

A Practical Study of

GALATIANS: You Were Running Well

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

Study #3 – Galatians 2:1-10

UNTIL: Divine Direction Was Not Discerned

Key verse: Galatians 2:2

And I went up in accordance with a revelation and I laid before them the gospel which I am preaching among the Gentiles. But privately to those of recognized eminence lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.

TEXT:

v. 1 Then after the space of fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas having taken along also Titus.

v. 2 And I went up in accordance with a revelation and I laid before them the gospel which I am preaching among the Gentiles. But privately to those of recognized eminence lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.

v. 3 But not even Titus who was with me, though he was a Greek was compelled to be circumcised.

v. 4 But because of the false brethren brought in secretly who came in secretly (snuck in) to spy out our liberty which we are having in Christ Jesus in order that they might bring us into bondage.

v. 5 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).

v. 6 But to be something from those who were of recognized eminence whatever they once were it makes no difference to me. God is not accepting man's person. For those of recognized eminence laid nothing in addition upon me.

v. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised even as Peter [had been entrusted with the gospel] to the circumcised.

v. 8 For He who energized Peter unto apostleship to the circumcision also energized me unto the Gentiles.

v. 9 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.

v. 10 Only that we should keep on remembering the poor which this very thing I made haste also to do.

INTRODUCTION:

Where Grownups Go for Fun

Estimated number of visitors to Orlando's Walt Disney World each year:
60 million

Expected number of visitors to Bass Pro Shops in 2009: 100 million

Jayne O'Donnell, "Bass Pro CEO Hooked Dream Job," USA Today (9-30-09), 2B

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(Cow Pies & Candle Lights by G. T. Burton) Benton, Arkansas: G. T. Burton.
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TWO OL' HOSSES

When they're together workin' cows
it's always head and heel,
don't need to call instructions
because they do it all by feel.
In camp they only mumble
'cause they've said it all before,
and they know the other's feelings
from the skin down to the core.

One lost a wife and baby
in the storms of '68,
and the other rode beside him
trying hard to compensate.
They've partnered nye-on thirty years,
through blizzards, rain, or heat,
and I suppose without the other
one could never be complete.

Now and then they do the town,
but their doin's kind'a slow,
their daily life is so content
the spree is just for show.

If either one could have his wish
they'd stay partners to the end;
just two ol' Hosses getting older
growing closer, friend to friend

(Coyote Cowboy Poetry by Baxter Black) Brighton, CO: Coyote Cowboy Company. Copyright - Baxter Black, 1986.

TAKE CARE OF YER FRIENDS

Friend is a word that I don't throw around
 Though it's used and abused, I still like the sound.
 I save it for people who've done right by me
 And I know I can count on if ever need be.

Some of my friends drive big limousines
 Own ranches and banks and visit with queens.
 And some of my friends are up to their neck
 In overdue notes and can't write a check.

They're singers or ropers or writers of prose
 And others, God bless'em, can't blow their own nose!
 I guess bein' friends don't have nothin' to do
 With talent or money or knowin' who's who.

It's a comf'terbul feelin' when you don't have to care
 'Bout choosin' your words or bein' quite fair
 'Cause freinds'll just listen and let go on by
 Those words you don't mean and not bat an eye.

It makes a friend happy to see your success.
 They're proud of yer good side and forgive all the rest
 And that ain't so easy, all of the time
 Sometimes I get crazy and seem to go blind!

Yer friends just might have to take you on home
 Or remind you sometime that you're not alone.
 Or ever so gently pull you back to the ground
 When you think you can fly with no one around.

A hug or a shake, whichever seems right
 Is the high point of givin', I'll tellya tonight,
 All worldly riches and tributes of men
 Can't hold a candle to the worth of a friend.
 p. 122

(Same Kind of Different as Me: A Modern-day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman Who Bound Them Together by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, and Lynn Vincent) Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group. Copyright – Ron Hall, 2006.

I'm gon' tell you right now what I first thought about Mr. Ron askin me would I be his friend: I didn't like it. Why would he want to be my friend? That's what I was thinkin. What does he want? Everybody want somethin. Why don't he pick somebody else? Why *I* got to be his friend?

You got to understand that by that time, I had layers of street on me a mile thick. Some homeless folks got lotsa friends, but I hadn't ever let nobody get that close. It wadn't that I was worried about gettin hurt or nothin like that. Bein a friend is a heavy commitment. In a way, even more than a husband or a wife. And I was selfish. I could take care a' myself, and I didn't need nobody else's baggage. Besides that, friendship to me means more than just somebody to talk to, or run with, or hang with.

Bein friends is like being soldiers in the army. You live together; you fight together; you die together. I knowed Mr. Ron wadn't fixin to come up outta no bushes and help me fight.

But then I got to thinkin about him some more and thought maybe we might have somethin to offer each other. I could be his friend in a different way than he could be my friend. I knowed he wanted to help the homeless, and I could take him places he couldn't go by hisself. I didn't know what I might find in his circle or even that I had any business bein there, but I knowed he could help me find out whatever was down that road.

The way I looked at it, a fair exchange ain't no robbery, and a even swap ain't no swindle. He was gon' protect me in the country club, and I was gon' protect him in the hood. Even swap, straight down the line.

p. 108

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On! II by Texas Bix Bender) Salt Lake City, Utah: Gibbs-Smith. Copyright - Texas Bix Bender, 1997.

A hand that ain't there when you need it is kinda like a blister — only shows up when the work's all done.

p. 54

There's no better friend than a horse that's saddled and ready to go.

p. 83

A good pard will ride with you till hell freezes over—and a little while on the ice.

p. 17

(Savvy Sayin's: Lean & Meaty One-Liners by Ken Alstad) Tucson, AZ: Ken Alstad Company. Copyright - Ken Alstad Company, 1994.

Close friends are folks who've sopped gravy out'n the same skillet.

p. 154

(God's Little Devotional Book by Honor Books, Inc.) Tulsa, OK: Honor Books, Inc.. Copyright - Honor Books, Inc., 1995.

With tears streaming from her eyes, she placed her hands on either side of his face, looked directly into his eyes, and said, "I like me best when I'm with you."

True friendship is letting those around you not only "be themselves" but "be their best."

p. 277

(Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul: 101 Stories of Life, Love and Learning
by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Kimberly Kirberger)
Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc.. Copyright - Jack
Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Kimberly Kirberger, 1997.

*Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while
and leave footprints on our hearts. And we are never, ever the same.*

Source Unknown

p. 35

(Hope Again: When Life Hurts and Dreams Fade by Charles R. Swindoll)
Dallas, TX: Word. Copyright - Charles R. Swindoll, 1996.

Jay Kesler, my long-time friend and currently the president of Taylor University, has said that one of his great hopes in life is to wind up with at least eight people who will attend his funeral without once checking their watches. I love it! Do you have eight people who'll do that?

p. 121

(A Man to Match the Mountain: Overcoming the Obstacles of Life by David Roper)
Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House. Copyright - David Roper, 1996.

I recall a story about General William Westmoreland who was reviewing a platoon of paratroopers during the Vietnam War. As he went down the line he asked each trooper in turn, "How do you like jumping, son?" "I love it, Sir!" each one bellowed. When he came to the end of the line and asked the final soldier how he liked jumping, the man replied quietly, "I hate jumping, Sir!" "Then why do you jump?" the astonished general asked. "Because I want to be around guys who jump!" he said. That was Jonathan; his man David was a man who "jumped."

p. 245

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

Jesus invites us into a community where imperfect people can find acceptance, love, forgiveness, and a new beginning.
p. (Entry #16)

It was JOHN BUNYAN who said:

Getting out of the will of God for our lives is far easier than getting back in once we are out.
(source unknown)

Isaiah 53:6 (NIV)

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Luke 15:11-19 (DAV)

And He said, “A certain man was having two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate which falls to me.’ And he divided his wealth between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey to a distant country, and there he squandered his wealth with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be in need. And he went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to be feeding hogs. And he was longing to fill his stomach with some of the carob-pods which the hogs were eating, and no one was giving [anything] to him. But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many employees of my father are getting more than enough bread, and I am perishing here with hunger! Having pulled up stakes I will go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I sinned against heaven, and before you; No longer am I worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your employees.”’

Psalm 37:23-24 (NIV)

If the Lord delights in a man's way,
 he makes his steps firm;
 though he stumble, he will not fall,
 for the Lord upholds him with his hand.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Job 23:10-12 (NIV)

But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold. My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

These verses describe so well what is taking place in this section in the **BOOK OF GALATIANS**.

The Apostle Paul, because he was leadable, has experienced **DIVINE DIRECTION** in his life as is recorded in this witness of what has happened in his life after conversion.

Thus far in our series of studies we have seen:

1. You Were Running Well UNTIL: No Runs, No Hits, and a Big Error
2. You Were Running Well UNTIL: You Forgot What God Was Doing in Your Life

There are **THREE D'S** that cause us to miss divine direction in our lives. They are:

1. **DESIRES**,
2. **DULLNESS**, and
3. **DISOBEDIENCE**.

Isaiah 55:8-11 (NIV)

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Hebrews 5:11-14 (DAV)

Concerning Him there is much to be said, and it is hard to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing (hard of hearing). For though by this time you are under moral obligation to be teachers, you are having need again for someone to be teaching you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have become such as are having need of milk and not solid food. For everyone who is partaking only of milk is unacquainted with the teaching about righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice are having their powers of perception trained to discern good and evil.

Isaiah 30:21 (NIV)

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”

Psalm 32:8-9 (NIV)

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
 I will counsel you and watch over you.
 Do not be like the horse or the mule,
 which have no understanding
 but must be controlled by bit and bridle
 or they will not come to you.

John 10:4 (DAV)

Whenever he brings out all his own, he is going before them, and the sheep are following him because they are knowing his voice.

How easy it is to miss divine direction when personal desires get in the way.

The writer of the **BOOK OF HEBREWS** calls this **DULLNESS OF HEARING**; and when **DESIRES** and **DULLNESS** dominate, we are going to miss His will and then it will be said of us:

“You were running well UNTIL . . .”

DISOBEDIENCE reared its ugly head in the lives of:

SAUL,

DAVID, and

JONAH

and it cost them each a great deal.

The older we get too, the more vulnerable we become to sometimes missing His will because of **ASSUMPTION** or **ANTICIPATION**.

How to discern God's direction:

1. **Circumstances**,
2. **God's Word**, and
3. **Prayer and the Peace** which follows.

Colossians 3:15 (DAV)

And let the peace of Christ be ruling in your hearts, into which also you were called in one body; and keep on being thankful.

Isaiah 26:3 (NIV)

You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 32:17 (NIV)

The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles these ten verses and says:

He was recognized by the apostles (2:1-10).

While chapter 2 continues Paul's defense of his apostolic authority and the gospel he preached, he focused not on the source of his message but on its content. Further, whereas in chapter 1 he emphasized his independence from the other apostles, he now demonstrated that there was a basic unity between himself and them

Anders quotes Thomas Jefferson:

“The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.”

Thomas Jefferson

p. 18

Anders says:

In chapter 2, Paul informs the Galatian Christians: I am a true apostle, and two proofs demonstrate that my gospel of grace is true. First, it is true because the apostles and leaders in Jerusalem approved my gospel of grace and authenticated my apostleship. Second, my gospel of grace is true because I confronted and corrected the apostle Peter when he was showing preference to the Judaizers and their false system of legalism. Such a bold and uncontested act validates my apostolic authority and message.

p. 18

Anders says:

Heavenly Deception in Washington, D.C.

In 1974, The Church of Latter-Day Saints completed a tabernacle in Kensington, Maryland. For nighttime interstate travelers around the Maryland perimeter of Washington, D.C., the surreal appearance of this beautiful, gothic structure bathed in celestial light is a familiar sight. Adorned with lofty spires and the statue of an angel, it appears to the uninitiated to be an awe-inspiring Christian building. A first hint comes when you realize its subtle architecture includes no crosses. The doctrinal differences between Mormonism and Christianity are just as subtle but still real and immensely important. Just as their buildings bear no crosses, so their faith has no central role for the cross of Christ.

Mormons will tell you that they believe in Jesus, yet they do not believe that he is the only way to salvation, and they believe things that are contrary to what Jesus taught. They believe that ultimately humans will become divine. They do not believe the Bible is God's final and authoritative revelation of himself to us. They do not claim the Bible is infallible. They do not believe in a literal heaven and hell. Jesus taught these things. Since Jesus claimed to be the Truth, one must choose between the credibility of Jesus and the credibility of Mormon doctrine. One cannot completely trust both.

p. 19

Anders says:

In Paul's day the Judaizers said the same things: "Believe in Jesus Christ, but we have something wonderful to add to what you believe." They preached "the gospel plus Moses." In our day these counterfeits of the gospel of grace preach "the gospel plus" their extra-biblical beliefs, their religious organization, their rules, regulations, and special revelations. In response to such false teachings they go beyond the gospel of grace, Paul said in Galatians 1:8, if anyone **should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!**

Paul continues defending the gospel of grace in chapter 2. He defends his apostleship and message by presenting two authenticating interactions: (1) his approval by the Jerusalem leaders, and (2) his correction of Peter's legalism—both of which substantiated the gospel and his apostleship. pp. 19-20

Anders says:

SUPPORTING IDEA: *The leaders in Jerusalem endorsed the gospel Paul preached and affirmed his apostleship.*
p. 20

Barclay says:

THE MAN WHO REFUSED TO BE OVERAWED
Galatians 2:1-10
p. 15

Barclay says:

IN the preceding passage Paul has proved the independence of his gospel; he has proved that he owed it to no man, and that it had come to him direct from God. In this passage he is concerned to prove that this independence is not anarchy, and that his gospel was not something schismatic and sectarian, but was indeed no other than the faith delivered to the Church.
p. 16

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Chapter 2 begins a different unit of Paul's argument. There is a connection, of course, for he is still speaking of his apostolic authority. But now he wants to demonstrate the essential unity between himself and the other apostles, whereas ch. 1 focused on his independence from them. There are four main differences between the first ten verses of this chapter and those preceding it: (1) There is a new subject—not the source of Paul's Gospel, but the nature of the Gospel as centered in the issue of circumcision for Gentiles; (2) there is a new aspect of Paul's relationship to the Twelve—not independence from them, but harmony and cooperation; (3) there is a new period of Paul's ministry and of early church history; and (4) there is a new conclusion—namely, that in the essential content of the Gospel and of the plan for missionary activity, Paul and the Twelve were one.
p. 713

Bartlett says:

HAVING ESTABLISHED the fact that he had received his apostleship and the gospel he was to preach directly from the Lord Jesus Himself, Paul now turns in 2:1-10 to his second line of defense, which is to show how his ministry to the Gentiles had been fully endorsed by the leaders of the mother church at Jerusalem.
p. 32

Baxter says:

Speaking summarily, that was both the first and the final thing about the Galatian failure—they were erring from that *absolutely distinctive* doctrine of the one true Gospel, that the eternal salvation of the soul is altogether of Divine *grace* in Christ, apart from religious observances and human merit-works of every kind. And what was it to which they were turning? Glance through the epistle. They were seeking to be “justified by the law” (v. 4). They were toying with the observance of “days and months and seasons and years” (iv. 10). They were yielding to the idea that the rite of circumcision was necessary (v. 2, vi. 12, 13). They were seeking to supplement the work of the Holy Spirit by law-works of the flesh (iii. 3). They were overlaying the simplicity and spirituality of the Gospel with Judaistic observances; and, indeed, it would seem that a fairly thorough conformity to the Law of Moses was becoming insisted on among them (iv. 21). It was not that the Gospel was being directly denied; but their minds were becoming inoculated with legalistic and ritualistic ideas which destroyed its vital doctrines.

p. 142

Bickel & Jantz say:

The best place to start building unity in the church is to start working with a team of diverse people who are united by their common faith in Christ and their mission.

—G. Walter Hansen

The Message Is Always the Same

So far in his first of three major arguments to the Galatians to prove that his gospel is true, Paul has made it clear that he received his apostolic authority directly from Jesus, independent of the other apostles in Jerusalem. As Galatians 2 begins, he continues this argument, but with a different emphasis. Now he lets the Galatians know that even though his gospel is *independent* of the other apostles, it is the *same* as theirs.

Evidently the Judaizers are trying to create a division between Peter, a leader in the Jerusalem church, and Paul, who is preaching in other places from his base in Antioch. So God instructs Paul to return to Jerusalem in order to affirm that Peter's message and Paul's message are the same. This section is a great example for us. Even though God calls us to different ministries in different places, our Good News message is always the same: The only way to be saved is through faith alone in Christ alone.
p. 44

De Haan says:

Chapter two of Galatians opens with an account of the first great church council recorded in the fifteenth of Acts. The occasion was the controversy over the matter of circumcision and the Law of Moses. These legalistic disturbers of the peace from Judaea had come to Antioch and opposed Paul's message of grace, asserting that the Gentiles "must be circumcised (become Jews), and keep the law" (Acts 15:24). So serious was the dissension that a committee (including Paul and Barnabas) were delegated to go to Jerusalem to seek advice from the apostles.

This was seventeen years after Paul's conversion and he gives added details in this chapter (Galatians 2) of this meeting. We have already seen the final decision of the council in Acts 15:23-31. It was an endorsement of Paul's message of grace—salvation for Jew and Gentile by grace—without the works of the law.
p. 57

Dunnam says:

Paul sought to prove the independence of his gospel. In this chapter he seeks to clarify the fact that this independence is not sectarian or self-seeking. He defends his gospel as *the faith in God's grace which is sufficient for all*, Jew and Gentile alike.
p. 31

Dunnam says:

This was not an easy visit for Paul. His inner being is in turmoil. Even as he wrote, his worry and agitation are visible in the broken and disjointed sentences.

He was totally committed in his mission to the Gentiles. His passion to share the Good News with the non-Jew was like an intense fire, everlastingly burning in his breast. He struggled not to say too little lest he compromise his commitment. Nor did he want to say too much, lest it might appear that he was at variance with, and antagonistic to, the leaders of the church.
p. 31

Eadie says:

AFTER his conversion, the apostle had held no consultation as to his course or the themes of his preaching with the other apostles; and in proof he still continues his narrative. He had been in Jerusalem once, and had seen Peter and James, but he had stayed only for a brief period. The apostles whom he met did not question his standing, neither did they sanction his commission nor add to his authority. He now in his historical argument refers to another visit to Jerusalem, when he saw the chief of the apostles; but met them as an equal, on the same platform of official status, and took counsel with them as one of the same rank and prerogative.
p. 101

Harrison says:

The chief enemy of the Gospel is human nature. Man is proud. Especially is he proud of his own thinking. He does not want to be told! He dislikes having a supernatural revelation handed to him; it leaves no room for speculation. He likes to “discover truth”; then it’s *his*, something he can be proud of.

