

Sunday, November 22, 2009—Grace Life School of Theology—Understanding Galatians and Law—Galatians 2:6-10

Galatians 2:6

- *“But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:)”*
- Remember from verse two that Paul’s intention was to explain the gospel that he had been preaching among the gentiles privately to those who were of reputation (Peter, James, John). In verse four we learned that false brethren had snuck into the meeting for the purpose of spying out and potting against gentile liberty.
- The big question in verse six revolves around who the expression *“these who seemed to be somewhat”* is referring to. Is Paul speaking about the apostles of reputation, the false brethren, or a combination of both?
- In my view I believe Paul is referring the leaders of reputation, namely Peter, James, and John. We already know what Paul thinks of those who undividedly crash this meeting, he calls them false brethren.
- C. R. Stam believes that Paul is referring specifically to James. Pastor Stam writes, “the James referred to here is not the same James of the four gospels, “Peter, James, and John.” The apostle James had already been killed by wicked King Herod (Acts 12:2). The James referred to here in Galatians 2 is James the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:19) and for that reason he had attained superiority over the twelve apostles and the church at Jerusalem.”
- Peter was the rightful leader of the Little Flock.
 - Matthew 16:19
 - Acts 1:15, 2:14, 5:29
- *“for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:”*
- The leaders of repute added nothing to Paul’s understanding. This certainly is an interesting statement. These Apostles who had been with Christ during his earthly ministry were not able to tell Paul anything he did not already know. Remember, Paul had been a Pharisee and knew the Old Testament.

Galatians 2:7

- *“But contrariwise”*
- The beginning of verse seven adds further information to what was just said in verse six. Those of reputation did not add anything to Paul’s understanding. But on the contrary, Paul did add something to their understanding. Paul communicated information to them that they had not previously heard or understood.

- *“when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as [the gospel] of the circumcision was unto Peter;”*
- There is no clearer verse in the Bible than Galatians 2:7 to demonstrate the fact that Peter and Paul were preaching different gospels. Remember from verse two why Paul went to Jerusalem by revelation, for the purpose of communicating the gospel which he preached among the gentiles. Now in verse seven the leadership of the Little Flock has now come to understand that Paul had been commissioned and sent forth by the resurrected and exalted Christ to preach a difference gospel among the gentiles.
- This clearly demonstrates that Paul added nothing to their understanding because the contents of the gospel had changed.
- The NIV has Peter and Paul preaching the same gospel, thus eliminating the clearest statement in the word of God that there is more than one gospel.
- Gospel of the Circumcision
 - Who are the circumcision? The Nation of Israel.
 - Most people think that after the resurrection the twelve apostles the gospel to the whole world in order to fulfill the so-called Great Commission.
 - Matthew 28:19-20
 - Acts 1:8—you can’t read Matthew 28 without reading Acts 1:8. Where were they to begin to fulfillment of this commission?
 - Luke 24:48—when we combine these three texts you get the complete picture. They are to begin their commission in Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, and then the utter most parts of the world. In short, Israel is still first in the plan and program of God.
 - Ephesians 2:11-12—all of the covenants of promise were made with Israel and not the gentiles.
 - II Samuel 7:12-16—God makes a covenant with David regarding the eternal nature of his throne and kingdom.
 - Acts 2:27-30—in these verses Peter preaches the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to fulfill the Davidic Covenant.
 - Peter’s message is that Christ rose from the dead to fulfill the Davidic Covenant. Along with his plea in both Acts 2:36 and Acts 3:19-24 that if Israel would repent for their part in Christ death, God the Father would send Christ back to fulfill all that the prophets had spoken, sure sounds like good news.
 - Acts 2:38—Peter is doing exactly what Christ told him to do in Matthew 28.

- Acts 5:31—repentance and forgiveness of sins were still being preached to Israel only.
 - Who was the audience this gospel was preached to? The circumcision. Who was the one doing the preaching? Peter.
- Gospel of the Uncircumcision
 - Compare Peter’s message in Acts 2 with Paul’s message in Acts 13.
 - Acts 13:33-39—Paul is preaching justification apart from the Law of Moses through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - Romans 11:13—Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles was sent to them with a gospel message for them. Now the gentiles can be justified totally and completely outside of the Law of Moses.
 - Ephesians 6:19—this is what Paul calls the mystery of the gospel.
 - According to Paul in Galatians 2:7, the kingdom Apostles understood and recognized that Paul had been given a different and distinct gospel.

Galatians 2:8

- *“(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)”*
- The same God that made Peter an apostle and sent him out with a commission to minister to Israel sent Paul to minister to the gentiles. Christ was the source of Paul’s gospel; he did not learn it from any man.

Galatians 2:9

- *“And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”*
- The use of the terms “*right hands*” is important. The Greek word is used to refer to direction or the right side of the human body. Metaphorically it means a place or honor or authority.
 - Matthew 20:21, 22:44, 25:33-34
- The word translated “fellowship” in this verse carries the following meanings:
 - fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation
 - the share which one has in anything, participation
 - intercourse, fellowship, intimacy
 - the right hand as a sign and pledge of fellowship (in fulfilling the apostolic office)

- Paul is saying James, Peter, and John perceived the authenticity and validity of Paul's gospel message and ministry they entered into a ministerial agreement or partnership with him.
- Paul and Barnabas would go unto the heathen with the gospel of the uncircumcision and the 12 would limit their ministry to Israel only.
- Just what did this agreement mean that Paul was to go to the Gentiles, and Peter, James, and John to the circumcision? After this agreement Paul continued to go to the Jews wherever he found a synagogue.
 - Acts 17:2
 - Romans 1:16
- Paul's whole dispensational program was based on joining the uncircumcision and circumcision people into one joint body (Ephesians 2:13-18). How could he do this if he did not evangelize the Jews?
- Baker, offers the following explanation, "The explanation has been made that when God set Israel aside (Romans 11:12, 15), Israel ceased to be the chosen nation and became just another one of the nations so that Paul was abiding by this agreement by going to the nations since Israel was not just one among the nations."
- What about the Jewish apostles then? The simple explanation of this agreement is that the Jewish apostles would continue their ministry in the last of Judea, while Paul would carry the gospel to the uncircumcised nations, which included Jews of the dispersion.
- Simply stated, Peter, James, and John agree to limit their ministry to those who were members to the Little Flock through faith in their preaching. While Paul would go to the rest of humanity which no included all of Israel that had not submitted to the preaching of the gospel of circumcision.

Galatians 2:10

- *"Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."*
- Thus far the only thing James, Peter, and John had done was recognize and acknowledge that the Lord had given Paul his apostleship to the Gentiles. There had been no contribution whatsoever to his message or gospel!
- Before parting they suggest to Paul that he remember the needs of the poor, which might have been a contribution if it were not for the fact that he had already been doing this.
 - Acts 11:30—why were these guys poor? They had sold all their houses and lands in compliance with the teaching of the Apostles.
- Therefore, nothing was added to Paul's gospel. This historical evidence supports Paul's statement in Chapter One that the gospel he preached was not after man.