

Galatians 2a - Tricity Baptist Church - YAH - August 6, 2020 - Steel

I Lie Not!

Note: These verses are to be read (adjacent to the notes on the right) as much as possible.

We are moving out of Galatians 1 and into chapter 2 as Paul continues the personal defense of his apostleship. We won't be doing much reviewing this week, instead, we will be using a different teaching tool:

We have been noticing what was *unique* about Paul's certification. We want to lay one more course of bricks on each of the verses we only skimmed at the very end of last week's session. We want to add value to last week's session.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

1. Paul was claiming that he received his message directly and personally by the immediate revelation of Jesus Christ and he was making an outrageous claim.

Paul was not merely saying that he has had a personal, saving encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was asserting that he has learned even more about this gospel than what Christ illuminated when He was on earth. He has received this truth directly from Christ who did at least four things:

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

- **First**, Christ unveiled *Himself* to Paul uniquely. (Acts 9:5)
- **Secondly**, Christ unveiled *the gospel* uniquely to Paul.
- **Thirdly**, Christ *illuminated those mysteries* which had been kept secret from the foundations of the world to Paul. (Romans 16:25,26). Paul was a unique steward of these mysteries.
- And **finally**, Christ even gave *new information or revelation* to Paul which was in addition to what the other apostles received.

We explained that **in doctrinal terms we call this idea that Christ continued to reveal Himself progressive revelation**. The Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit have revealed more of the doctrine of Christ to Paul than to those who had gone on before.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Now, we want to add one more truth to this idea of revelation.

We see the word revelation (the Greek *apokalupsis*) in 1:11, 1:16, and 2:2. Christ unveiled **both** Himself and His gospel directly to Paul. But, I want to travel down this revelation road for just a few more seconds. We must go back to our starting point, especially when we are talking about the scriptures themselves.

What sets the Bible apart from all the holy books and holy prophecies of men? Is it the perfections of the scripture? Is it the exact agreement of all the books of the Bible? Is it the wonderful message of redemption which could not and would not have been conceived by men? Well,

ultimately, all those things, and more are true, but we haven't touched on the sweet spot yet.

What makes this Bible so inconceivably unique? Unlike all the holy books, so-called, of men, this book stands alone in its supreme glory, now listen, not so much for the facts and arguments it contains (as powerful as they are, but it stands alone because of the Person it unveils. **THE BIBLE ALONE IS THE SELF-REVELATION OF GOD.** It is not merely God communicating to men. It is God communicating **HIMSELF** to us. It is God's self-revelation. No pseudo scripture can or ever has made such a claim!

And still, we insist on treating this book academically, like it is some literary masterpiece it is. Masterpiece it is, but it is the Master who brings this book alive. It is His self communication to us.

I stress this, because we miss this point so often in evangelism. We turn our witnessing into an intellectual exercise and expect our listeners to respond to a given set of facts. When we walk into the witnessing situation, dear friend, we are presenting a Person, not a creed, and we must plead for the assistance of that Person as we seek to open the eyes of others to Christ. The heart that turns to Christ will follow the path of the scriptures.

Read Vs 12 Again

Secondly, we saw:

12 For **I** neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

2. Paul's Certification Placed His Message on an Equal Plane with Christ's.

Now, we want to add one more emphasis to what Paul is saying:

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

When something is certified (vs 11) - it is approved according to a standard. In this case, Christ is the standard.

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

Be sure you notice what Paul is emphasizing in verse 12. Normally, when speaking of himself, Paul just lets his verbs stay in the first person singular. In other words, the word **I** is rightfully there, based on the structure of the verb. In this case, **(Paul inserts "ego" here, thus, placing emphasis on himself in contrast to others.)**

Now, ***all of the scriptures of all of the apostles were inspired and they were equally inspired.*** So, that leads us to wonder why Christ's personal revelation to Paul was so unique. **Why was Paul taught personally and directly by Christ - and not the other apostles?**

Well, this is for your benefit and mine. You see, every time we read the Word of God, we "weight it." By that, I mean we attach a value to it, relative to the rest of God's Word.

Have you ever noticed how non dispensational Bible teachers do nine tenths of their exposition from the gospels rather than from the Pauline epistles? And when they DO use the epistles they interpret them through the gospels? Folks, the revelation which God gave to Paul was given directly by Christ. We always interpret the gospels (and for that matter, the general epistles) through the lens of Paul's epistles, never vice versa. That is largely what makes a Dispensationalist a dispensationalist.