Many of us who willingly acknowledge that man’s *moral* nature is perverted by sin—the evidence is incontrovertible—still refuse to realize that man’s *mental* processes are likewise warped, biased and undependable because of sin. The Corinthians prided themselves on their thinking. Read I Corinthians 1-2 for God’s estimate of human thinking that set aside divine wisdom, climaxing in a statement of man’s utter incapacity for spiritual things:

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor. 2:14).

p. 33

Hendriksen says:

*E. The Validity of the gospel as proclaimed by Paul
acknowledged by Jerusalem’s “pillars”;
the work divided; the poor to be remembered*

In Chapter 1 the apostle has shown that he had received his gospel directly from Christ, not *from* men nor *through* this or that man. He now proceeds to show that, because of this very fact, *this gospel which he proclaims is independent of men’s evaluation*. A God-given gospel does not need human validation. It can “stand on its own feet.” And for this very reason, as soon as Jerusalem’s “pillars” see that Paul and Barnabas had been thus divinely entrusted with the gospel, they extend to them the right hand of fellowship and agree to divide the work. James, Cephas, and John recognize *God’s* hand when they see it!

p. 69

Hendriksen says:

If Paul's conversion occurred in A.D. 34, then the first trip to Jerusalem "after three years" took place *circa* A.D. 37. Nevertheless, as already indicated, it is impossible to be precise, since these "three years" may not have amounted to a full three years as we now count them. Thus, the real date may have been A.D. 36. Similarly, all we can safely affirm about the expression "after an interval of fourteen years" is that it probably means that the trip to Jerusalem described here in Gal. 2 took place *about* the year A.D. 50.

Between the trip to Jerusalem indicated in Gal. 1:18 and the one here in 2:1 Paul had been in Tarsus, had labored with Barnabas in Antioch (Syria), about the time of the death of Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 44) had accompanied Barnabas on a relief mission to Jerusalem, had gone back to Antioch, and, together with Barnabas, had made his first missionary journey. It is from Antioch, to which they have again returned, that Paul and Barnabas now—after these fourteen years—make their trip to Jerusalem. They are sent to Jerusalem in order to assure *Gentile freedom over against the insistent demand of the Judaizers that the Gentiles be circumcised* (Acts 15:1, 2; Gal. 5:1). On this issue the minds of Paul and Barnabas are made up, but they are going to prove to the entire assembly, if such proof be required, that their own view and the course which they have been following is the only right one.

p. 70

Henry says:

From the very first preaching of Christianity there was a difference of apprehension between those Christians who had first been Jews and those who had first been Gentiles. Peter was the apostle of the circumcision. But Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles. He informs us of another journey which he took to Jerusalem, v. 1-10.

p. 1839

Lenski says:

So much for *the source*.

Now he presents *the contents* of his gospel regarding the very point assailed by the Judaizers, Christian liberty and circumcision in particular. Paul advances to the time of the great apostolic convention at Jerusalem when he came into fullest contact with the other apostles, yea, with all the leaders and with the church officially assembled. This was the decisive occasion when the first Judaizers were publicly and officially discredited and their Judaistic claims rejected. *They* were disowned, *Paul* was most fully acknowledged.

p. 66

Luther says:

PAUL taught justification by faith in Christ Jesus, without the deeds of the Law. He reported this to the disciples at Antioch. Among the disciples were some that had been brought up in the ancient customs of the Jews. These rose against Paul in quick indignation, accusing him of propagating a gospel of lawlessness.

Great dissension followed. Paul and Barnabas stood up for the truth. They testified; "Wherever we preached to the Gentiles, the Holy Ghost came upon those who received the Word. This happened everywhere. We preached not circumcision, we did not require observance of the Law. We preached faith in Jesus Christ. At our preaching of faith, God gave to the hearers the Holy Ghost." From this fact Paul and Barnabas inferred that the Holy Ghost approved the faith of the Gentiles without Law and circumcision. If the faith of the Gentiles had not pleased the Holy Ghost, He would not have manifested his presence in the uncircumcised hearers of the Word.

p. 44

MacArthur says:

2:1-10 By recounting the details of his most significant trip to Jerusalem after his conversion, Paul offered convincing proof that the message he proclaimed was identical to that of the other twelve apostles.

p. 1660

MacArthur titles this section:

**Apostolic
Commendation**

(2:1-10)

p. 33

MacArthur says:

As Jesus made clear in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt. 13:24-30), wherever and whenever the good seed of God's truth is sown Satan will be there to sow his seed of falsehood. It was therefore inevitable that, as Paul faithfully and powerfully planted the truth of the gospel, Satan's false teacher would be on the apostle's heels planting lies.

Paul warned the Ephesian elders to "be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). He warned Timothy, "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron" (1 Tim. 4:1-2).

Throughout his long and widespread ministry Paul fought against the emissaries of Satan who always seek to discredit both the truth and its representatives. In Galatians 2:1-10 he continues defending himself against their accusation that he was a self-appointed apostle proclaiming a self-devised message that was different from that of Peter and the other apostles at Jerusalem. He devastatingly argues that, although he received his message independently of the other apostles, he preached a message identical to theirs, a fact they wholeheartedly acknowledged. His gospel was independent in terms of revelation but identical in terms of content.

p. 34

McGee says:

Now we come to the second division of this personal section in Galatians. We have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ communicated the gospel directly to Paul. Was it the same gospel that the other apostles had received from the lips of the Lord? We will see the oneness of the gospel and Paul's experience with the apostles in Jerusalem. We will see the communication of the gospel and see that the church in Jerusalem approved Paul's gospel.
p. 157

Ridderbos says:

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PAUL'S MISSIONARY COMMISSION BY THE APOSTOLIC CONFERENCE

p. 75

Vos says:

HIS APOSTLESHIP CONFIRMED BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH (2:1-10)

In previous verses Paul has been careful to underscore the divine origin of his message and his independence from the apostolic company, the churches of Judea, and Christian brethren elsewhere. Paul might successfully establish himself as a loner. Could he also win the full approval of the apostles and the mother church? Could he prove that his ministry and message flowed in the mainstream of Christianity? This fact he now sets about to demonstrate.

p. 38

Wiersbe says:

GALATIANS 2

The runner (1-5). Paul saw himself as a man running a race, and he was sure he was on the right track and headed for the right goal. The Judaizers were trying to move the church into bondage and get them on a detour (5:7; Acts 15).

The steward (6-10). God has committed the gospel to His people, and we must guard it and share it with others. God is not looking for popular celebrities; He is looking for faithful stewards (1 Cor. 4:1-2).

p. 767

Wiersbe says:

THE FREEDOM FIGHTER—PART 1 (Galatians 2:1-10)

This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.” So wrote veteran news analyst Elmer Davis in his book *But We Were Born Free*, and his convictions would certainly be echoed by the apostle Paul. To Paul, his spiritual liberty in Christ was worth far more than popularity or even security. He was willing to fight for that liberty.

p. 43

Wuest says:

When Paul did go back to Jerusalem after some years, he was most careful to maintain his independence of the apostles there. His fellowship with them was on terms of equality. He was not indebted to them for anything (2:1-10).

p. 56

Let's dig into the text now and see what we can learn from what the Lord has written.

v. 1 Then after the space of fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas having taken along also Titus.

The NET Bible titles this section:

Confirmation from the Jerusalem Apostles

The NET Bible translates verse 1:

Then after fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem again with Barnabas, taking Titus along too.

Peterson titles this section:

What Is Central?

Peterson paraphrases verse 1:

Fourteen years after that first visit, Barnabas and I went up to Jerusalem and took Titus with us.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says of this verse:

Much debate has centered on the question of the identification of this trip which Paul took to **Jerusalem** with **Barnabas**, a Jewish believer, and **Titus**, a Gentile believer. The Book of Acts mentions five Jerusalem visits made by Paul after his conversion: (1) the visit after he left Damascus (Acts 9:26-30; Gal. 1:18-20); (2) the famine visit (Acts 11:27-30); (3) the visit to attend the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-30); (4) the visit at the end of the second missionary journey (Acts 18:22); (5) the final visit which resulted in Paul's Caesarean imprisonment (Acts 21:15-23:35). Scholars are divided primarily over whether Galatians 2:1 refers to the famine visit or to the Jerusalem Council visit. But in the context in which he is listing all contacts with human authorities, why would Paul omit reference to his second trip to Jerusalem? And if the reference is to the Council of Acts 15, why did not the apostle allude to its decrees? It seems this passage has the famine visit in view.

Verse 1 tells us several things.

There are **THREE PEOPLE** involved in this trip to Jerusalem:

1. **PAUL,**
2. **BARNABAS,** and
3. **TITUS.**

I personally believe that all of the interaction that's involved in the following verses, I would prefer to take this as the **JERUSALEM COUNCIL VISIT.**

The little word **"THEN"** takes us **BACK** to chapter 1:

Galatians 1:18 (DAV)

Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas and I remained with him fifteen days.

Galatians 1:21 (DAV)

Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

This word **“THEN”** helps us trace the progression of thought.

So as to get the **CHRONOLOGY** in our minds, we would note **SIX SPECIFICS:**

1. The **DAMASCUS ROAD** experience.
2. He then went away into **ARABIA**—some 50 to 75 miles east of Damascus.
3. He came back to **DAMASCUS** for the rest of the three-year period involved in this whole operation and ministry in the north.
4. He then went to **JERUSALEM** for a two-week retreat. This was 130 miles southwest of Damascus; and there he met with Peter and James, the brother of our Lord.
5. He then went north and homeward bound to **SYRIA** and **CILICIA**. Because of opposition in Jerusalem he went 60 miles northwest to Caesarea and there he took a boat for the 300 mile trip north to his home territory, Tarsus of Cilicia.
6. After **FOURTEEN YEARS**, he then returned to **JERUSALEM**.

During this **FOURTEEN YEAR PERIOD**, he and Barnabas had a ministry in Antioch. Then the two of them, along with **JOHN MARK**, set out on the **FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY**.

They were not very far into the trip before **JOHN MARK THREW IN THE TOWEL** and went back to Jerusalem.

This trip to Jerusalem can be understood when we read:

Acts 14:26-15:4 (DAV)

and from there they sailed to Antioch, from which place they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled (accomplished). And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they reported all things that God did with them and that He opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they were spending not a little time with the disciples. And some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you are not able to be saved.” And when Paul and Barnabas had not a little dissension and debate with them, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the turning of the Gentiles, and were giving great joy to all the brethren. And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God did with them.

So what we have here in the record of Paul and Barnabas finishing missionary journey number one by returning to Antioch, from whence they departed and made a report. During this reporting there were a number who entered into conflict with Paul and Barnabas over what is required for salvation. Circumcision was a major issue.

As a result of this conflict, the church felt it necessary to send Paul and Barnabas, along with others, down south to Jerusalem to get these things settled.

There are **THREE MEN** involved here in verse 1—that we know about anyway—that are going on this trip to Jerusalem:

1. **PAUL,**
2. **BARNABAS,** and
3. **TITUS.**

TITUS, we see him here at the **COUNCIL** but also in **CORINTH** and charged with the ministry on the **ISLE OF CRETE**.

Paul and Barnabas are going to Jerusalem to represent the grace of God and a Gentile Gospel. They take Titus along as a **TEST CASE**.

John 7:17 (NASB)

If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The “fourteen years” are most likely to be reckoned from the end of the three years mentioned in 1:18. Paul’s main point is not how long after his conversion he made this visit to Jerusalem, but how long after last seeing the apostles he went up to see them again.

p. 713

Bartlett says:

Barnabas is mentioned to show that Paul was accompanied by one whose orthodoxy no Hebrew Christian doubted. And there can be no question that Titus was taken along to be made a test case for this whole issue of the circumcision of Gentile converts.

p. 33

Bickel & Jantz say:

Jesus once told His followers, “Be as shrewd as snakes and as harmless as doves” (Matthew 10:16). Wherever he went, Paul embodied this advice. Once he received his assignment from God, his actions were always a balance between wisdom (“shrewd as snakes”) and discretion (“harmless as doves”). Take this trip to Jerusalem. He responds to God’s call upon his heart and goes to Jerusalem, but not before arranging for Barnabas, his co-laborer and chief encourager, to help him transport the gifts of the believers in Antioch (Acts 11:30).

Before he begins his trip, however, Paul exhibits some “shrewd as snakes” wisdom. He decides to pick up Titus, a Gentile believer who also lives in Antioch. As we will find out, Paul doesn’t ask Titus to join the team because he needs someone to carry his luggage. Paul is bringing Titus along as a kind of “test case” for the Jerusalem leaders. No doubt the Judaizers, who also used Jerusalem as their home base, have been pressuring the apostles to make circumcision a requirement for salvation. As a Gentile, of course, Titus was uncircumcised. So Paul, the shrewd rascal that he is, wants to find out how his fellow apostles in Jerusalem will respond.
pp. 46-47

Gaebelein says:

Fourteen years passed by before he ever saw Jerusalem again. What wonderful years of service these years were! The great servant of Christ had preached the divine message in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The day of Christ will reveal the blessed results of these years. Acts XV must be read to see why Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem.
pp. 208-9

Henry says:

It was some evidence that he had no dependence upon the other apostles, that had been so long absent from them, and was all the while employed in preaching pure Christianity, without being called into question by them for it.
p. 1839

Ironside says:

When Paul came in contact with them he waited until he had a definite revelation commanding him to go to Jerusalem. He says, "I went up by revelation." He did not go alone; he took Barnabas with him.

Barnabas had come from Jerusalem to find him in Tarsus, to persuade him to go to Antioch and assist in the ministry there. In the beginning it was Barnabas who was the leader, and Paul was the follower. But as time went on Barnabas took the lower place and Paul came to the front. With Barnabas it was a case of, "He must increase, but I must decrease." We read elsewhere of him, "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (Acts 11:24). Such a man can stand to see some one else honored and himself set to one side. So Barnabas stepped into the background and Paul came to the front. And then Paul says, "And took Titus with me also." Why did he mention that? Because this was a test case.

p. 59

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

. . . "After fourteen years"; viz., from Paul's conversion inclusive [ALFORD]. In the fourteenth year from his conversion [BIRKS]. The same visit to Jerusalem as in Acts 15 (A.D. 50), when the council of the apostles and Church decided that Gentile Christians need not be circumcised.

p. 1261

Lightfoot says:

'An interval of fourteen years elapsed. During the whole of this time I had no intercourse with the Apostles of the Circumcision. Then I paid another visit to Jerusalem. My companion was Barnabas, who has laboured so zealously among the Gentiles, whose name is so closely identified with the cause of the Gentiles. With him I took Titus also, himself a Gentile. And here again I acted not in obedience to any human adviser. A direct revelation from God prompted me to this journey.'

p. 102

Luther says:

Paul chose two witnesses, Barnabas and Titus. Barnabas had been Paul's preaching companion to the Gentiles. Barnabas was an eye-witness of the fact that the Holy Ghost had come upon the Gentiles in response to the simple preaching of faith in Jesus Christ. Barnabas stuck to Paul on this point, that it was not necessary for the Gentiles to be bothered with the Law as long as they believed in Christ.

Titus was superintendent of the churches in Crete, having been placed in charge of the churches by Paul. Titus was a former Gentile.
p. 45

MacArthur says:

This was the period from the time of his first visit to Jerusalem (1:18) to the one Paul refers to here, which probably was for the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-22) called to resolve the issue of Gentile salvation.
p. 1660

MacArthur says:

Then after an interval of fourteen years from the first visit when he met Peter and James, he **went up again to Jerusalem**. During the previous seventeen years he had preached the gospel without any human instruction, his message having been given to him entirely by God's direct revelation (Gal. 1:11-12, 16-17).

Paul and Barnabas had completed their first missionary tour (Acts 13:1-14:28) and returns to Antioch to report the miracles of Gentile conversion by grace through faith. Jewish legalists in Judea were upset when they heard the report and went to Antioch to teach that a Gentile had to become a Jew before becoming a Christian.

It seems probable, as many scholars believe, that this trip of Paul's **again to Jerusalem** was for the council (Acts 15) called to resolve the issue

...

p. 35

MacArthur says:

In addition to the leader Paul and his intimate Jewish friend and companion **Barnabas**, . . . **Titus**, a special child of Paul and his co-worker (Titus 1:4-5), went **along also**, being among the “certain others” mentioned by Luke. Titus, as an uncircumcised Gentile and a product of the very ministry the Judaizers were attacking, was a fitting attendee to take along to the council. Consistent with their deceitful, self-serving methods of operation, the Judaizers likely claimed they sent the delegation from Antioch to Jerusalem to have Paul’s and Barnabas’s doctrine corrected. But both Luke and Paul make clear that such was not the case. Luke states that they were “sent on their way by the church” at Antioch (v. 3). Though there may have been some reluctance on the part of Paul in accepting the assignment to go to Jerusalem, a direct **revelation** by God affirmed his obligation. Paul says more specifically that **it was because of a revelation that I went up**. It is possible that the Holy Spirit spoke to the leaders of the Antioch church, along with Paul, just as He had done when Paul and Barnabas were commissioned for their first missionary venture (Acts 13:2). In any case, the matter was resolved when Paul, divinely commanded to go to Jerusalem, was obedient, and the Antioch church affirmed that command by giving their blessing.

p. 35

Pinnock says:

Taking Titus, a Gentile convert, along with him as a bold stroke. Paul wanted to be sure not only his message was accepted, but the fruits of it as well. Would they accept Titus as a Christian brother without reservation? This was the issue at the practical level. Paul’s move immediately smoked out the opposition.

p. 28

(Friendships That Run Deep: 7 Ways to Build Lasting Relationships by Keith R. Anderson) Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. Copyright - Keith R. Anderson, 1997.

