

Love and the Gospel  
(Galatians 2:11-21)

I. The Occasion of Paul's Correction of Peter (vs. 11-14)

-James and his men were not of the party of the circumcision (unconverted Jews such as the Pharisees) nor of the Judaizers (professing Christians who advocated faith in Christ plus circumcision in order to be saved).

-Peter no longer ate with Gentiles because he was afraid that his actions might cause trouble for the believers in Jerusalem and precipitate a split in the church there.

II. The Occasion of Paul's Correction of Peter (vs. 15-21)

-Even ethnic Jews have believed in Christ because they are persuaded that justification is by faith in Christ apart from the works of the Law (vs. 15, 16).

-These believing Jews aren't rendered sinners because they believe in Christ as the Gentiles do, but they would be if they turned back again to the Law for justification (vs. 17, 18).

-Paul, like all believers in Christ, has died to the Law, through the Law's killing action, and through union with Christ in His death on the cross. Paul now lives by faith in Christ. He is overwhelmed by Christ's love for him demonstrated in His bearing Paul's guilt and punishment for him on the cross (vs. 19, 20).

-Paul concludes that if righteousness, justification, and acceptance with God are obtained by law observance, then Christ's death on the cross was all in vain (v. 21).

Practical Lessons

- 1) Paul's correction of Peter indicates that when the gospel is at stake, nothing is more important.
- 2) Paul's correction of Peter reminds us that not all biblical truths should be ranked equally with other biblical truths.
- 3) Paul's correction of Peter illustrates that the most dangerous errors in any generation are those which many Christian leaders don't see.

4) Paul's correction of Peter shows that love is willing to confront others when necessary.

5) Paul's correction of Peter reveals fervent love for Jesus Christ.