3. Paul also certified his message with his own personal testimony.

We have already emphasized, our testimony stands as a witness, a legal record, holding the listener accountable. Do you want to keep your testimony clear and usable before God? ***Make sure it focuses on scripture.***

4. Paul also certified that his calling had been *from the womb*.

Except for last week's recap, have not stressed this yet. I believe every servant of Christ is called from the womb.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; **immediately** I conferred not with flesh and blood:

The level of our success is irrelevant. Paul happened to have great suffering and great success. Jeremiah who was also called from the womb had great suffering and little success.

5. Paul acted immediately (Verse 16) - Be obedient!

6. Paul affirmed the facts in question with exact details.

To thoroughly understand Paul's history here in Galatians we would need to refer to the book of Acts.

A. Paul, who was then Saul, witnessed the stoning of Stephen at the end of Acts 7.

B. Paul is directly converted by Christ, in Acts 9:1-22. This was no mere apparition. He comes fact to face with the risen Christ.

C. And then, to fully understand these next few verses we need to read much of Acts 14 and Acts 15.

As we scan Acts 14 and 15 we begin to understand why it was necessary for Paul to defend himself. The enemies of the gospel, particularly, his former Israelite brethren, had been pursuing Paul doggedly from town to town. Now, you and I know that the charges leveled against Paul were groundless. Now, false witnesses laying false charges always hurt the accused, but it is important to know that Paul was not defending himself for his own sake. He was defending himself for our sake, and for the gospel's sake.

If you are a careful observer you may notice that Paul has become a target once again - in *our* time.

Sometimes the Jews made Paul the target and sometimes Paul made the Jews the target! Look at Acts 13:46. Sometimes these Jews were falsely infiltrating the church. They made the local church their forum, Acts 15:1-2. Sometimes the attack was totally from without, Acts 15:5. Neither Paul, nor the Lord Jesus Christ, nor Peter, nor Jude, nor John were strangers to hatred, anger, and persecution. What amazes us is how these early teachers, beginning with our Lord, seem to have made themselves the target! At times they seemed conciliatory, and at other times they were downright confrontational!

Now, come forward 2,000 years and let's ask ourselves, when is the last time we really challenged the lie? Because, let me tell you, the enemy has not retreated. The lies have not gone away. The polluters of the pure gospel of Christ are without and within.

I used to see the way Christians were being marginalized and provincialized and feel genuine sympathy. But, folks, after observing year after year how Christians do not want issues confronted, how Christians want to be seen as the loving and kind ones, and how Christians withdraw from any kind of controversy over the truth, I just can't bring myself to muster up as much sympathy as I used to.

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Be assured, and be able to defend the fact this apostle was:

- Personally called by Jesus in Acts 22:10 and Galatians 1:1.
- Called to be an Apostle by the will of God in Colossians 1:1, Ephesians 1:1, 1 Corinthians 1:1.
- Set apart to be His minister and witness in Acts 9:15; 26:16; Romans 1:1.



17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

20 Now the things which

But, let's get back to our passage at hand. Paul is accomplishing two purposes at the same time:

First, we will see, Paul wants us to be very clear that his message was authoritative and was taught directly by Christ, not from the apostles or any other peers.

Secondly, through this history, is showing us that his own apostleship was authoritative and clearly accepted by the apostles.

In the passage before us, Paul now recounts the events immediately following his conversion...

I write unto you, behold,
before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into
the regions of Syria and
Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by
face unto the churches
of Judaea which were in
Christ:

23 But they had heard only,
That he which persecuted
us in times past.

Paul first studies at the **Wilderness Bible Institute**. Remember, Paul has not **conferred** (or consulted in detail) with flesh and blood, (verse 16) but he did spend certain days with the disciples. So, what was this man made of? In addition to being taught directly by Christ, Paul became absorbed in two things:

First, he was immersed in the Word - especially those Old Testament scriptures which pointed to Christ.

Secondly, he becomes immersed in ministry an immediate gospel preaching firebrand and confronter of false teachers!

NOW, LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW GOD PREPARED PAUL FOR HIS SERVICE, AND I WANT US TO COMPARE IT WITH HOW WE PREPARE MEN TODAY.

As an educator, now, I want you to see the core foundational ingredients of bona fide biblical training of any servant of Christ.:

1. He must first be immersed in the Word of God itself. (not the teachings of men). Did we see that with Paul??? Do we see that in most Bible colleges today? You've got to be kidding!

2. He must be immersed in the ministry of the Word, immediately and perpetually in the life and training of any servant of Christ. Did we see that in Paul? Acts tells us that immediately after his conversion (3 days!), "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues"! (Acts 9:20) Do we see that in most Bible colleges or schools today? You've got to be kidding!

3. Finally, he must be intimately guided by godly, pastoral men. I say that because Christ does not visit us personally in our ministry training. He educates us through His body today, this education must be, first and foremost pastor or elder driven. We must end this silly pastoral ideas that we can send our sons off to school without making constant oversight and guidance available to them. We call this the Paul/Timothy dynamic. Do we see that in most Bible schools or seminaries today? You've got to be kidding!