If you love a person long enough, he or she will disappoint you, hurt you or even leave you. I wish it could be different but our humanness doesn't seem to let us get away with perfection. I read recently that the only place perfection exists is on our résumés! Simple day-to-day life creates stress, disappointment, frustration, hurt, conflict and anger between even the best of friends.

p. 99

v. 2 And I went up in accordance with a revelation and I laid before them the gospel which I am preaching among the Gentiles. But privately to those of recognized eminence lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.

The NET Bible translates verse 2:

I went there because of a revelation and presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did so only in a private meeting with the influential people, to make sure that I was not running—or had not run—in vain.

Peterson paraphrases verse 2:

I went to clarify with them what had been revealed to me. At that time I placed before them exactly what I was preaching to the non-Jews. I did this in private with the leaders, those held in esteem by the church, so that our concern would not become a controversial public issue, marred by ethnic tensions, exposing my years of work to denigration and endangering my present ministry.

I have chosen this verse as my **KEY VERSE** for this third study because the Apostle Paul was sensitive to divine direction. He went to the city of Jerusalem in accordance with the revelation and experienced God's blessing because of his obedience.

His purely human response would be to stay away from the city because of its intense opposition to the Gospel. I am sure that it is pretty clear in his mind what happened the last time he was in the city.

Acts 9:29-30 (DAV)

And he was talking and arguing with the Jews who had adopted Greek culture, but they were attempting to put him to death. But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------|---------------------|----------------|
| MAN – all he was | 1:1 | CHARACTER | WALK |
| MESSAGE – all he said | 1:11 | CONVERSATION | WORDS |
| MINISTRY – all he did | 2:2 | CONDUCT | WITNESS |

Thinking of Paul the man, all that he was came through Jesus Christ (1:1).

All that he said, came through Jesus Christ (1:11).

His ministry, all that he did, came through Jesus Christ (2:2).

We're talking about the:

MAN,

MESSAGE, and

MINISTRY

We're talking about his:

CHARACTER,

CONVERSATION, and

CONDUCT.

We're talking about his:

WALK,

WORDS, and

WITNESS.

All came through Jesus Christ.

How careful we need to be to discern divine direction lest we be found running in vain or running in directions outside of His will.

It is possible to be doing a lot of meaningless things in our lives outside His will.

It was WATCHMAN NEE who said:

As we grow in Christ, obedience increases, activity decreases.
(source unknown)

The Apostle Paul, upon arrival in Jerusalem, spent some time alone with the **THREE KEY FIGURES:**

PETER,

JAMES, and

JOHN.

In a session he shared with them the ministry to which God had called him in order to have their blessing before his ministry was made more public. He did it in light of the fact that he wanted to be certain that he was running well in the will of God.

He was a man who did not want to waste any time going somewhere or doing something that was outside of God's will for his life.

1 Corinthians 9:27 (DAV)

But I am treating my body roughly and making it serve me, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

Isaiah 48:17 (NIV)

This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
 “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who
 directs you in the way you should go.

The apostle tells us that he:

“WENT UP IN ACCORDANCE WITH A REVELATION.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul went to Jerusalem on his second visit **in response to a revelation**. That is, he went because God directed him to, not because the Jerusalem leaders had summoned him or called him “on the carpet” for preaching to **the Gentiles**. The reference may well be to Agabus’ prophecy of a famine which prompted Paul and Barnabas to go to Jerusalem on a relief mission (cf. Acts 11:27-30). Paul seized this opportunity to consult with the other apostles **privately** concerning the message he was preaching to the Gentiles. This does not mean Paul sought their approval of its truth and accuracy, for he had received the gospel from God by revelation. Rather, he wanted them to consider its relationship to the gospel they were proclaiming. But if the Jerusalem leaders insisted on circumcision and other requirements of the Law for Gentile converts, Paul’s labor (**running**) among the Gentiles was **in vain**. It was not that the apostle had any doubts or misgivings about the gospel he had preached for 14 years . . . but that he feared that his past and present ministry might be hindered or rendered of no effect by the Judaizers.

Paul was a **MAN DIRECTED BY GOD** and so he makes statement of that here in verse 2:

“AND I WENT UP IN ACCORDANCE WITH A REVELATION AND
 I LAID BEFORE THEM THE GOSPEL WHICH I AM PREACHING
 AMONG THE GENTILES.

This “GOSPEL” is the gospel of the grace of God that is described in:

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.

This “GOSPEL” had **NO LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**, as a man is unable to gain any merit before God.

Romans 4:4-5 (DAV)

Now to the one who is working, his wage is not reckoned as a favor but as what is due. But to the one who is not working, but is believing in Him who is declaring righteous the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.

James M. Gray has expressed it quite ably:

Only a Sinner

(saved by grace)

Words by James M. Gray

Music by Daniel B. Towner

Naught have I gotten but what I received;
Grace hath bestowed it since I have believed;
Boasting excluded, pride I abase;
I'm only a sinner, saved by grace! . . .

Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows,
Loving his Savior to tell what he knows;
Once more to tell it would I embrace
I'm only a sinner saved by grace!

<http://my.homewithgod.com/heavenlymidis2/sinner.html>

The apostle goes on to say:

“BUT PRIVATELY TO THOSE OF RECOGNIZED EMINENCE LEST BY ANY MEANS I SHOULD BE RUNNING OR HAD RUN IN VAIN.”

The Apostle Paul felt that it was necessary to have this private meeting with Peter, James, and John about:

“THE GOSPEL WHICH [HE WAS] PREACHING.”

He is already aware of the **DIVINE AFFIRMATION** upon this message he preaches and now he wants the **HUMAN STAMP OF APPROVAL** as well.

He concludes the verse by telling us why he is doing this:

“LEST BY ANY MEANS I SHOULD BE RUNNING OR HAD RUN IN VAIN.”

As we noted in our first study, Paul often **LIKENS LIFE TO A RACE**. It was one of his favorite illustrations.

Romans 9:16 (DAV)

So then it is not depending on the one who is desiring or the one who is running, but on God who is having mercy.

1 Corinthians 9:24, 26 (DAV)

Are you not knowing that those who are running in a race are indeed all running, but one is receiving the prize? Be running in such a manner in order that you may win. . . . As for myself, therefore, I am running that way, not aimlessly, as one who has no fixed goal; I am boxing that way, not as one who is punching the air.

Philippians 2:16 (DAV)

holding fast (forth) the word of life, to the end that I may have a ground for glorying in the day of Christ, because I ran not in vain nor labored in vain.

Philippians 3:13-14 (DAV)

Brethren, I am not considering myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing: I am forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forward to what is laying ahead. I am pressing onward toward the goal for the prize of the call from above of God in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 12:1 (DAV)

Therefore, since we are having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us be running with perseverance the race lying before us,

2 Timothy 4:7 (DAV)

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

Paul is an intensely **GOAL-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL**. His goals led him to constantly be examining his daily life and those goals in light of the will of God.

(Swim with the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive by Harvey Mackay. New York: Ivy Books. Copyright – Harvey B. Mackay, 1988.

The Japanese have a very simple way of describing the typical American marketing plan: READY? FIRE! AIM!
p. 17

(The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic
by Stephen R. Covey. New York: Simon and Schuster. Copyright –
Stephen R. Covey, 1989.

In your mind's eye, see yourself going to the funeral of a loved one. Picture yourself driving to the funeral parlor or chapel, parking the car, and getting out. As you walk inside the building, you notice the flowers, the soft organ music. You see the faces of friends and family you pass along the way. You feel the shared sorrow of losing, the joy of having known, that radiates from the hearts of the people there.

As you walk down to the front of the room and look inside the casket, you suddenly come face to face with yourself. This is your funeral, three years from today. All these people have come to honor you, to express feelings of love and appreciation for your life.

As you take a seat and wait for the services to begin, you look at the program in your hand. There are to be four speakers. The first is from your family, immediate and also extended—children, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents who have come from all over the country to attend. The second speaker is one of your friends, someone who can give a sense of what you were as a person. The third speaker is from your work or profession. And the fourth is from your church or some community organization where you've been involved in service.

Now think deeply. What would you like each of these speakers to say about you and your life? What kind of husband, wife, father, or mother would you like their words to reflect? What kind of son or daughter or cousin? What kind of friend? What kind of working associate?

What character would you like them to have seen in you? What contributions, what achievements would you want them to remember? Look carefully at the people around you. What difference would you like to have made in their lives?

pp. 96-97

By keeping that end clearly in mind, you can make certain that whatever you do on any particular day does not violate the criteria you have defined as supremely important, and that each day of your life contributes in a meaningful way to the vision you have of your life as a whole.

To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you're going so that you better understand where you are now and so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.

p. 98

(Terry Fox: His Story by Leslie Scrivener) Toronto, Canada: Canadian Publishers. Copyright – Unknown, 1981.

Terry was refreshing, too, because he represented old-fashioned values at a time when most of us had had enough of modern narcissism and indulgence. Duty, dedication, and honour—qualities more fitting to Victorian than contemporary social values—were his trademark. Perhaps that's why Terry was such a welcomed phenomenon in the summer of 1980. His heroism was within our reach, and any of us—old or young, rich or poor, successful or struggling—could aspire to the attitude of excellence he displayed.

Through it all—from the isolation in the bleak hills of Newfoundland to the uproar in southern Ontario—Terry remained guileless. Yet he had heart enough to weep, without shame, when a little girl, a cancer victim like himself, honoured him with a spring flower.

p. 173

Divine direction gives us the path on which we should run. It is Paul's desire that he might run well and that he might please Him who has qualified him for the race.

Isaiah 55:12 (NIV)

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Anders says:

Jerusalem did not force Paul to come to them for their official stamp of approval. God sent Paul to Jerusalem to bring unity in the mission of the church. If the leaders in Jerusalem sided with the legalistic, false teachers who required Gentile Christians to be circumcised and keep the whole law, then Paul said he would have **run my race in vain**. It would be futile for him to preach a grace message if the Jerusalem leaders preached a legalistic one. He talked to those **who seemed to be leaders**. Paul's reference to these leaders becomes more clear in verses 6 and 9.

p. 20

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Undoubtedly, Paul mentions the matter of revelation only to emphasize once again that at no time was he at the call of the other apostles. On the contrary, his movements as well as his Gospel are to be attributed directly to the revealed will of God.

p. 714

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Paul spoke privately to those who were the apparent leaders of the Jerusalem church, wishing to avoid public remarks or a decision that would seriously affect the work he was doing among the Gentiles. If the doctrine of grace were not boldly and clearly upheld, terrible consequences for the church's missionary outreach would ensue. What happened at the council, then? Obviously, Paul's point was upheld, for the present tense of the verb "to preach" shows that the Gospel preached by Paul in his early years was still being preached by him at the time of his writing.

p. 714

Bickel & Jantz say:

Here comes Paul with his little missionary band—two Jews and a Gentile—basically confronting the issue of work vs. grace head-on. Can't you just see this bulldog and his friends marching into a meeting with the leaders of the church? Can't you just hear him saying, "Let's put our cards on the tables, boys. It's time to fish or cut bait!" That's the "shrewd as snakes" Paul.

p. 47

Calvin says:

He now proceeds to prove his apostleship and his doctrine, not only by works, but also by a Divine revelation. Since God directed that journey, which had for its object the confirmation of his doctrine, the doctrine was confirmed, not by the concurrence of men only, but likewise by the authority of God.

p. 48

De Haan says:

When Paul arrived in Jerusalem he first called for a meeting with the leaders of the church, to reach an understanding, and to be able to present a united front before his critics. To these leaders Paul told of his experience. As a test he took Titus with him, a Gentile, to see whether they would insist on his being circumcised according to the law. The purpose was, of course, to silence the false teachers who had come to the meeting to destroy Paul's message.

p. 58

Eadie says:

The nature of that divine revelation we know not. The apostle was no stranger to such divine promptings. He had received the gospel by revelation, and in the same way had often enjoyed those divine suggestions and counsels which shaped his missionary tours. Acts xvi. 6, 7, 9. The apostles did not summon him to account, asking why he had assumed the name and professed to do the work which so specially belonged to them.

p. 104

Eadie says:

. . . the present indicating its continuous identity and his enduring work; that conference made no change upon it. The gospel so characterized was, indeed, the great scheme of mercy, but especially in the free form in which he presented it,—unhampered by legal or Mosaic restrictions, unconditioned by any distinctions of race or blood . . .

pp. 105-6

Gutzke says:

According to the Book of Galatians the gospel is based on the plan of God. This is something God has in mind to do.

John 3:16 is the very heart of the gospel: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This is salvation, and the way of salvation is God’s idea. It is not dependent on human beings, nor is it dependent on any preacher, smart or good as he may be. It is God’s idea. pp. 29-30

Gutzke says:

When he wrote “And I went up by revelation” he means to say “by the guidance of God.” Paul did not plan this. The Lord led him to Jerusalem; so to Jerusalem he went. p. 31

Hendriksen says:

Paul continues: **I went up, moreover, as a result of revelation.** Whatever hesitancy there may have been on Paul’s part when he and others were delegated by the Antiochian church to go to Jerusalem for the purpose already indicated, was removed by this divine revelation. p. 77

Hendriksen says:

Continued: **to make sure that I was not running or had not run in vain;** or, somewhat more literally, “lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.” If, while Paul was preaching the gospel of justification by faith, *without the works of the law*, the other apostles, though in principle agreeing with him, would have been “soft” in their attitude toward those who seriously questioned the rightness of his convictions and of his preaching, the cause of mission work among the Gentiles would have been seriously undermined. The effectiveness of that which Paul had been doing in the past and was still doing would have been decisively weakened. p. 78

Henry says:

He went up by revelation. It was a privilege with which this apostle was often favoured to be under a special divine direction. It should teach us to endeavour to see our way made plain before us, and to commit ourselves to the guidance of Providence.
p. 1839

Hogg & Vine say:

Presumably this interview preceded the gathering of the whole church mentioned in Acts 15 . . .
p. 59

Hogg & Vine say:

These words are not to be understood as indicating any misgiving in the Apostle's mind concerning the gospel he preached. They refer to his apprehension of the possibility of non-success in his mission. When "dissension and questioning" arose at Antioch, he had consented to take the judgment of the church at Jerusalem. If then, through any lack of diligence or forethought on his part, a decision adverse to the broader, more liberal gospel were to be given, the work of God among the Gentiles would be set back indefinitely. Hence his precaution that the leaders should be put in possession of all the facts and arguments, so that, if possible, their weighty influence in favour of freedom might be secured before the points in dispute were debated in public.
p. 60

Ironside says:

He gave them an outline of the glad tidings that he preached among the Gentiles, but he did this privately "to them that were of reputation." When we go back to Acts 15 we find that Paul called together the apostles who happened to be in Jerusalem, James, Cephas, and John, together with the elders of the Church there, and to them he told the story of his ministry, his activities. He outlined for them the contents of the gospel message which he carried to the Gentiles.
p. 60

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

by revelation—not from being absolutely dependent on the apostles at Jerusalem, but by independent divine “revelation.” Quite consistent with his at the same time, being a deputy from the Church of Antioch, as Acts 15:2 states. He by this *revelation* was led to suggest the sending of the deputation.
p. 1261

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

Paul does not *himself* fear lest he be running, or had run, in vain; but lest he should, if he gave them no explanation, *seem so to them*. His race was the swift-running proclamation of the Gospel to the Gentiles . . .
p. 1261

Lange says:

Paul does not therefore defiantly say, “I know that I preach the right Gospel, let others think of it what they will,” but he is concerned for a mutual understanding, of the convincing of others, in the interest of peace and of the cause which they serve in common.
p. 41

Lenski says:

The church in Antioch elected Paul as one of the commission that was to go to Jerusalem for the conference regarding the issue the Judaizers had raised. In Acts 15 Luke reports only that Paul went along. From Paul we now learn more, namely that the Lord bade him go in a revelation. It seems that, although he was duly elected to go, he had some reluctance about acceptance. The Lord himself removed his scruples, and he went.
p. 69

Lenski says:

Paul was very glad to tell everything, and, no doubt, James, Peter, and John were equally glad to hear all they could from Paul and from Barnabas. It was a rare opportunity of which all concerned made the most. Whether any others of the elders of Jerusalem were present at this private meeting we cannot determine; it is possible.

p. 71

Lenski says:

Paul rubs the word in by his repetitions. The irony of that procedure is directed against the Judaizers. *They* were the ones who thought that repute was the main thing and that it settled everything against Paul. If *they* denied standing and repute to Paul, then Paul counted for nothing, and, of course, the Galatians would accept what *they*, these Judaizers, were pleased to say.

p. 72

Lightfoot says:

‘Arrived at Jerusalem, I set forth the principles of the Gospel, as I had preached it and still preach it to the Gentiles—the doctrine of grace, the freedom from the ceremonial law. This explanation I gave in a private conference with the leading Apostles of the Circumcision. In all this I had one object in view; that the Gospel might have free course among the Gentiles, that my past and present labours might not be thwarted by opposition or misunderstanding.’

p. 102

Lovett says:

1. Then, after an interval of fourteen years, I went up to Jerusalem once again. Barnabas was with me and we took Titus along also. 2. This trip was made in obedience to a revelation. The Spirit led me to go first to the reputed pillars of the church for a private session. I laid before them very frankly the exact message I preach to the Gentiles. I couldn’t afford to have this mission frustrated and allow my trip to be in vain.

p. 22

Luther says:

Not that Paul himself ever thought he had run in vain. However, many did think that Paul had preached the Gospel in vain, because he kept the Gentiles free from the yoke of the Law. The opinion that obedience to the Law was mandatory unto salvation was gaining ground. Paul meant to remedy this evil. By this conference he hoped to establish the identity of his Gospel with that of the other apostles, to stop the talk of his opponents that he had been running around in vain.
pp. 46-47

MacArthur says:

This revelation from God was the voice of the Holy Spirit (*see notes on Acts 13:2-4*). He refers to the divine commissioning of his visit in order to refute any suggestion by the Judaizers that they had sent Paul to Jerusalem to have the apostles correct his doctrine.
p. 1661

MacArthur says:

Paul hoped the Jerusalem leaders would support his ministry to the Gentiles and not soften their opposition to legalism. He did not want to see his ministry efforts wasted because of conflict with the other apostles.
p. 1661

MacArthur says:

Paul's referring to the apostles with whom he spoke in private as **those who were of reputation** reflected the general attitude of the church toward those Christ-appointed leaders. The phrase describing them is used of authorities and implies a position of honor. But the fact that he refers to them in this way four times in eight verses (Gal. 2:2-9) suggests a tinge of sarcasm. It is not, however, directed at the apostles but at the Judaizers who had been claiming apostolic approval of their legalistic perversions of the gospel. In the letter sent out by the council the deceitful Judaizers are described as "some of our number to whom we gave no instruction" who had been disturbing the churches and "unsettling [their] souls" (Acts 15:24).
pp. 36-37

MacArthur says:

It was **for fear** that they might compromise with the teaching of the Judaizers and their perverse gospel that Paul sought in private to be certain that the teachers in Jerusalem agreed with his revelation of the gospel and would not be soft on legalism. Otherwise he **might** discover he was like an athlete who was **running, or had run, in vain** by seeing that all the spiritual effort in his ministry past and present was in conflict with them and was futile.

p. 37

McGee says:

Paul recognized that if he were preaching a different gospel from what the other apostles were preaching, there was something radically wrong. Paul was willing to admit, "If I were preaching a different gospel, I would be wrong. I have run in vain. I have certainly been disillusioned and misinformed." So he goes to Jerusalem and communicates that gospel to the apostles there.

pp. 157-8

Patrick & Lowth say:

But the apostle doth not say he went up . . . "by revelation," but . . . "according to revelation:" now he had said before he received not his doctrine or gospel by men, or of men, "but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;" and here he may be supposed to add, that in his journey he acted suitably to the revelation which constituted him the apostle of the gentiles; telling the church of Jerusalem what things he had done among the gentiles in pursuance of it, not inquiring what they did, but declaring what God did by him, not permitting Titus, a Greek, to be circumcised, "not giving place for an hour" to the "false brethren," &c.

p. 726

Pinnock says:

Paul speaks of Peter, James, and John in a strange way: they are “those of repute” and “reputed to be pillars.” What can be the explanation for this? We know he regarded them as bona fide apostles along with himself (1:17). But he had to choose his words carefully in the light of the Galatian situation. The false teachers had no doubt exaggerated the authority of the Jerusalem apostles in order to downplay Paul’s. Indeed they did it to build up their own status as supposed emissaries of Jerusalem. Therefore, Paul adopts language that shows he respects the office of the apostles, but is not overawed by their persons. The extravagant claims made for them by the Judaizers were quite out of place.
p. 29

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

In vain does not reflect on the effectiveness of Paul’s **gospel**, but rather on his efforts to maintain a unity in the church without sacrificing “the truth of the gospel” (v. 5).
p. 1519

Ridderbos says:

Paul’s declaration that he went to Jerusalem on the basis of, and in agreement with, a revelation, tells us that he took this important step neither arbitrarily nor by way of experiment, but in the strength of divine commissioning and empowerment. Nor is it in conflict with this view that he also went on assignment from the church at Antioch (Acts 15:1). It is even possible that the revelation did not come to him personally (cf. Acts 13:2, 4). But the conclusion lies ready at hand that he received this revelation when he was in a state of doubt concerning which direction the way of the Lord pointed, and that he received certainty about the desirability of the journey to Jerusalem.
p. 80

Ridderbos says:

The purpose of these private discussions was to circumvent the possibility that, by yielding to the wishes of the Judaizers, Paul's work, at least that of the past, should practically be made useless. This does not mean to say that Paul would have stood ready *a priori* to abide by the decision of the leaders at Jerusalem—for that would have been to declare his apostleship and his missionary commission dependent upon their views. However, if at Jerusalem it was proposed to do as the Judaizers wishes, those who proposed it had better know that this would be tantamount to obliterating the work which Paul had done with so much exertion. If the Gentiles also had to subject themselves to the law of Moses, Paul might as well begin all over again from the very start.

pp. 81-82

Simpson says:

MOST of us have been taught that while our salvation and justification are given us through the free grace of God and received by simple faith alone, yet our sanctification must be worked out by ourselves, and the struggle between evil and good in our own hearts and lives must be a long and painful one. This was the error into which the Galatians had been led by false teachers. Having begun in the Spirit, they were seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. Having taught them, as we have already seen, the doctrine of free grace in their salvation, the apostle now proceeds to show them that their sanctification is just as much a gift as their justification, and that the deeper work of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling Christ in their hearts is also a work of grace as free and as complete as the first chapter in their religious experience.

p. 19

Vos says:

And Paul's contention was that law-keeping was not only not necessary but was now at an end and could add nothing to the perfect work of Christ.

p. 39

Vos says:

Paul and Barnabas and their companions followed two courses of action. They spoke to the mother church in a general way in public addresses and to the leaders privately and in greater detail concerning the gospel Paul had been preaching among the Gentiles. This *gospel* or good news concerned salvation by grace through faith alone. *Preach* is in the present tense and shows that Paul had not ceased to preach this gospel but was continuing to preach it.
pp. 39-40

Wiersbe says:

“Lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain” (Gal. 2:2) does not mean that Paul was unsure either of his message or his ministry. His conduct on the way to the conference indicates that he had no doubts (Acts 15:3). What he was concerned about was the future of the gospel among the Gentiles, because this was his specific ministry from Christ. If the “pillars” sided with the Judaizers, or tried to compromise, then Paul’s ministry would be in jeopardy. He wanted to get their approval *before* he faced the whole assembly; otherwise a three-way division could result.
p. 46

Wuest says:

And I went up in accordance with a revelation. And I laid before them for their consideration the gospel which I am preaching among the Gentiles, but privately to those of recognized eminence, lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.
p. 202

Wuest says:

The rendering could be, “I went up in accordance or in conformity with a revelation.” That is, the church at Antioch could have commissioned Paul to go to Jerusalem, and in addition to that, the Holy Spirit could have spoken directly to him to the same effect.
p. 58

Wuest says:

Lest by any means I should run or had run in vain. Paul uses his favorite metaphor, borrowed from Greek athletics, the stadium foot race, in speaking of his missionary career. The words *I should run* are present subjunctive, the rendering therefore being, “Lest I should be running,” referring to his apostolic labors in which he was then engaged. The great apostle expresses therefore a fear of present failure together with a fear that his past labors have been of no avail.

p. 59

(Axiom: Powerful Leadership Proverbs by Bill Hybels) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright– Bill Hybels, 2008.

Leadership’s first test is the test of the family, and it’s the test that must be passed before any further tests may be taken.

p. 212

As we read the record of Paul’s conduct when he arrives in Jerusalem in privately meeting with those of recognized eminence, we understand that relationships are vital.

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

What distinguishes consistently happier people from less happy people is the presence of rich, deep, joy-producing, life-changing, meaningful relationships.

Spending meaningful time with people who care about us is indispensable to human flourishing. Social researcher Robert Putnam writes, “The single most common finding from a half-century’s research on life satisfaction, not only from the U.S. but around the world, is that happiness is best predicted by the breadth and depth of one’s social connections.”

pp. 182-3

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

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for lifting me to where you are, for telling me your whole mind, for sharing yourself completely with me, for trusting me with your ministry, and giving me your love. Amen.
 p. 348

(The Essential Wooden: A Lifetime of Lessons on Leaders and Leadership by John Wooden & Steve Jamison) New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
 Copyright– John Wooden & Steve Jamison, 2007.

These five blocks—Industriousness, Enthusiasm, Friendship, Loyalty, and Cooperation—form the foundation of the Pyramid of Success. These are powerful personal attributes essential for both you as leaders and those you lead. It is a foundation upon which a structure of significance and productivity can be built.
 p. 40

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

Thoughts about myself hinder my usefulness to God. God's purpose is not to perfect me to make me a trophy in His showcase; He is getting me to the place where He can use me. Let Him do what He wants.
 (December 2)

An Office Supervisor's Hidden Identity

The first summer that my wife and I were dating, she worked as a temp at a bank. In the first two weeks that she had the job, she quickly noticed some extremely unprofessional behavior among the team of four people that she worked with and their supervisor. The supervisor, who was a generation older, was very friendly with the younger staff, taking long coffee breaks with them. College-aged staff would sit on her desk to chat and gossip.

The supervisor and her team were so friendly that the group's behavior toward one other new member of the team was a stark contrast. This person, a woman in her 30s who had come on staff just a week before my wife, was shunned. If she walked up and tried to join the conversation during a coffee break, the conversation ended. The group, including the supervisor, made jokes about her behind her back and laughed at the way she dressed. They rolled their eyes and winked at each other when she was present. It was obvious that this middle management worker was perceived as an unnecessary intrusion.

Two weeks into the temp job, my wife walked into the office on Monday morning and was surprised to find a much different scenario. No gossiping, no kidding around, no long coffee breaks. All the workers had their eyes riveted on their work. The previous supervisor had been replaced. The cliquish team addressed the new supervisor with formal, businesslike respect. My wife thought she even saw fear in their eyes.

The new supervisor was not a stranger. It was the 30-something woman who had been shunned and mocked. It turned out the bank had hired her to be the new supervisor from the first day she came on the job three weeks before, but the bank had concealed her true identity so she could observe the work style of the team.

In some ways, this situation resembles the coming of Christ to earth. In his first coming, Jesus Christ revealed his true identity and glory to his true followers, but to those who did not believe, his glory was largely hidden by his humanity. Following his resurrection, Christ ascended to the right hand of God, where he rules all things. One day he is coming again to the earth to establish his glorious kingdom over everything. At that time there will be no mistaking who is in charge.

Craig Brian Larson, editor of PreachingToday.com

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v. 3 But not even Titus who was with me, though he was a Greek was compelled to be circumcised.

The NET Bible translates verse 3:

Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Greek.

Peterson paraphrases verse 3:

Significantly, Titus, non-Jewish though he was, was not required to be circumcised.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

It now becomes apparent why Paul brought **Titus** along on this Jerusalem trip. He was a test case. Would the Jerusalem apostles force the rite of circumcision on a Gentile believer? Paul knew that both Jews and Gentiles are accepted by God through faith in Jesus Christ without any distinction and that the church should do the same. The apostle declared that this truth was affirmed in Jerusalem because Titus was **not . . . compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek.**

Paul had told us in verse 2 that he met with the leaders “privately.” The **REASON** for that was:

“lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.”

Now, in **CONTRAST** to that, the **RESPONSE** that he receives from “those of recognized eminence” is given to us in verse 3:

“BUT NOT EVEN TITUS WHO WAS WITH ME, THOUGH HE WAS A GREEK WAS COMPELLED TO BE CIRCUMCISED.”

This helps us to get a better understanding of:

Galatians 1:7 (DAV)

Which is not another gospel except there are certain ones who are troubling your minds and are desiring to change (pervert) the gospel of Christ.

SATAN is in the business of:

TROUBLING OUR MINDS and

TWISTING THE MESSAGE.

The **TEST CASE** before the Jerusalem counsel was **TITUS**. They did not ask that he do anything with regard to having himself circumcised in order to be recognized as a Christian.

Bartlett says:

We need to get the full force of this waiving of circumcision in the case of Titus. Paul was not against circumcision as such. He even permitted Timothy to be circumcised (Acts 16:3) because his mother was a Jewess. But to insist upon Jewish usages for Gentile converts would be to make them essential parts of Christianity. And this Paul would not, and could not, do. The non-circumcision of Titus was really a decision in favor of Gentile freedom from the yoke of Judaism.

p. 37

Eadie says:

So far from my having run in vain; in the very headquarters of Jewish influence or Judaistic leaning, my Greek companion Titus, heathen though he was, had not circumcision forced upon him.

p. 110

Hogg & Vine say:

Paul, moreover, has a purpose in particularising Titus, see vv. 3-5, who, as the word 'take' shows, was rather a subordinate than a colleague.
p. 57

Hogg & Vine say:

Thus v. 3 stands in contrast with v. 2; the former shows how far the Apostles was prepared to go in order to allay any legitimate fear as to his course and to promote a good understanding; the latter shows that his willingness to conciliate did not extend to surrender in any really vital matter.
p. 62

Ironside says:

. . . "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." What a tremendous answer that was to these Judaisers who were perverting these Galatians and turning them away from the simplicity of the grace of God. They said, "A man uncircumcised cannot be recognized as in the family of God." Paul says, "I took Titus with me, and talked the matter over with the elders at Jerusalem, and they did not say one word about making Titus submit to circumcision. He was accepted as a fellow-Christian just as he was." What an answer to those who were criticizing him and misleading his converts!
p. 62

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

. . . So far were they from regarding me as running in vain, that "*not even* Titus who was with me, who was a Greek (and therefore uncircumcised), was compelled to be circumcised."
p. 1261

Lange says:

The sense is clear: . . . points to a thought to be supplied. "I laid frankly before them, how I preach among the Gentiles; not concealing that I do not at all hold them to the keeping of the law, to the receiving of circumcision—and now, according to the representation of the false teachers, it was to be expected that they would appear in opposition to me; but . . . so far was this from being the case, so far from declaring this doctrine false [or, connecting it with the last clause, so far from my having run in vain—R.], not even with respect to Titus, a born Gentile, who had come to Jerusalem, to the very mother of the Jewish Christian churches with me, was the demand made that he should be circumcised, though it might readily have been, when Jewish prejudice was so greatly offended by his uncircumcision."

p. 34

Lenski says:

The Judaizers failed utterly and completely in their contention at Jerusalem. The Galatians have the verdict, the resolution worded by James and formally adopted by the assembly (Acts 15:13, etc.); the failure of the Judaizers was even more complete as we see from the test case of Titus. This was an actual case which occurred right there in the conference. Facts speak even louder than words.

pp. 74-75

Lightfoot says:

3. St. Paul is here distracted between the fear of saying too much and the fear of saying too little. He must maintain his own independence, and yet he must not compromise the position of the Twelve. How can he justify himself without seeming to condemn them? There is need of plain speaking and there is need of reserve. In this conflict of opposing aims and feelings the sense of the passage is well-nigh lost. The meaning of individual expressions is obscure.

p. 104

Lovett says:

PRIVATE. What a rugged apostle! This giant of the faith went to this convention ready to defy the whole structure of Judaism. See how the Spirit gave him the wisdom to secure the approval of his ministry before it came to the floor of the convention. Consider his courage in taking along Titus, an uncircumcised Gentile, as living proof of the Gospel's power! To have this unclean Gentile stand before the mother church was shocking! But if he could have Titus received into fellowship right there on the sacred soil, it would be a damaging blow against the Judaizers. The Galatians no doubt knew Titus and of his Gentile birth, hence the mention of his name in this epistle. What happened to Titus at this council would be of key importance to Paul's readers.
pp. 22-23

Luther says:

Paul's victory was complete. Titus, who was with Paul, was not compelled to be circumcised, although he stood in the midst of the apostles when this question of circumcision was debated. This was a blow to the false apostles. With the living fact that Titus was not compelled to be circumcised Paul was able to squelch his adversaries.
p. 48

MacArthur says:

Paul was perfectly confident in the outcome of the Jerusalem Council and knew that afterward he would have a companion who would be personal proof that his gospel of grace apart from law was valid. He was confident that **Titus** would be allowed to leave Jerusalem uncircumcised, just as he had entered, with the full blessing of the apostles and elders. And if Gentile believers were not compelled to be circumcised in Jerusalem, which was still home base for most of the apostles, how could they be required to be circumcised in their home countries? Henceforth **Titus** was a living verification that the Judaizers taught a spurious gospel that was rejected by the rest of the church.
p. 38

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

Titus (v. 1) was a “test-case” Gentile. The term **circumcised** introduces a central topic of the Jewish false teachers, one which Paul addresses repeatedly in Galatians (5:2, 3, 6). Unlike Timothy, whom Paul had circumcised because Timothy’s mother was Jewish, Titus was not circumcised. Circumcising him would have been a sign to all other Gentiles that following Jewish law was required for a person to become a Christian. As Paul explains in this letter, that would be a rejection of the Good News that salvation is God’s gift to those who believe in His Son.
p. 1519

Wuest says:

The context clearly indicates that strong pressure was brought to bear upon the Jerusalem church to impose circumcision upon Gentile converts, Titus being the individual around whom the controversy was waging. The Jerusalem council sustained the decision of the Antioch church to the effect that circumcision was not to be required of Gentile converts.

Translation. *But not even Titus who was with me, although he was a Gentile, was compelled to be circumcised.*
p. 60

v. 4 But because of the false brethren brought in secretly who came in secretly (snuck in) to spy out our liberty which we are having in Christ Jesus in order that they might bring us into bondage.

The NET Bible translates verse 4:

Now this matter arose because of the false brothers with false pretenses who slipped in unnoticed to spy on our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, to make us slaves.

Peterson paraphrases verse 4:

While we were in conference we were infiltrated by spies pretending to be Christians, who slipped in to find out just how free true Christians are. Their ulterior motive was to reduce us to their brand of servitude.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

But this victory did not come easily. Pressure to have Titus circumcised was brought to bear by certain **false brothers** . . . No doubt these were Judaizers, whose chief slogan is found in Acts 15:1: "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." These "false brothers" ("sham Christians," NEB) were like spies or fifth-column agents who penetrated to search out weak areas of enemy positions. In this case they **infiltrated** (pareisēlthon; lit., "sneaked in alongside," used only here and in Rom. 5:20) the **ranks**, that is, they intruded without invitation into the apostles' private conference. Their goals were twofold: first, **to spy on** (kataskopēsai, used only here in the NT) **the freedom we have in Christ**. With hostile intent they purposed to observe the apostles' freedom from the Mosaic Law and from the legalism it engenders. Second, they intended to **make Christians slaves**. They wanted to bring believers back into bondage, to enslave them to the Law's rules and ceremonies.

Here in this verse we have **SATAN'S TACTICS** at infiltration. We also see the subtlety and the power of Satan's strategies and plans to infiltrate believers and their freedom in Christ.

You will notice the phrase:

"SPY OUT OUR LIBERTY WHICH WE ARE HAVING IN CHRIST JESUS."

The **PURPOSE** they had in mind in doing this is:

"IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT BRING US INTO BONDAGE"

by adding some legal requirements for salvation.

ETERNAL VIGILANCE IS THE PRICE OF LIBERTY.

During one of the Billy Graham crusades in Los Angeles several years ago, a number of Jehovah's Witnesses made false counselor badges and went in to deal with people who were coming forward to receive Christ. This is a picture of what is actually happening here. These false brethren were **"SPY[ING] OUT OUR LIBERTY."**

What does Paul mean by **"LIBERTY"**?

