

Sunday, January 8, 2023—Galatians 2:15 We Who Are Jews By Nature: The Importance of Pronouns in Bible Study

Galatians 2:15

- **We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,**
- This is an important dispensational verse that needs to be properly understood. The use of the pronoun “we” in verse 15 will determine Paul’s usage throughout the rest of the passage as well as the rest of the book.
- Properly identifying pronouns is important when conducting Bible study. Those who follow dispensational teaching on YouTube and social media know this is true. Recent teaching on Ephesians 1 stands out as an important case in point.
 - Ephesians 1:1—are “the saints which are at Ephesus” and “the faithful in Christ Jesus” the different groups of people? Some Bible teachers say that the “saints” are Jewish believers and the “faithful in Christ Jesus” are gentile believers. This distinction is used to teach that Paul is addressing “saints” i.e., Jewish believers in Eph. 1:3-12.
 - Ephesians 1:2—“you” is a 2nd person plural pronoun. Which means Paul is speaking to everyone identified in verse one i.e., “the saints which are at Ephesus” and “the faithful in Christ Jesus.” So, even if one sees two different groups in verse 1, Paul is addressing both groups in verse 2.
 - “Our” is a 1st person plural pronoun. Which means that Paul is including himself with everyone identified in verse 1. Put another way, God is the Father of everyone in verse 1 along with Paul in verse 2.
 - Ephesians 1:3—“Our” is the same 1st person plural pronoun as the one in verse 2. So, has Paul shifted to delineate one group from verse 1 from another or he is including himself in the statements he is making about both groups? It is later, Paul is including himself with everyone from verse 1.
 - “Us”—is a 1st person plural pronoun. Paul is once again including himself along with everyone else from group verse 1.
 - Ephesians 1:4—“Us” is the same 1st person plural pronoun found in verse 3.
 - “We” is a 1st person plural pronoun. This pronoun parsing is done to avoid Eph. 1:4 having anything to do with a gentile member of the body of Christ on account of aversion to Calvinism.
 - Where in first 4 verses of Ephesians 1 did Paul clearly identify that he was only talking to or about half of the people mentioned in verse 1?
- Galatians 2:16—Paul clearly identifies the “we” as those who are “Jews by nature.” Consequently, throughout the rest of the chapter/book when Paul uses the pronoun “we,” unless the text explicitly states otherwise, he is including himself with Israel. As a result, there are

clearly two different groups of people in verse 15; those who were Jews by nature and those who were sinners of the Gentiles.

- Galatians 4:1-7—note the shift in pronouns in verse 6 to “ye.”
- Was there ever a time in Biblical history when the Jews were not considered sinners like the Gentiles?
 - Ephesians 2:11-12—in time past Israel possessed a favored standing before God.
 - Romans 1:24-28—God gave the Gentiles over to a reprobate sinful mind. Historically, this took place at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11. In the next chapter, God calls Abram and begins to make promises to him and his descendants.
 - Genesis 12:3—one of the promises that God made to Abram was that if any Gentile wanted to be blessed, they would have to bless Abram’s descendants.
 - Deuteronomy 4:6-7—God was “nigh” unto Israel. Israel enjoyed a special spiritual position.
- In time past God did not consider the Jews sinners in the same sense as the Gentiles.
 - Matthew 15:21-28—the only way a Gentile could receive blessing in time past was to recognize her place dispensationally, a Gentile dog.
 - Romans 3:9, 23—historically this is not a conclusion that could have been reached before the writing of Paul.
- During the Dispensation of Grace, the Jews are considered sinners along with the Gentiles.