Did you notice the antics of the president of a famous Virginia school this past week? His life did not correspond to the gospel he says he embraces. Do you know why that kind of stuff happens? It happens because godly pastors are no longer dominating the classrooms and boardrooms of our schools. Now, we can't always find perfect schools for our children, but folks, God gave you a pastor to help navigate these gnarly waters.

That threefold cord (immersion in the word, immersion in ministry, and a healthy Paul Timothy relationship) is not easily broken. That is what produces abundant fruit and thrusts tested servants of Christ into the harvest.

Getting back to our narration:

2:1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

Several years later Paul makes a quick trip to Jerusalem where he sees Peter a mere 15 days and none of the other apostles (with the exception of seeing James).

Why is Paul so adamant about establishing these historical facts? He wants to insure the integrity of his message.

He continues with his history...

So, let's summarize these Jerusalem visits and then see why Paul has brought us to this point. Only then, will we fully understand why this book has been given to us.

The Bible mentions that Paul visited Jerusalem five times:

- a. The visit after he left Damascus (Acts 9:26-30; Galatians 1:18-20).
- b. The famine visit (Acts 11:27-30).
- c. The visit to attend the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-30).**
- d. The visit at the end of the second missionary journey (Acts 18:22).
- e. The final visit which resulted in Paul's Caesarean imprisonment (Acts 21:15-23:35).⁵⁵

We are, at the moment, focusing on the third of those visits: The Jerusalem Council.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

1. Paul went there under the direct instructions of the Lord. Paul loved being around the local church. Paul clearly relied on the church at Antioch for accountability and oversight. Paul, however, was not much of an association man. Any inclinations Paul had for going to Jerusalem were clearly in the name of Jewish evangelism. I don't think it ever occurred to Paul to hang ten with the apostles. In any case, the Lord directly commanded Paul to go - at least for this event. ***I think Paul wanted folks to know that he was not instigating this.***

2. Paul communicated informally first. He ministered discreetly. These apostles needed educating. There is an old truism which says that a good diplomat gives the other person the credit while he gets what he wants. Maybe there's some truth to that. We have a prototype here for how to behave ourselves when genuine issues occur within the body.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

3. Paul came prepared with a test case, in this case, a living one. I think Paul's own creativity shows here, the wisdom of the church at Antioch shows, but most importantly, I believe the Lord led in this. In any case, Paul came prepared for spiritual warfare.

I want the same to be said of me when I engage in conflict for Christ. I want to reduce my exposure to liability as much as I can. I want to avoid

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

having others get caught in the crossfire. I want to be fully prepared and articulate. I want the cause of Christ to win, and not an argument.

4. Paul engaged the issue with his eyes open. He knew his enemies were false brethren, he knew they would feign sincerity, he knew their end game. He did not play their game.

5. He kept his eye on the prize: The truth and purity of the gospel. He took the lumps so that the gospel would continue with these brethren. He cared enough to go to Jerusalem and to engage.

Have you ever seen someone halfway between consciousness and dreamland after coming out of surgery? Have you ever seen someone lay there in bed and reach, as it were, with their fingers, trying to grasp something which isn't there. It's kind of humorous. We watched a zoo animal do this the other day as he came out of surgery.

Now, sadly, there is a spiritual lesson here. We have around us a group of believers who live in that halfway world between dreamland and reality. And we see they reach out here and there, trying to grasp clouds or some other fluff or stuff - never quite succeeding, but ever so content to try.

Folks, our gospel is under attack today. It is under attack from the Pharisees, from false brethren, and from misinformed brethren. And why are we losing so much ground? Let me tell you why...

- First, it is because We are giving place *by our ignorance*. We don't even know we're under attack. The battle is out there, somewhere.
- Secondly, we are giving place *by our complacency*. We don't want anyone waking us up. We like our cozy world. We are content reminding ourselves that we attend a good church and have a good pastor. We love peace at any price while we peek out now and then from under the corner of our covers.
- Thirdly, It is because we are giving place *by cooperating with those who are corrupting the gospel*. We have bought into the idea that the enemy of our enemy is our friend. It is unthinkable to us that such a thing as false brethren could even exist. If they name the name of Christ they are our fiends. I sometimes wonder if any of us have anything left in us which outrages us when we see our precious gospel defiled. Stop dining with the devil, folks.

I don't want life to bypass me! I know this generation is no different than any other. I want to pick my battles, prepare for my battles, and quit myself along with the real men of God who, by God's grace, and only by God's grace have stood alone with our Lord. I want to stand against those who dilute, denude, detract from, or add to this precious gospel.