John 8:32 (NIV)

and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Their whole purpose in **"SPY[ING] OUT OUR LIBERTY WHICH WE ARE HAVING IN CHRIST JESUS"** was:

"IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT BRING US INTO BONDAGE."

Bringing them **"INTO BONDAGE"** would be bringing them under the legal requirements of circumcision and living by certain parts of the law.

Jeremiah 5:31 (NIV)

The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?

(If God is in Charge . . . by Stephen W. Brown) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers. Copyright – Stephen W. Brown, 1983.

When Abraham Lincoln went to the slave market one time, he was moved with compassion to place a bid on a young black girl. He won the bid and walked away with his “property.” There was a sullen, angry expression on the black girl’s face, because she knew that here was another white man who had bought her and would abuse her. As they walked away from the slave block, however, Lincoln told the girl, “You are free.”

“What does that mean?” she demanded.

“It means, you are free.”

“Does it mean that I can be what I want to be?” she asked.

“Yes,” replied Lincoln, “you can be what you want to be.”

“Does it mean that I can say what I want to say?” she asked, her anger softening.

“Yes,” Lincoln answered. “You can say what you want to say.”

“Does it mean,” she went on, “that I can go where I want to go?”

“Yes, you can go where you want to go.”

“Then,” said the girl, “I will go with you.”

p. 102

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

An old woman lay seriously ill in a hospital. Her closest friend read Isaiah 25:6-9 aloud to her. Wanting the comfort and support of faith, the sick woman asked her friend to hold her hand. On the other side of the bed, her husband, who considered himself a deeply religious man and who prided himself for his boldness in having a “Honk, if you love Jesus” bumper-sticker on his car, reached out to take her other hand. His wife withdrew it, saying with deep sadness, “Herbert, you are not a believer. Your cruelty and callousness throughout the forty years of our marriage tells me that your faith is an illusion.”

pp. 141-2

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

By any measure Tolstoy's quest for holiness ended in disappointment. In short, he failed to practice what he preached. His wife put it well (in an obviously biased account):

There is so little genuine warmth about him; his kindness does not come from his heart, but merely from his principles. His biographies will tell of how he helped the laborers to carry buckets of water, but no one will ever know that he never gave his wife a rest and never—in all these thirty-two years—gave his child a drink of water or spent five minutes by his bedside to give me a chance to rest a little from all my labors.

Tolstoy's ardent strides toward perfection never resulted in any semblance of peace or serenity. Up to the moment of his death the diaries and letters kept circling back to the rueful theme of failure, exposing the vast gap between the high ideals of the gospel and the sad actuality of his own life. p. 144

A. N. Wilson, a biographer of Tolstoy, remarks that "his religion was ultimately a thing of Law rather than of Grace, a scheme for human betterment rather than a vision of God penetrating a fallen world." With crystalline clarity, Tolstoy could see his own inadequacy in the light of God's Ideal. But he could not take the further step of trusting God's grace to overcome that inadequacy. p. 146

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Paul's reference to these men "infiltrating" and "spying" entails a military metaphor and suggests the subversive and militant nature of the evil that Paul was fighting. In Paul's mind, the desire of the legalizers "to make us slaves" occurred in a manner similar to those who would take a city by stealth or force in order to place the inhabitants in chains. p. 714

Bickel & Jantz say:

Although Paul tries to keep the meeting with the Jerusalem apostles private, the Judaizers—Paul refers to them as “so-called Christians” and “false teachers”—crash the party. Their purpose is clear: They want to enslave the Christians by requiring them to follow Jewish regulations. Larry Richards writes colorfully that what you have here is the “Freedom Party” (Paul, Barnabas, Titus) squaring off against the “Slavery Party” (the Judaizers). And in the middle of the confrontation are the “pillars of the church” . . .

p. 48

Gutzke says:

Paul had things to say about the “false brethren.” There were those in the church whose ideas were wrong. To say they were “false brethren” does not necessarily mean they were insincere, or liars. They were “false” because what they were teaching was not true. There were those in the church at that time who were opposed to Paul and his way of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Paul called these men false because they had contradictory ideas which they brought in secretly, while they acted as if they were friends. They entered the group to see what Paul said and did, so that they could bring him under bondage. They were false in that they were not true believers in Christ.

p. 35

Hogg & Vine say:

to spy out—*kataskopeō*, as in 2 Sam. 10. 3, LXX, *e.g.*, to search out with a view to overthrowing.

our liberty—*eleutheria*, a word here used to describe the unfettered condition of the Christian soul in contrast with the Jewish condition of bondage to law, and so in 5. 1. This liberty is said to be “in Christ Jesus”, and is secured by the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who frees the mind from mistaken notions about God and Christ, 2 Cor. 3. 17. It secures to the individual freedom of choice and of action, 1 Cor. 10. 29, but always within the limits imposed by consideration for the welfare of others, Gal. 5. 13, and this because Christ’s freeman is the bondservant of God, 1 Peter 2. 16. Hence Christian liberty is far removed from the carnal license which false teachers promise their dupes, 2 Peter 2. 19.

p. 64

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

. . . What I did concerning Titus (viz., by not permitting him to be circumcised) was not from contempt of circumcision, but “on account of the false brethren” (Acts 15:1, 24) who, had I yielded to the demand for his being circumcised, would have perverted the case into a proof that I deemed circumcision necessary.

p. 1262

Lange says:

The complete definition of “false brethren” is given in “spy out,” “bring us into bondage;” they do not yet stand in the freedom which there is in Christ; nay, more they wish to deprive others also of it; nay, more, they exercise a system of espionage against these. The false teachers in Galatia were essentially such people, perhaps they were emissaries of those in Jerusalem; and on this account it is with special purpose that their conduct in Jerusalem, and their discomfiture, as mentioned.

p. 36

Lange says:

Two things are laid to their charge: first, a “spying out of” **our liberty**;—they lie in ambush for our liberty, spy out in what we show ourselves freemen, turn their notice to that, but with hostile intent; therefore, how widely removed from brotherly love! Then, in the second place, they seek to reënslave the free, i.e., they demand of them to give up their freedom. By the freedom which we have in Christ Jesus is primarily meant freedom from the Mosaic law, from its ritual ordinances, and especially therefore from circumcision. The wider, deeper meaning of this freedom is involved in this, but here, doubtless, not primarily in view.

p. 37

Lange quotes Starke:

STARKE:—The main aim of false teachers is only to take us prisoners to deprive us of our liberty in Christ, although they do not confess such an aim in words, but will have the appearance of wishing only to check carnal security and liberty.

p. 42

Luther says:

Human reason can think only in terms of the Law. It mumbles: “This I have done, this I have not done.” But faith looks to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, given into death for the sins of the whole world. To turn one’s eyes away from Jesus means to turn them to the Law.

True faith lays hold of Christ and leans on Him alone. Our opponents cannot understand this. In their blindness they cast away the precious pearl, Christ, and hang onto their shabby works. They have no idea what faith is. How can they teach faith to others?

p. 49

MacArthur says:

to spy out. This Greek word pictures spies or traitors entering by stealth into an enemy’s camp. The Judaizers were Satan’s undercover agents sent into the midst of the church to sabotage the true gospel.

p. 1661

MacArthur says:

bondage. Conveys the idea of absolute slavery to an impossible system of works righteousness.

p. 1661

MacArthur says:

Their specific purpose was to undermine the **liberty which** true believers **have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring them into the bondage** of legalism. The verb (*katadouloō*) is a compound and conveys the strong slavery of a works system. The Judaizers could not tolerate a gospel that was not tied to Mosaic ritual and law, because their view of salvation was centered in what they could self-righteously perform to earn favor from God rather than in what God could do for them.

p. 39

Machen says:

Paul here calls the Judaizers “false brethren,” and the meaning of that term is clear. “Brother” in Paul’s Epistles means “fellow-Christian,” and thus a “false brother” is a man who claims to be a Christian or is thought to be a Christian and yet is not, or does not show himself by his present actions to be, a Christian at all. It is not a pleasant term, but the reason why it is not a pleasant term is that the thing that it designated was not a pleasant thing. These Judaizers might have seemed to a superficial observer to be true disciples, but in their heart of hearts, Paul seems to mean, they were Pharisees rather than disciples of Jesus Christ. They were depending upon their own works for salvation, and according to the apostle Paul a man cannot possibly do that if he is to be saved. So Paul calls them false brethren. Unlike the leaders of the modern Church the apostle Paul believed in calling things by their true names.

p. 106

Ridderbos says:

In designating those persons *the false brethren*, Paul challenges their right to belong to the church. They made their approach as brothers in the Lord, and apparently were received as such also, and so were granted the right to speak in the church. But the way in which they entered (a stealthy, dishonest way, concealing their real motives), and their conduct after they were in, marked them as false and unauthentic members of the church. Paul calls the real purpose for which they stole in: *to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus*. The figure is that of a spy who infiltrates the enemy camp, plays the part of a friend to the cause, and so gets to learn the strategic situation of the opponent. By *our liberty* the apostle means, as becomes more evidently apparent in the following chapter, the freedom from the law brought by Christ.

p. 84

Wiersbe says:

The fact that Paul called them “false brethren” indicates that they were not true Christians, but were only masquerading as such so they could capture the conference for themselves.

p. 45

Wuest says:

Now it was because of the false brethren who had been surreptitiously brought in, those of such a character that they sneaked in for the purpose of spying out our liberty which we are having in Christ Jesus, with the expectation of reducing us to abject slavery . . .

p. 202

Wuest translates verse 4:

Translation. *Now it was because of the false brethren who had been surreptitiously brought in, those of such a character that they sneaked in for the purpose of spying out our liberty which we are having in Christ Jesus, with the expectation of reducing us to abject slavery.*

p. 61

(What Difference Do it Make?: Stories of Hope and Healing by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, and Lynn Vincent) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright – Ron Hall, Denver Moore, Lynn Vincent, 2009.

Listen, if the devil ain't messin with you, he's already got you.
p. 45

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

You may not agree with this, but you should take time to consider it. While religions have historically tried to make us the same, Jesus calls us to be different. If you have ever experienced this, you know your soul bristled at the demand to quietly get in line and conform. But something in your gut told you this was wrong. If there was a God, his value would not be uniformity, but uniqueness. And you were right. Imprinted on your soul is the fingerprint of God. There is something inside you that resists surrendering your soul to legalism. The good news is that all that time it wasn't you fighting against God; you were fighting for what God has created you to become.

To come to God is to discover the uniqueness of your being.

When you come to God, you begin a process that re-creates you from the inside out. You begin a journey that is nothing less than life transforming. While there are some things we will share in common, the journey God has prepared for you is uniquely yours with him. Don't be confused about this—everything around us pushes us toward conformity. Whether it's communism or Islam, Calvin Klein or McDonald's, we are all pushed toward standardization and quickly find ourselves as assembly-line humanity.

We have to choose.

Liberal or conservative? Democrat or Republican? Evolution or creation? Pro-choice or pro-life? The environment or development? Coke or Pepsi? Coke Zero or Pepsi One?

Choose your box and stay there.

p. (Entry #22)

Jesus, I Come

by William T. Sleeper

Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,
 Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;
 Into Thy freedom, gladness, and light,
 Jesus, I come to Thee;
 Out of my sickness, into Thy health,
 Out of my want and into Thy wealth,
 Out of my sin and into Thyself,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of my shameful failure and loss,
 Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;
 Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.
 Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm,
 Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
 Out of distress to jubilant psalm,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of unrest and arrogant pride,
 Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;
 Into Thy blessed will to abide,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.
 Out of myself to dwell in Thy love,
 Out of despair into raptures above,
 Upward for aye on wings like a dove,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of the fear and dread of the tomb,
 Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;
 Into the joy and light of Thy throne,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.
 Out of the depths of ruin untold,
 Into the peace of Thy sheltering fold,
 Ever Thy glorious face to behold,
 Jesus, I come to Thee.

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/o/u/outofmyb.htm>

v. 5 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 NET Bible translates verse 5:

But we did not surrender to them even for a moment, in order that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

Peterson paraphrases verse 5:

We didn't give them the time of day. We were determined to preserve the truth of the Message for you.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . because **the truth of the gospel** was at stake for the Galatians, and the entire Christian church. To impose circumcision on Titus would be to deny that salvation was by faith alone and to affirm that in addition to faith there must be obedience to the Law for acceptance before God. Thus the basic issue of the gospel was involved and Paul would not deviate or yield **for a moment**.

The words **"TO WHOM"** refer to the **FALSE BRETHREN** that have been brought in secretly who were planted to bring them into bondage.

The apostle says:

"NOT EVEN FOR AN HOUR DID WE YIELD TO THE SUBMISSION DEMANDED."

When **"SUBMISSION [IS] DEMANDED"** you know that **SATAN IS AT WORK.**

Paul says **“WE [DID NOT] YIELD TO THE SUBMISSION DEMANDED”** and our **PURPOSE** in being unswerving and unyielding in our devotion to the Gospel of Christ is:

“IN ORDER THAT THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL MIGHT REMAIN (CONTINUE FOR YOU).”

Anders says:

Paul stood absolutely firm because **the truth of the gospel** was at stake. To impose circumcision on Titus would be to deny that salvation was by faith alone and to affirm the law as the means to God's acceptance.
p. 21

Barclay says:

There is a battle behind this passage; and it seems likely that the leaders of the Church urged Paul, for peace's sake, to compromise, and to give in, in the case of Titus. But Paul stood like a rock. He knew that this was a test case, and he would not yield one inch for one moment. To yield would have been to accept the slavery of the law and to turn his back on the Christian freedom which is in Christ. In the end Paul's determination won the day.
p. 17

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Defending the Gospel that Paul had received from God was not done for any personal or selfish reasons, but “so that the truth of the gospel might remain” with believers (v.5). The word “truth” (GK 237) stands in marked contrast to the falseness mentioned in the preceding verse. Therefore, it must mean “the true gospel” as opposed to “the false gospel” being taught by the false brothers. The issue at stake here is an either-or issue: either the true Gospel in its entirety, or that which is no gospel at all!
p. 714

Bartlett says:

Paul refused to compromise. He would not hedge an inch. Too much was involved. There is in many religious quarters today altogether too strong a tendency to substitute a subjection *of* conscience through fear of man for a subjection *to* conscience through fear of God. Such substitution on the part of leaders jeopardizes the spiritual welfare of souls that look to them for help and guidance. Forbid that we should ever permit enemies of the faith to dictate or tamper with our message.

p. 39

Baxter says:

To Paul the issue was as vivid as it was absolutely vital—the very Cross of Christ itself was imperilled 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

Calvin says:

The truth of the gospel denotes its genuine purity, or, which means the same thing, its pure and entire doctrine. For the false apostles did not altogether set aside the gospel, but mixed up with it their own notions, so as to give it a false and disguised aspect, which it always has when we make the smallest departure “from the simplicity that is in Christ.” (2 Cor. xi. 3.)

p. 52

Fergusson says:

4. It is not enough that people have the name of the gospel among them, or some truths of it being mixed with several errors, but all, and especially ministers, should endeavour to have the gospel in purity and integrity, free from any mixture of contrary errors; for a little leaven, to which error is compared, Matt. xvi. 12, leaveneth the whole lump, 1 Cor. v. 6. Thus it was Paul’s endeavour that “the truth of the gospel might continue with them,” that is, the whole doctrine of the gospel, not corrupted with any error.

p. 31

Hendriksen says:

With respect, then, to those pseudo-brothers, these infiltrators, the apostle continues: **to whom not even for a moment did we yield submission.** The meaning is clear and simple: not at any time during the Conference—whether in the private interview or at the public meeting; whether at the beginning, in the middle, or at the close—was there any yielding to the wishes of the enemies of the one and only true gospel. It was one and the same gospel, whether proclaimed by Paul or Barnabas; by Cephas, James, or John. It was not dependent on anything men might say about it. They were able neither to subtract from it nor to add to it. Neither did they wish to do so; **in order that the truth of the gospel**—that is, the gospel in all its purity—**might continue with you.**
p. 80

Hogg & Vine say:

. . . this emphatic expression implies prompt resistance to a formal demand, and excludes the notion that Titus had been circumcised.

that the truth of the gospel—not=‘the true gospel’, but the true teaching of the gospel, *i.e.*, as contrasted with any perversion of it by the admixture of a foreign element, such as Jewish law, here and v. 14, or Gentile philosophy, cp. Col. 1. 5.
p. 65

Lenski says:

Paul states why “we did not yield for an hour (we say: for a moment).” He and Barnabas together with their fellow delegates thought of the Galatians to whom they had brought the truth of the gospel. If they had yielded, that truth would have been lost to the Galatians. Paul and Barnabas would have had to go back to Galatia and undo all that they had done. They stood solid “in order that the truth of the gospel (its verity and reality) might continue on (on through . . .) for you.” . . . is not “with you”; it is the face-to-face preposition: the truth of the gospel facing the Galatians, they facing the truth.
p. 79

Lightfoot says:

'But while I held conferences with the Apostles of the Circumcision, I did not yield to the clamours of the disciples of the Circumcision. An incident which occurred will show this. Titus, as a Gentile who was intimately acquainted with me, was singled out as a mark for their bigotry. An attempt was made to have him circumcised. Concession was even urged upon me in high quarters, as a measure of prudence to disarm opposition. The agitators, who headed the movement, were no true brethren, no loyal soldiers of Christ. They were spies who had made their way into the camp of the Gospel under false colours and were striving to undermine our liberty in Christ, to reduce us again to a state of bondage. I did not for a moment yield to this pressure. I would not so compromise the integrity of the Gospel, the freedom of the Gentile Churches.'

p. 105

McGee says:

Paul stood by his guns. These false brethren said, "This man Titus who is here meeting with the church (and it was practically all Jewish then) has not even been circumcised!" Paul says, "No, and he's not going to be circumcised. He is as much a believer as any of you. He has been saved by faith apart from the Law. He is not about to follow any part of the Law for salvation." This is a tremendous stand that Paul is taking.

p. 158

Ridderbos says:

According to the translation which we are following, the apostle describes his attitude and that of his fellows as adamant. At issue, after all, was not merely the question of whether or not Titus ought to be circumcised, but also that of *the truth of the gospel*: that is, its true, unmodified content. In other instances Paul wanted to give in, to accommodate himself, in order to aid the influence of the gospel (cf. 5:12, 1 Cor. 9:19-23, Acts 16:3, 21:23 ff.). But this time the issue was drawn *in optima forma* and he knew no yielding. And Paul indicates that in taking this resolute stand he had the churches of Galatia in his mind's eye. He wanted no damage done to the essence of the gospel once preached to them.

p. 85

Wiersbe says:

Ever since Paul's time, the enemies of grace have been trying to add something to the simple gospel of the grace of God. They tell us that a man is saved by faith in Christ *plus* something—good works, the Ten Commandments, baptism, church membership, religious ritual—and Paul made it clear that these teachers are wrong. In fact, Paul pronounced a curse on any person (man or angel) who preaches any other gospel than the gospel of the grace of God, centered in Jesus Christ . . .

p. 49

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

The Bible presents a realistic picture of the Christian life, including long, dull marches through the wilderness, humiliating failures, pain, struggle. These don't come off well on television—unless they're told as a quick, summarized prelude to the victorious conclusion. The resulting picture of the Christian life as being one of incessant joy and constant success can actually backfire. The viewer, whose experience is different, can begin to feel distressingly inferior, as if somehow he or she is missing out on the magic of faith. In essence, the electronic church is the mouth of the body, but without the other parts.

p. 215

(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.

