** fell into huge sins. Job (3:3 ff.) and Jeremiah (20:14) curse the day of their birth; Elijah (1 Kings 19:4) and Jonah (4:8) are tired of life and pray for death. Such errors and sins of the saints are set forth in order that those who are troubled and desperate may find comfort and that those who are proud may be afraid. No man has ever fallen so grievously that he could not have stood up again. On the other hand, no one has such a sure footing that he cannot fall. If Peter fell, I, too, may fall; if he stood up again, so can I.

Those whose consciences are weak and tender should set great store by such examples, in order that they may understand better what they are praying when they say: "Forgive us, etc.," or "**I believe in the forgiveness of sins**," in which the apostles and all the saints believed. They prayed the **Our Father** just as we do. The apostles were not superior to us in anything except in their apostolic office. We have the same gifts that they had, namely, **the same Christ, Baptism, Word, and forgiveness of sins**. They needed all this no less than we do; they were **sanctified and saved** by all this just as we are.

LIFE APPLICATION

When we see conduct that is not in step with the truth of the gospel, why must we also speak up?