You and I cannot be useful if we want to be sweet as honey in the mouths of men. God will never bless us if we wish to please men, that they may think well of us. Are you willing to tell them what will break your own heart in the telling and break theirs in the hearing? If not, you are not fit to serve the Lord. You must be willing to go and speak for God, though you will be rejected. 1431.488

p. 48

(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.

TRAINING 19

An ounce of obedience is better than a ton of learning. CC78
p. 62

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

Perfectionism keeps running aground on the barrier reef of original sin.

How can we in the church uphold the ideal of holiness, the proper striving for Life on the Highest Plane, while avoiding the consequences of disillusionment, prettiness, abuse of authority, spiritual pride, and exclusivism?

p. 130

(Addresses by Phillips Brooks) Philadelphia, PA.: Henry Altemus. Copyright – Unknown.

I am anxious to-day to impress this upon you: that the Christian faith is not a dogma, it is not primarily a law, but is a personal presence and an immediate life that is right here and now.

p. 134

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

It is a lot easier for me, Lord Jesus, to be an onlooker than a participant. I get all the pleasures of diversion and excitement, and none of the stress of risk and discipline. But that is not what you want from me, and I know it. Forgive me for looking on, and enable me to enter in, by faith. Amen.

p. 112

Sources of Truth

My eight-year-old embraces some interesting sources of truth. We were coming home from the grocery store recently when he asked, “Dad, do you believe in the Bermuda Triangle?”

“Jack,” I replied, “if you’re asking me if I believe that this place exists, my answer is yes. If you’re asking me if I believe all the mysterious stories about ships and planes disappearing, no: I think that’s all baloney.”

“Well, Dad,” Jack said with a note of defensiveness, “I believe in it. And I bet you want to know why.”

“Yes, Jack. I do.”

“Well, I was watching *Scooby Doo* . . .”

David Slagle, Atlanta, Georgia

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(Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message by Ravi Zacharias) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Ravi Zacharias, 2000.

“TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION,” IT IS SAID.

G.K. Chesterton, with his ever-ready wit, told us why that is so: “It is because we have made fiction to suit ourselves.” Modern-day techniques have only enhanced the capacity to mass-produce lies. With that combination of propensity and facility, we live with the reality that sometimes the truth seems impossible to believe.

p. 75

(Pure Pleasure: Why Do Christians Feel So Bad About Feeling Good? by Gary Thomas) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright— Gary Thomas, 2009.

Both attitudes—hedonistic license or pharisaic prohibitionism—grieve God.
p. 162

. . . told me a story about the famed Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon. Apparently, Spurgeon once waited to board a train near the first-class section when a man approached him and said, “Pastor Spurgeon, I see you are traveling in first class today.”

“That’s correct, sir.”

With a smug tone the man replied, “Well, I’m trying to take care of the Lord’s resources, and so I am traveling in third class.”

“Very well, sir,” Spurgeon responded. “You take care of the Lord’s resources, and I shall take care of the Lord’s servant.”
p. 172

As Christians, we have an awful tendency to “overcorrect.” We see our error (“Oh, so maybe I *can* legitimately accept and even cultivate pleasure. I see how I’ve endangered myself and dishonored God with a prohibitionist mind-set”) and then rush to the other extreme to get away from that error, only to create a new one (“I want to ‘eat, drink, and be merry’ for the rest of my life!”). Writing or reading a book like this presents exactly that grave danger. Today’s church, frankly, has not earned a reputation for intellectual sophistication. Instead of holding things in a healthy balance, we tend to bounce back and forth between dangerous extremes.

Writing a book on pleasure touches both extremes. Powlison warned about this several years ago. He notes how some counselees “exclusively inhabit the obsessive responsibility side, and some live for their pleasures, possessions, and recreations. Either way, they’re distracted and driven . . . It’s a fair bet that at least 99 percent of humankind operates somewhere between mildly dysfunctional and completely crazed on this issue.”¹⁰

10. David Powlison, “Innocent Pleasures,” *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 23 (Fall 2005): 25.
p. 162

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

Howard Hendricks tells of visiting a leprosy center in India. The morning he arrived, the residents were gathered for a praise service. One of the women with leprosy hobbled to the platform. Hendricks said that even though she was partially blind and badly disfigured, she was one of the most beautiful women he'd ever seen.

Raising both of her nearly fingerless hands toward Heaven, she said in a clear voice, "I want to praise God that I am a leper because it was through my leprosy that I came to know Jesus Christ as my Savior. And I would rather be a leper who knows Christ than be completely whole and a stranger to His grace."²

2. Alice Gray, *Treasures for Women Who Hope* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 71-72. pp. 28-29

v. 6 But to be something from those who were of recognized eminence whatever they once were it makes no difference to me. God is not accepting man's person. For those of recognized eminence laid nothing in addition upon me.

The NET Bible translates verse 6:

But from those who were influential (whatever they were makes no difference to me; God shows no favoritism between people)—those influential leaders added nothing to my message.

Peterson paraphrases verse 6:

As for those who were considered important in the church, their reputation doesn't concern me. God isn't impressed with mere appearances, and neither am I. And of course these leaders were able to add nothing to the message I had been preaching.

Paul uses the phrase **"RECOGNIZED EMINENCE" FOUR TIMES** in these ten verses:

1. verse 2—"But privately to those of recognized eminence,"
2. verse 6—"those who were of recognized eminence,"
3. verse 6—"FOR THOSE OF RECOGNIZED EMINENCE," and then finally
4. verse 9—"THOSE WHO WERE OF RECOGNIZED EMINENCE"—are named as **"JAMES AND CEPHAS [OR PETER] AND JOHN."**

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Having completed his discussion of Titus, Paul resumed the narrative relating to his conference with the apostles in Jerusalem and declared that they **added nothing to his message**. They did not correct or modify Paul's message but recognized its divine source and affirmed its truth and completeness. But why did the apostle speak in what appears to be a derogatory manner about some of the Jerusalem leaders? In verse 2 he referred to them as "those who seemed to be leaders"; in verse 6 he described them as **those who seemed to be important**; and in verse 9 he finally named "James, Peter, and John" as "those reputed to be pillars." In view of the fact that Paul's purpose in this passage was to emphasize his unity with the apostles, it seems best to explain these allusions as stemming from the fact that the Judaizers, in order to disparage Paul, had made much of the Jerusalem leaders. While there may be irony in Paul's expressions, he declared that he was not awed by the past or present stations of James, Peter, and John. Indeed they endorsed Paul's message and received him as an equal.

Paul here is just expressing in different words his statement in:

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.

OUR MAIN CONCERN IS NOT THE APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF MEN BUT OF GOD.

2 Timothy 2:15 (DAV)

Make every effort to present yourself to God, approved, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path.

2 Corinthians 10:18 (DAV)

For not he who is commending himself is approved, but whom the Lord is commending.

The Apostle Paul is referring to Peter, James and John when he speaks of those **“OF RECOGNIZED EMINENCE.”**

He certainly is not degrading the Jerusalem leadership here. He is just emphasizing the fact that really the message of no Christian worker is right just simply because of the greatness of the worker. God is not accepting man’s person—He uses man as a mere vehicle to communicate His message, even as the apostle has referred to this in:

Galatians 1:11-12 (DAV)

For I am making known to you, brethren, the message which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it but through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Paul does add that Peter, James and John:

“LAID NOTHING IN ADDITION UPON ME”—the Apostle Paul and the ministry which he was carrying out.

This is an amazing statement because you would expect that the key leaders—or the top brass—would add something in addition to the ministry of the Apostle Paul or at least would endeavor to correct him some way.

Pinnock says:

Paul speaks of Peter, James, and John in a strange way: they are “those of repute” and “reputed to be pillars.” What can be the explanation for this? We know he regarded them as bona fide apostles along with himself (1:17). But he had to choose his words carefully in the light of the Galatian situation. The false teachers had no doubt exaggerated the authority of the Jerusalem apostles in order to downplay Paul’s. Indeed they did it to build up their own status as supposed emissaries of Jerusalem. Therefore, Paul adopts language that shows he respects the office of the apostles, but is not overawed by their persons. The extravagant claims made for them by the Judaizers were quite out of place.

p. 29

We can **SUMMARIZE** verse 6 by simply saying:

NO CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Three times in this chapter (vv.2, 6, 9) Paul refers to the three major figures at Jerusalem in an unusual way. The persons in question are James, Peter, and John (v.9), described as “those who seemed to be leaders,” “those who seemed to be important,” and “those reputed to be pillars.” Why this unusual and perhaps even deferential way of referring to them? Though not all commentators agree, it does seem as if Paul is making a real (though balanced) note of disparagement of these three apostles. The very repetition of the phrase seems ominous, in the same way as Antony’s repetition of the word “honorable” concerning Brutus in his eulogy at Julius Caesar’s funeral in Shakespeare’s play makes the conspirators seem dishonorable. Furthermore, each occurrence of the phrase seems to grow stronger with each repetition.

p. 715

Baxter says:

. . . Paul had received direct from God he had later compared and checked off among the other apostles. Fourteen years after his first visit to Jerusalem he had gone there again for that very purpose (ii. I, 2); and there had been thorough concurrence between them and himself (verses 6-10).

p. 145

Hogg & Vine say:

. . . “they imparted nothing”. That is to say, they neither modified his teaching nor added to his authority. “To me” bears the emphasis of the sentence.

p. 67

Lange says:

This exaltation of individuals=the Apostles, in such a way as to throw the authority of Paul into the shade, rests entirely upon mere human judgment. God's census does not rank them thus: **God accepteth no man's person.**—He makes no such distinction, to Him the senior Apostles are not “of repute” in contrast with Paul; he has chosen Paul to be an Apostle as much as them.
p. 37

MacArthur says:

His point here was that, although those twelve men were personally appointed apostles by Jesus Christ, so was he. He did not need their approval for his own confidence, nor did he need to seek their confirmation to convince himself, and in that regard who or **what they were made no difference** to him and his ministry. He had no doubts about his calling and revelations.

It may be that the Judaizers put Paul down by reminding him that the Twelve had been with Jesus for the entire course of His earthly ministry, whereas he had not (cf. 1:19). The twelve were also leaders in the Jerusalem church, which understandably was held in high regard by Christians as the first and leading congregation.
p. 40

MacArthur says:

The Twelve had **contributed nothing** to Paul's knowledge or understanding of the gospel or to his authority to preach it. For seventeen years he had preached the gospel without their having had the least part in it. When he finally went to Jerusalem to testify to what he preached, it was not for approval or correction but simply for recognition—and that not for his own sake but for the sake of those who had been deceived by the false accusations against him being spread by the Judaizers.
p. 41

Machen says:

What he is anxious here to say is that the greatness of these men had nothing whatever to do with the manner in hand; his apostleship did not come to him through any man, but directly from Christ; and so no man's greatness—not even the greatness of the original apostles of Jesus—had anything whatever to do with its invalidation. He appeals, therefore, to the original apostles not because of their real greatness—which he did not at all deny—but because of the greatness that was attributed to them by the Judaizers. The Judaizers had appealed to them in a falsely exclusive way, as though they were the only ones who had a right to speak.
p. 115

Patrick & Lowth say:

. . . “It was no advantage to me, I was not the better for it; and this sense is confirmed by the following reason, “For they who were of reputation added nothing to me.”
p. 727

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

While Paul recognized the leadership roles of James, Cephas (Peter), and John (v. 9) as “pillars” of the Jerusalem church, he pointed out that they were in no way superior to him in their understanding of the gospel. **added nothing to me:** The other apostles were satisfied with Paul's understanding of the gospel.
pp. 1519-20

Wuest says:

These men of eminence, Paul says, added nothing to him. The word *added* is from *prosanatithemi*. It means “to communicate, to impart.” In these words Paul says what he began to say at the beginning of the verse. The Jerusalem apostles imposed on him no burden of doctrine or practice, and imparted to him nothing in addition to what he knew.
p. 63

(The Treasures of Fanny Crosby by Fanny Crosby) Uhrichsville, OH:
Barbour. Copyright— Barbour Publishing, Inc., 2003.

Trust in Christ

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because
he trusteth in thee.

ISAIAH 26:3

All the way my Savior leads me—
 what have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
 Who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,
 here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whatever befall me,
 Jesus doeth all things well.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean
 not unto thine own understanding.

PROVERBS 3:5

When my way is hedged about me,
 hedged with thorns of care;
When the cross I loved so dearly,
 seems too hard to bear;
When my heart is bowed with sorrow,
 and no light I see—
Lord, Thy tender mercy pleading,
 let me lean on Thee.

p. 76

v. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised even as Peter [had been entrusted with the gospel] to the circumcised.

The NET Bible translates verse 7:

On the contrary, when they saw that I was entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised just as Peter was to the circumcised

Peterson paraphrases verse 7:

It was soon evident that God had entrusted me with the same message to the non-Jews as Peter had been preaching to the Jews.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Further, **James, Peter, and John** recognized that Paul had been divinely commissioned to preach **the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had to the Jews.**

The word **"BUT"** forms the **CONTRAST** to what he has had to say in the previous verse.

Instead of laying anything **"in addition upon"** the Apostle and his ministry, they saw that he had:

"BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THE GOSPEL TO THE UNCIRCUMCISED"

in the same way that

"PETER [HAD BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THE GOSPEL] TO THE CIRCUMCISED."

They had just **ONE MESSAGE** but **TWO DIFFERENT MISSION FIELDS**:

1. one who was going to go to the **JEWS** and
2. another who was going to go to the **GENTILES**.

The Lord had entrusted the Apostle Paul with the Gospel message to the people who were not Jews. He had entrusted the Gospel message to Peter for those who were of the Jewish persuasion. This did not mean that they had a different message; it just meant that they were ministering to a different audience.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

The phrase “they saw” implies a change of mind by the Twelve as a result of Paul and Barnabas’s having reported on all that God had done through them among the Gentiles (cf. Ac 15:4). At first they were skeptical and uncertain, but later they came to stand with Paul on the issue of circumcision . . .
p. 715

Henry says:

4. The other apostles were fully convinced of his divine mission and authority, and accordingly acknowledged him as their fellow-apostle, v. 7-10. They justly concluded *that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul, as the gospel of the circumcision was to Peter. They gave unto him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, and agreed that these should go to the heathen, while they continued to preach to the circumcision.* And thus this meeting ended in an entire harmony and agreement; they approved both Paul’s doctrine and conduct, and had nothing further to add, *only that they would remember the poor*, which of his own accord *he was very forward to do*. Herein he has given us an excellent pattern of Christian charity and we should by no means confine it to those who are just of the same sentiments with us, but be ready to extend it to all whom we have reason to look upon as the disciples of Christ.
p. 1839

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

So far from *adding any* new light to ME, THEY GAVE in THEIR adhesion to the new path on which Barnabas and I, by independent revelation, had entered. So far from censuring, they gave a hearty approval to my independent course, viz., the innovation of preaching the Gospel without circumcision to the Gentiles.
p. 1262

McGee says:

Let's understand that there were not two gospels in the sense of Peter's gospel and Paul's gospel. These men were in complete agreement. The gospel of the circumcision and the gospel of the uncircumcision refer to the groups the gospel was going to. The Gentiles were the group that Paul was speaking to. He was called to go to the Gentiles, the uncircumcised. Peter was called to go to his own Jewish brethren who were the circumcised.
p. 158

We can **SUMMARIZE** verse 7 with this sentence:

THERE WAS ONE MESSAGE AND TWO FIELDS OF SERVICE.

v. 8 For He who energized Peter unto apostleship to the circumcision also energized me unto the Gentiles.

The NET Bible translates verse 8:

(for he who empowered Peter for his apostleship to the circumcised also empowered me for my apostleship to the Gentiles)

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Thus Paul jolted the Judaists by declaring that the leaders in Jerusalem approved of his mission to the Gentiles.

It should be noted that Peter and Paul did not preach two gospels, as might be inferred from the KJV rendering, “the gospel of the uncircumcision” and “the gospel of the circumcision.” There was one gospel though it was preached by different apostles to two distinct groups of people. The reason the apostles concluded that Paul’s commission was equal to Peter’s was the fact that God gave success to both as they preached.

It is the Spirit of God who does the energizing of Peter and Paul to two different audiences, giving the same message.

This is the **KEY VERSE** in his argument for apostleship:

his **MESSAGE** and

his **MISSION**.

Whereas there is **ONE MESSAGE** to **TWO DIFFERENT MISSION FIELDS**, there is also **ONE SPIRIT** who is energizing both of these apostles to their ministry:

“HE [the Spirit of God] WHO ENERGIZED PETER UNTO APOSTLESHIP TO THE CIRCUMCISION ALSO [the Spirit of God] ENERGIZED ME UNTO THE GENTILES.”

The One who is energizing **PETER** is also energizing **PAUL**:

one to the **JEWS**—one to the **GENTILES**.

one to the **CIRCUMCISION**—one to the **UNCIRCUMCISION**.

MacArthur says:

The Holy Spirit, who has but one gospel, empowered both Peter and Paul in their ministries.

p. 1662

Wiersbe says:

“The gospel of the circumcision” and “the gospel of the uncircumcision” are not two difference messages; it had already been agreed that there is only one gospel. Rather, we have here two different spheres of ministry, one to the Jews and the other to the Gentiles. Peter and Paul would both preach the same gospel, and the same Lord would be at work in and through them (Gal. 2:8), but they would minister to different peoples.

p. 50

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

Make friends with whatever's next.

Embrace it. Accept it. Don't resist it.

Change is not only a part of life; change is a necessary part of God's strategy. To use us to change the world, he alters our assignments. Gideon: from farmer to general; Mary: from peasant girl to the mother of Christ; Paul: from local rabbi to world evangelist. God transitioned Joseph from a baby brother to an Egyptian prince. He changed David from a shepherd to a king.

FEARLESS

p. 127

(Pure Pleasure: Why Do Christians Feel So Bad About Feeling Good? by Gary Thomas) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright—Gary Thomas, 2009.

I'm arguing that we need to look at pleasure and the good gifts of this earth through the eyes of redemption. When our hearts are cleansed and transformed by God, the very things that used to cause us to stumble can now become friends of faith. Not *all* things, of course; anything specifically against the will and commands of God, regardless of what kind of pleasure it seems to offer, will always destroy our souls. But the good things of this earth, created by God to be received with thanksgiving and praise—things such as friendship, good food and fine drinks, laughter, sex, and family life—can be redeemed to season our life and faith in many positive ways. God can even give us the power to take what we formerly misused and transform it into an instrument of praise.

pp. 22-23

(Found: God's Will: Find the Direction and Purpose God Wants for Your Life
by John MacArthur) Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook. Copyright–
John MacArthur, 1977.

Some apparently think that God's will is lost. At least they say they are searching for it! To them, God must appear to be a sort of divine Easter bunny who has stashed His will, like eggs, somewhere out of sight and sent us running through life trying to find it. And He is up there saying, "You're getting warmer!"

pp. 5-6

(The Beautiful Fight: Surrendering to the Transforming Presence of God
Every Day of Your Life by Gary Thomas) Grand Rapids, MI:
Zondervan. Copyright– Gary L. Thomas, 2007.

It's not as if I'm called to find out the will of God and then accomplish it in my own strength. On the contrary, not only does God call me; he also equips me, sustains me, and empowers me. Anything less is a Christless Christianity.

p. 128

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

Dear Jesus, teach me my place: as a servant, not a master, as the friend of the bridegroom, not the bridegroom; as a witness to the truth, not the truth itself. Amen.

p. 246

v. 9 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.

The NET Bible translates verse 9:

and when James, Cephas, and John, who had a reputation as pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we would go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

Peterson paraphrases verse 9:

Recognizing that my calling had been given by God, James, Peter, and John—the pillars of the church—shook hands with me and Barnabas, assigning us to a ministry to the non-Jews, while they continued to be responsible for reaching out to the Jews.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

This was sealed by James, Peter, and John in their extending to Paul **and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship**. This was a sign of agreement and trust and an indication to all present that they endorsed the division of labor whereby the Jerusalem apostles were appointed to evangelize the Jews and Paul was entrusted to carry the gospel **to the Gentiles**.

The grace that they perceived that was given to the Apostle Paul was his apostleship to the uncircumcision.

James, Peter and John, referred to as **“THOSE WHO WERE OF RECOGNIZED EMINENCE TO BE PILLARS”**—or key leaders:

“GAVE TO ME [the Apostle Paul] AND BARNABAS THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.”

Some have said that there are **TWO KINDS OF SAINTS** in the church:

1. **“PILLARS”** and
2. **CATERPILLARS.**

What does Paul mean when he says that these **THREE LEADERS** gave to them **“THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP”**?

JOSEPHUS—speaking of Artabanus, king of the Parthians—on **“THE RIGHT HAND”** says:

This is the greatest force there is with all these barbarians and affords a firm security to those who converse with them.
(source unknown)

Lovett points out:

RIGHT HANDS. What a moment in Gospel history! James, Peter, John and Paul stand with hands clasped in official fellowship. The other apostles give full sanction to Paul’s ministry, acknowledging his commission, received **by revelation**, to be identical with the one they received from Jesus **in Person**. Can you picture those four writers of most of the N.T. standing there in such perfect accord! The clasping of hands signifies compactual agreement in receiving Paul into the apostleship.
p. 25

This was a **DRAMATIC CONCLUSION** to their pact for cooperation in independent spheres of ministry. The Judaizers were put out of the picture when these **FIVE MEN JOINED HANDS**:

1. **PETER**,
2. **JAMES**,
3. **JOHN**,
4. **PAUL**, and
5. **BARNABAS**.

The **PURPOSE** given for this action on the part of these **KEY LEADERS** is seen in the last statement:

“IN ORDER THAT WE SHOULD GO UNTO THE GENTILES AND THEY TO THE CIRCUMCISION.”

I feel like singing a verse of:

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

by John Fawcett

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father’s throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one
Our comforts and our cares.

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/b/b/bbtttb.htm>

Verse 9 begins with the phrase:

“AND HAVING PERCEIVED THE GRACE WHICH WAS GIVEN TO ME.”

(The Preces Privatae of Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester selections from the translation by F. E. Brightman) London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. Copyright – unknown, 1920.

let me find grace in thy sight,
 so as to have grace
 to serve Thee acceptably
 with reverence and godly fear:
 and let me find also the second grace,
 so as that grace
 not to receive in vain,
 not to fail of it,
 nay but not to neglect it
 so as to fall from it;

 but to stir it up,
 so as to grow in it,
 nay but to persevere in it
 unto the end of my life. . . .

Thou that givest grace to the humbleminded,
 to me too give grace to be humbleminded: . . .

p. 166

Anders says:

On the other hand, his indignation may have been directed solely at the Judaizers working among his beloved Gentile churches. The Judaizers may have tried to diminish Paul's authority by emphasizing the apostolic authority of Peter, James, and John. In doing so, they could support their own opposition to Paul's teaching, tearing him down by lifting up the Jerusalem apostles. Indignant at the Judaizers' presumption and opposition. Paul may have been saying, "You claim that these Jerusalem apostles are the big shots around here. Well, listen up. My authority comes from God and is just as valid. I'm just as much a leader as they are."

pp. 21-22

Calvin says:

They who treated with contempt the grace of God, by which the most eminent apostles had been led to admire and reverence Paul, are charged with hateful and proud disdain. If they should allege that they were ignorant of that which the apostles knew from the beginning, the hypocritical pretence was not to be endured. This admonishes us to yield to the grace of God, wherever it is perceived, unless we choose to contend with the Holy Spirit, whose will it is that his gifts shall not remain unemployed. The grace which the apostles perceived to have been given to Paul and Barnabas, induced them to sanction their ministry by receiving them as their associates.

p. 59

Dunnam says:

The bottom line of that conference report was that Paul and Barnabas should go to the Gentiles, the uncircumcised; and James, John, and Peter to the Jews, the circumcised.

p. 36

Eadie says:

. . . “And coming to the knowledge of the grace which was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are reputed pillars, gave to me and Barnabas right hands of fellowship; that we should go or preach to the Gentiles, but they to the circumcision.”
p. 125

Fergusson says:

8. It is the duty of ministers, as pillars, to uphold the truth by their doctrine, prayers, graces and parts, Isa. lxii. 6, 7; 2 Tim. ii. 2; to be constant in truth against all contrary blasts, Matt. xi. 7; to adorn the truth by good example of an holy life, whereby they ought to shine before others, Matt. v. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 12; for, as James, Cephas, and John were accounted pillars; so they, and all faithful ministers, are really such: and Paul doth here indirectly tax the common opinion, whereby that name was appropriate only to those three, which did belong also to others: hence it is also that the church militant, in respect of the ministry of the word chiefly, is called the pillar and ground of truth, 1 Tim. iii. 15. “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars.”
p. 34

Fergusson says:

10. We ought not to withhold our approbation, especially when it is craved, from that which by evident signs and reasons we perceive to be approved of by God, although there be many who disapprove it, and though the giving of our approbation to it may disoblige those who otherwise pretend much friendship to us; for those three apostles, perceiving by most convincing evidences that God had called Paul to be an apostle, they acknowledged him for such, though those who did cry them much up as pillars, and what not, did not doubt oppose their so doing, as tending evidently to the disadvantage of their cause; “They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.”
p. 34

Gaebelein says:

This confirmation of Paul and the gospel he preached was a complete answer to the false claims and accusations of the enemies of the apostle.
p. 210

Gutzke says:

They reached out their hands, shook hands with him, and said, “You and we—we belong together.”
p. 38

Hogg & Vine say:

. . . a column upon which the weight of the building is supported, and so, metaphorically, of such as bear responsibility. It was commonly used by the Jews of teachers of the law.
p. 73

Ironside says:

Is it not a remarkable thing that men have read into these words the amazing idea that what the apostle Paul is saying here is that as they talked together they found out that there were two gospels?—that Peter and the other apostles chosen by the Lord had one gospel, the gospel of the circumcision, and that Paul and Barnabas had another, the gospel of the Gentiles. And so they were to go on preaching one gospel to the Jews, and Paul and Barnabas were to preach a different gospel altogether to the Gentiles! What amazing ignorance of the divine plan that would lead any one to draw any such conclusion! The apostle has already told us, “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (chap. 1:8).
p. 65

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship—recognizing me as a *colleague* in the apostleship, and that the Gospel I preached by special revelation to the Gentiles was the same as theirs.
p. 1262

Lange says:

They concluded with me and Barnabas an agreement as formal and firm as it was amicable. The more precise sense is given by the preceding context, inasmuch as this agreement was founded upon that. Seeing the coöperation . . . of God rendered to both Peter and Paul, they had become persuaded of the equal *divine* vocation of *each*, of the former to the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles, of the latter to the preaching of the gospel among the Jews.
p. 39

Lenski says:

Behold, what these three did! “They gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.” And this was not merely fraternal fellowship such as is extended to brethren in the faith; . . . is placed last in order that . . . may define it: “of fellowship, that we on our part (go, the verb understood) to the Gentiles, and they on theirs to the circumcision.” This was the fellowship of the apostles, the fellowship of the apostolic work. Three pillars acknowledge two others. This is what James, Peter, and John did at the great conference; behold what the Judaizers were trying to do in Galatia!
p. 88

Lovett says:

RIGHT HANDS. What a moment in Gospel history! James, Peter, John and Paul stand with hands clasped in official fellowship. The other apostles give full sanction to Paul's ministry, acknowledging his commission, received **by revelation**, to be identical with the one they received from Jesus **in Person**. Can you picture those four writers of most of the N.T. standing there in such perfect accord! The clasping of hands signifies compactual agreement in receiving Paul into the apostleship.
p. 25

MacArthur says:

Recognizing the grace that had been give to Paul, the other apostles and the church at large could only conclude that this man was a divinely commissioned and blessed instrument of God. Only God's **grace**—His free, sovereign, and undeserved blessing—could account for the mighty spreading of the gospel and building up of the church that the Lord had accomplished through this mortal.
p. 41

MacArthur says:

He not only was in doctrinal harmony with them but in personal harmony with them as well. There is only one gospel, and those five men (who wrote 21 of the 27 New Testament books) demonstrate that truth. They **gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship**, Paul says as he continues to confound the false claims of the Judaizers. In the Near East, to clasp **the right hand** of a person was to make a solemn vow of friendship and was a mark **of fellowship**, or partnership. The "pillars" at Jerusalem recognized Paul not only as a true preacher and teacher of the gospel but also as a beloved partner with them in Christ's service. They had different fields of service—Paul and Barnabas ministered primarily **to the Gentiles** and the Jerusalem leaders primarily **to be circumcised**—but they proclaimed the same gospel and served the same Lord in the power of His Spirit. That act of affirmation both of Paul and of his message was a devastating blow to the Judaizers. In fact, Paul's apostolate to the Gentiles was recognized as the equal of Peter's apostolate to the Jews.
p. 42

Machen says:

The pillars of the Jerusalem Church gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. The word “fellowship” is derived from the word meaning “common”; a man has “fellowship” with another, in accordance with the usage of this word, when he has something in “common” with him. But it is perfectly clear from the context what it was that the Jerusalem leaders had in common with Paul, and what they recognized that they had in common with Paul, and what they recognized that they had in common with him when they extended to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. They had the gospel in common with him. By extending to him the right hand of fellowship, they indicated that they and he were both engaged in preaching the same gospel of the same Lord.
pp. 129-30

McGee says:

The apostles accepted Paul’s apostleship. “The right hand of fellowship”—fellowship is the Greek *koinonia*, one of the great words of the gospel and the highest expression of a personal relationship. It means sharing the things of Christ.
p. 158

Patrick & Lowth say:

1. James is here mentioned first among the apostles of the circumcision, according to the common doctrine of the ancients, who style him, “the first bishop, archbishop, prince, and bishop of bishops . . .
p. 727

Patrick & Lowth say:

. . . He puts no difference betwixt these “pillars” or “chief of the apostles;” which no more agrees with the supposed supremacy of Peter, than it would with the pope’s supremacy to be reckoned among or after some of the cardinals; which as it is never done by them who own the pope’s supremacy, so neither would this have been done by Paul, had he owned the supremacy of Peter.

Thirdly, He says the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to him, as was that of the circumcision to Peter, by which words “he shows himself equal to Peter,” . . .

p. 727

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

The right hand of fellowship was a common sign of acceptance and friendship. It indicated full recognition of Paul by the representatives of the Jerusalem church.

p. 1520

Ridderbos says:

The grace comprises in one word what has been said in verses 7 and 8, that is, the ministry of the gospel and the divine power manifesting itself in this ministry, qualified, both of them, as an undeserved gift.

p. 89

Ridderbos says:

The giving of the right hands represents more than a reciprocal acknowledgment or testimony of friendship: it suggests rather a covenant. The genitive *of fellowship* qualifies this settlement more precisely. It rested on reciprocal acknowledgement that all were partners in the same cause: belief in Christ, or, better, Christ Himself. This then was not a settlement in which the one is lording it over the other or imposing his will upon the other. Because of the fellowship which they acknowledged, they could arrive at a binding agreement. Thus something was ratified and solemnly approved, something that had already become a fact: namely, that the field of labor was to be divided. And thus the ministry of Paul and Barnabas was sanctioned. That was the important thing. The agreement was inclusive rather than exclusive: that is to say, it did not prevent Paul and Barnabas from working with Jews, and Peter and the others from working with the Gentiles; it meant, rather, that just as the last addressed themselves to the Jews, so it should be the privilege of Paul and Barnabas to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles.

p. 90

Vos says:

James, Cephas, and John are the subjects in verses 6-10. Now (2:9) they are specifically named. The fact that James (a strict legalist) appears first gives special significance to the decision concerning Gentile freedom. He had become head of the Jerusalem church. While it was necessary to identify the James meant in Galatians 1:19, James the son of Zebedee had been put to death between the two Jerusalem visits of 1:19 and 2:1. This James is clearly “our Lord’s brother.” Peter commonly went by his Hebrew surname, Cephas, in Jerusalem. These men “seemed,” that is, “were reputed,” to be strong or powerful supporters of the church. Now these great leaders who saw that Paul had been made apostle to the Gentiles (v. 7) and perceived (v. 9) or understood the full significance of that fact, gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. The church leaders came to a full understanding with Paul and Barnabas and gave their full blessing to them. There was no effort to upbraid them or set them straight. They only requested the missionary pair to remember the poor—Jewish Christians in Judea.

pp. 42-43

Wuest points out:

James is mentioned first by Paul, and for four possible reasons. *First*, Paul showed his respect to the mother-church at Jerusalem and its highly esteemed leader. *Second*, this James was the brother of our Lord. *Third*, he had presided at the Council. *Fourth*, his well-known strictness as to the observance of the Mosaic law gave special weight to his support of Gentile freedom from the law.

pp. 65-66

Wuest says:

The custom of giving the hand as a pledge of friendship or agreement has been found among both the Hebrews and the Greeks.

p. 66

(Choosing Gratitude: Your Journey to Joy by Nancy Leigh DeMoss with Lawrence Kimbrough) Chicago, IL: Moody. Copyright— Nancy Leigh DeMoss, 2009.

I was struck by a comment made by theologian and author Dr. Wayne Grudem in an online interview. When asked by C. J. Mahoney about areas where he was vulnerable to discouragement in ministry. Dr. Grudem responded, “Honestly, *I don’t often become discouraged*. I continue to see evidence of God’s work in my life and the lives of those around me, and *I am simply overwhelmed with thankfulness to Him*”² (italics added).

2. Sovereign Grace Ministries Blog, 1/30/09, [http://www.sovereigngraceministries.org/Blog/post/Meet-Wayne-Grudem-\(4\).aspx](http://www.sovereigngraceministries.org/Blog/post/Meet-Wayne-Grudem-(4).aspx).

p. 18

This book is an invitation to join me on that journey. I want you to see what I’ve seen. And I want you to experience the fresh joys I am encountering as I confront those stubborn weeds of ingratitude and choose to cultivate a thankful heart.

p. 16

LETTING GOD CHOOSE

We may have secret longings too deep to utter to others—perhaps a desire for marriage, or a work or ministry we’d like to perform, or a special place to serve. We must put each desire in God’s hands and pray, “Lord, You must choose for me. I will not choose for myself.”

Genesis 13:10-11 tells us that Lot made his own choice about a desire he had. He “lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere . . . like the garden of the Lord . . . Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan.”

The plain of Jordan, with its rich soil and copious water supply, looked best to Lot. But the land was polluted with wickedness (v.13). Pastor Ray Stedman wrote that “Lot, presuming to run his own life, ‘chose for himself,’ and, deceived by what he saw, stumbled blindly into heartache and judgment. Abram, on the other hand, was content to let God choose for him. . . . Abram saw it in its true light.” Lot chose for himself and lost everything—his family, his fortune, his favor with man.

It is always the best course for us to let God choose and to follow His direction, knowing as we do that all our heavenly Father’s choices are prompted by infinite wisdom and love.

*Long ago I made my life’s decision
To serve the Lord and have Him choose my way;
And when I’ve felt uncertain at a crossroad,
He’s never failed to lead me day by day. —Hess*

**Contentment comes when we want God’s will
more than our own way.**

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Wednesday, May 5, 2010)

(The Grace and Truth Paradox by Randy Alcorn) Sisters, OR: Multnomah.
Copyright – Eternal Perspective Ministries, 2003.

Truth-oriented Christians love studying Scripture and theology. But sometimes they're quick to judge and slow to forgive. They're strong on truth, weak on grace.

Grace-oriented Christians love forgiveness and freedom. But sometimes they neglect Bible study and see moral standards as "legalism." They're strong on grace, weak on truth.

Countless mistakes in marriage, parenting, ministry, and other relationships are failures to balance grace and truth. Sometimes we neglect both. Often we choose one over the other.

p. 17

(Seeking Him by Nancy Leigh DeMoss & Tim Grissom with Life Action Ministries) Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers. Copyright – Life Action Ministries, 2004.

If a young man is killed through some random act of violence, and his father tracks down the guilty person and kills him, we would call that *vengeance*. If, however, the father calls the police and the murderer is arrested, tried, convicted, and executed, we'd call that *justice*. If, at the trial, the father pleads for the guilty man's life to be spared and judge and jury consent, we'd call that mercy.

Now imagine this: in addition to pleading for the guilty one to be spared, the father actually appeals to the judge to release the offender into his custody and care, Miraculously gaining approval, the father takes the young man into his heart and home, adopts him, and raises him and loves him as his own son ---- that would be *grace*!

No word brings greater joy to the heart of a follower of Christ than *grace*. Grace is the free gift of God to those who have sinned against Him and deserve only His wrath. Grace is that which God gives us to meet His requirements and to face the difficulties of life. The most magnificent display of God's grace is seen in our salvation, as described for us in Ephesians 2:1–9:
p. 86

(Seeking Him by Nancy Leigh DeMoss & Tim Grissom with Life Action Ministries) Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers. Copyright – Life Action Ministries, 2004.

“Grace is not simply leniency when we have sinned. Grace is the enabling gift of God not to sin. Grace is power, not just pardon.”

—John Piper

p. 90

Thomas Merton on the Uselessness of Planning Our Own Answers to Prayer

What is the use of praying if at the very moment of prayer, we have so little confidence in God that we are busy planning our own kind of answer to our prayer?

—Thomas Merton, Catholic writer and mystic (1915-1968)

Thomas Merton, source unknown; submitted by Kevin Miller

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

ALL OF US LONG TO BECOME SOMETHING MORE THAN WE are. We are driven to achieve, moved to accomplish, fueled by ambition. It burns hotter in some than in others, but it is within all of us. We’re all searching for our unique purpose, our divine destiny, or simply a sense of significance or some measure of success. When we are optimistic about the future, we find the energy to create it.

p. (Entry #1)

. . . we humans are most alive when we passionately pursue our dreams, live with purpose, and have a sense of destiny.

p. (Entry #1)

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

BOUNTEOUS is Jehovah in His nature; to give is His delight. His gifts are beyond measure precious, and are as freely given as the light of the sun. He gives grace to His elect because He wills it, to His redeemed because of His covenant, to the called because of His promise, to believers because they seek it, to sinners because they need it. He gives grace abundantly, seasonably, constantly, readily, sovereignly; doubly enhancing the value of the boon by the manner of its bestowal. Grace in all its forms He freely renders to His people: comforting, preserving, sanctifying, directing, instructing, assisting grace, He generously pours into their souls without ceasing, and He always will do so, whatever may occur. Sickness may befall, but the Lord will give grace; poverty may happen to us, but grace will surely be afforded; death must come, but grace will light a candle at the darkest hour. Reader, how blessed it is as years roll round, and the leaves begin again to fall, to enjoy such an unfading promise as this, “The Lord will give grace.”
p. 551

(The Loveliness Of Christ: Extracts from the Letters of Samuel Rutherford selected by Ellen S. Lister) Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright – Banner of Truth, 2007.

I am in a sweet communion with Christ as a poor sinner can be; and am only pained that he hath much beauty and fairness, and I little love; he great power and mercy, and I little faith; he much light, and I bleared eyes.
pp. 55-56

(Days of Grace Through the Year by Lewis B. Smedes) Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press. Copyright– InterVarsity Press, 2007.

We are ready for grace when we are bone-tired of our struggle to be worthy and acceptable. After we have tried too long to earn the approval of everyone important to us, we are ready for grace. When we are tired of trying to be the person somebody sometime convinced us we had to be, we are ready for grace. When we have given up all hope of ever being an acceptable human being, we may hear in our hearts the ultimate reassurance: we are accepted, accepted by grace.
p. 51

v. 10 Only that we should keep on remembering the poor which this very thing I made haste also to do.

The NET Bible translates verse 10:

They requested only that we remember the poor, the very thing I also was eager to do.

Peterson paraphrases verse 10:

The only additional thing they asked was that we remember the poor, and I was already eager to do that.

Verse 10 gives us the only stipulation given by the **THREE MEN** who were **"PILLARS"** of the Jerusalem church:

1. **"James,"**
2. **"Cephas"—Peter,** and
3. **"John."**

The **STIPULATION** given was that they:

"SHOULD KEEP ON REMEMBERING THE POOR."

PAUL says:

"WHICH THIS VERY THING I MADE HASTE ALSO TO DO."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The only request from the leaders in Jerusalem was that Paul **remember the poor** which he affirmed he **was eager to do**. It had been concern for the poor which brought Paul to Jerusalem in order to bring them financial relief . . . It was the same concern which motivated him on his third missionary journey to raise large welfare offerings for needy Christians in Jerusalem . . . Such offerings would alleviate human suffering, but they would also demonstrate genuine concern on the part of Gentile Christians for Jewish Christians. This in turn would help promote unity and love among believers and help prevent the kinds of misunderstandings which were undermining the Galatian churches.

This was the only stipulation upon Paul that they presented:

“Paul, you can go; but do not forget the poor here in Judea.”

“Paul, go for it! But remember the poor.”

Paul points up the fact that he was quick to obey what they had asked.

Paul set up a R.O.T.S. fund (The Relief of the Saints) and throughout his ministry in many of these Gentile congregations, he spoke to them about the needs of the poor saints in Jerusalem.

Paul makes reference to this in:

1 Corinthians 16:1, 3 (DAV)

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. . . . And when I arrive, whomever you may approve, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem;

Ironside says:

Verse 10 is interesting: “Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.” I wonder whether Paul did not smile as he heard that. They said, “You go to the Gentiles, Paul, but don’t forget there are many poor saints here in Judea, and although you do not preach among us, send us a collection from time to time.” He did, and thus showed that it was one Body and one Spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling.

p. 73

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

Are you better at competition or cooperation?

Show me how to use my life, Jesus, in ways that will make others better, not get the better of them. I will no longer look at others as competitors for your favor, but as companions in your life of peacemaking. Amen

p. 40

(Jesus Himself: The Story of the Resurrection – from the Garden Tomb to the Mount of Olives by Marcus L. Loane) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Marcus L. Loane, 2007.

Was the question meant to imply that he knew they had met with no success? Was it as if he were to say, ‘So you have caught nothing?’ And their reply came back, just as weary men with empty nets would shout. It was brief, and curt, and blunt: *No!* There was nothing more to say.

p. 76

(The Furious Longing of God by Brennan Manning) Colorado Springs, CO:
David C. Cook. Copyright— Brennan Manning, 2009.

Back in the late 1960's, I was teaching at a university in Ohio and there was a student on campus who by society's standards would've been called ugly. He was short, extremely obese, he had a terrible case of acne, a bad lisp, and his hair was growing like Lancelot's horse—in four directions at one time. He wore the uniform of the day: a T-shirt that hadn't been washed since the Spanish American War, jeans with a butterfly on the back, and of course, no shoes.

In all my days, I have never met anybody with such low self-esteem. He told me that when he looked in the mirror each morning, he spit at it. Of course no campus girl would date him. No fraternity wanted him as a pledge.

He walked into my office one day and said, his lisp evident, "Ah, you're a new face on campus. Well, my name is Larry Malaney and I'm an athgnostic."

I said, "*You're what?*"

He repeated himself and I said, "Wow, congratulations! If you ever become an atheist, I'll take you to dinner and we'll celebrate your conversion."

The story I'm about to tell you is what Larry got for Christmas one year.

Christmas came along for Larry Malaney and he found himself back with his parents in Providence, Rhode Island. Larry's father is a typical lace-curtain Irishman. Now there are lace-curtain Irish and there are shanty Irish. A lace-curtain Irishman, even on the hottest day in summer, will not come to the dining room table without wearing a suit, usually a dark pinstripe, starched white shirt, and a tie swollen at the top. He will never allow his sideburns to grow to the top of his ears and he always speaks in a low, subdued voice.

Well, Larry comes to the dinner table that first night home, smelling like a Billy goat. He and his father have the usual number of quarrels and reconciliations. And thus begins a typical vacation in the Malaney household. Several nights later, Larry tells his father that he's got to get back to school the next day.

"What time, son?"

"Six o'clock."

"Well, I'll ride the bus with you."

The next morning, the father and son ride the bus in silence. They get off the bus, as Larry has to catch a second one to get to the airport. Directly across the street are six men standing under an awning, all men who work in the same textile factory as Larry's father. They begin making loud and degrading remarks like "Oink, oink, look at that fat pig. I tell you, if that pig was my kid, I'd hide him in the basement, I'd be so embarrassed." Another

said, "I wouldn't. If that slob was my kid, he'd be out the door so fast, he wouldn't know if he's on foot or horseback. Hey, pig! Give us your best oink!"

These brutal salvos continued.

Larry Malaney told me that in that moment, for the first time in his life, his father reached out and embraced him, kissed him on the lips, and said, "Larry, if your mother and I live to be two hundred years old, that wouldn't be long enough to thank God for the gift He gave to us in you. I am so proud that you're my son!"

It would be hard to describe in words the transformation that took place in Larry Malaney, but I'll try. He came back to school and remained a hippie, but he cleaned up the best he could. Miracle of miracles, Larry began dating a girl. And to top it off, he became the president of one of the fraternities. By the way, he was the first student in the history of our university to graduate with a 4.2 grade point average. Larry Malaney had a brilliant mind.

Larry came to my office one day and said, "Tell me about this man Jesus." And for the next six weeks, in half-hour increments, I shared with Larry what the Holy Spirit had revealed to me about Jesus. At the end of those six weeks, Larry said, "Okay."

June 14, 1974, Larry Malaney was ordained a priest in the diocese of Providence, Rhode Island. And for the past twenty years, he's been a missionary in South America, a man totally sold out to Jesus Christ. Do you know why? It wasn't because of the six weeks of sitting in Brennan Manning's office while I talked about Jesus. No, it was because of a day, long ago, during a Christmas vacation, standing at a bus stop, when his lace-curtain Irish father healed him. Yes, his father healed him. His father had the guts to get out of the foxhole and choose the high road of blessing in the face of cursing and taunts. His father looked deeply into his son's eyes, saw the good in Larry Malaney that Larry couldn't see for himself, affirmed him with a furious love, and changed the whole direction of his son's life.

pp. 90-93

CONCLUSION:

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

LESSON #1: As the Apostle Paul documents his travels, you sense that he is definitely being guided by the Lord and living by Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (NIV).

LESSON #2: Paul was very sensitive to stir up trouble by talking privately first with those who were in positions of authority in Jerusalem.

LESSON #3: I would recommend that you pray with me every morning: “Dear Lord, keep me on task, on track, and out of Satan’s traps.” This is certainly a relevant prayer in view of this study in Galatians 2.

LESSON #4: When desires, dullness, and disobedience dominate we are in danger of missing His will for our lives.

LESSON #5: Satan’s desire is to keep us in bondage by adding to or complicating the Gospel message.

LESSON #6: Fellow believers will recognize God’s leading in your life and ministry.

LESSON #7: Satan’s henchmen often demand unquestioned submission to their authority.

LESSON #8: Paul does not want to be wasting time running outside of the will of God.

LESSON #9: Ask God to give you the courage to stand tall and to resist the demands of our pagan culture around us.

LESSON #10: Remember to be faithful in your giving to those who are less fortunate and are in need.

LESSON #11: Ask God for a clear focus on your mission for life and where your ministry should take place. God is faithful to lead in this regard.

Barclay says:

(iii) Paul was a man conscious of a special task. He had the feeling that God had given him a task to do, and he would let neither opposition from without nor discouragement from within stop him doing it. It will always be the case that the man who knows he has a God-given task will always find that he has a God-given strength to carry it out.
p. 18

Lucado says:

Jesus did for us what I did for one of my daughters in the shop at New York's La Guardia Airport. The sign above the ceramic pieces read Do No Touch. But the wanting was stronger than the warning, and she touched. And it fell. By the time I looked up, ten-year-old Sara was holding the two pieces of a New York City skyline. Next to her was an unhappy store manager. Over them both was the written rule. Between them hung a nervous silence. My daughter had no money. The manager had no mercy. So I did what dads do. I stepped in. "How much do *we* owe you?" I asked.

How was it that I owed anything? Simple. She was my daughter. And since she could not pay. I did.

Since you and I cannot pay. Christ did. We've broken so much more than souvenirs. We've broken commandments, promises, and worst of all, we've broken God's heart.

But Christ sees our plight. With the law and the wall and shattered commandments on the floor, he steps near (like a neighbor) and offers a gift (like a Savior).

What do we owe? We owe God a perfect life. Perfect obedience to every command. Not just the command of baptism, but the commands of humility, honesty, integrity. We can't deliver. Might as well charge us for the property of Manhattan. But Christ can and he did. (From *Next Door Savior* by Max Lucado)
p. 26

The Apostle Paul forges a tremendous argument in his favor by recalling how these men joined together in consultation that they might discern divine direction for each of their ministries. And through their consultation, they discovered that they both had the same message but just different mission fields.

Our **TITLE** for the study is:

“You Were Running Well UNTIL: Divine Direction Was Not Discerned.”

Deuteronomy 5:33 (NIV)

Walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

Deuteronomy 5:29 (NIV)

Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

Deuteronomy 4:9 (NIV)

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

Who can measure the joy of looking back over years and being able to discern the evidences of divine direction in a life and recognize that God has been faithful to lead a step at a time to the place of His choosing?

Barbara Rydeburg wrote the following poem:

He does not lead me year by year,
 Nor even day by day;
 But step by step my path unfolds.
 My Lord directs my way.

Tomorrow's plans I do not know.
 I only know this minute;
 But He will say, "This is the way,
 By faith, go walk ye in it."

And I am glad that it is so.
 Today's enough to bear,
 And when tomorrow comes,
 His grace shall far exceed its care.

What need to worry then, or fret?
 The God who gave His Son holds
 All my moments in His hand;
 And gives them one by one.

(source unknown)

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Truly we can say with the writer of the book of Lamentations:

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his
 compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your
 faithfulness.

It was Hudson Taylor in his book Spiritual Secret who said:

The Lord counted upon as never absent, would be holiness complete.
His favorite song was “Jesus, I am Resting, Resting”:

Jesus, I am resting, resting
In the Joy of What Thou Art;
I am finding out eh 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.

(source unknown)

The epitaph on the monument of the grave of William Carey reads:

A worthless, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my perfect righteousness,
My Saviour and my all.

(source unknown)

Oh that it could be said of us as it was of **CALEB** of old:

“He wholly followed the Lord”:

I followed the Lord my God, fully recognizing His will. I was faithful to be obedient, trusting Him to triumph over trouble and to make a way through the sea and through the hard places and to make the crooked places straight. And when it seems that my way should go through the valley of the shadow, I need to fear no evil for He is with me. And when I look back I can say with a heart filled with gratitude and joy, He has led me all the way.

Staying in God's will is going to, many times, involve saying:

"NO"—to the BODY and

"YES"—to the SPIRIT.

Are you IN His will?

Or are you OUT of His will?

Or are you CONSIDERING His will?

Maybe you need to come to your senses in the far country and come home.

In Jonah 1 we see Jonah OUT of the will of God.

In Jonah 2 we see him coming BACK to the will of God through a whale of an experience.

In Jonah 3 we see him IN the will of God.

In Jonah 4 we see him frustrated by trying to RUN AHEAD of the will of God.

(If God is in Charge . . . by Stephen W. Brown) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers. Copyright – Stephen W. Brown, 1983.

Someone has said that every creature fulfills the purpose of its creation except man. Have you ever heard of a dog with ulcers? The reason a dog doesn't get ulcers is that a dog usually doesn't try to be anything but a dog. Trees rarely cry, because a tree never tries to be anything but a tree. Apart from a few specially designed exceptions, fish never try to fly, and birds don't try to swim. All of creation glorifies God by being that for which it was created. The exception is man.

Man was created to glorify God, to be the one creature who would respond in love to a loving Creator. The psalmist expressed the proper position of man:

“Whom have I in heaven but Thee?
And besides Thee, I desire nothing on earth.
My flesh and my heart may fail;
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Ps. 73:25-26).

p. 62

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)
Auburn, MA: The SeedSowers Christian Book Publishing House.
Copyright -Christian Books Publishing House, MCMXCII.

Do not seek to fulfill your ambitions of becoming more spiritual, or to be counted in the company of those people who are honored for their spirituality. Your aim should be to die to all such ambitions by letting yourself be humbled. You must learn to accept obscurity and scornful disregard while you keep your eyes solely on God.

p. 37

True humility comes from seeking the interests of God before your own. Humility comes in no longer living for yourself but in letting Jesus Christ live His life in you.

p. 158

Fanny J. Crosby has it right:

All the way my Savior leads me;
 What have I to ask beside?
 Can I doubt His tender mercy,
 Who through life has been my Guide?

Heav'nly peace, divinest comfort,
 Here by faith in Him to dwell!
 For I know, whate'er befall me,
 Jesus doeth all things well.

All the way my Savior leads me,
 Cheers each winding path I tread;
 Gives me grace for every trial,
 Feeds me with the living Bread.

Though my weary steps may falter,
 And my soul athirst may be,
 Gushing from the Rock before me,
 Lo! A spring of joy I see.

All the way my Savior leads me
 O the fullness of His love!
 Perfect rest to me is promised
 In my Father's house above.

When my spirit, clothed immortal,
 Wings its flight to realms of day
 This my song through endless ages—
 Jesus led me all the way.

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/a/l/t/altheway.htm>

(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.

Lord, make me childlike. Deliver me from the urge to compete with another for place or prestige or position. I would be simple and artless as a little child. Deliver me from pose and pretense. Forgive me for thinking myself. Help me to forget myself and find my true peace in beholding Thee. That Thou mayest answer this prayer, I humble myself before Thee. Lay upon me Thy easy yoke of self-forgetfulness that through it I may find rest. Amen.
p. 33