

# Galatians

Focusing on Faithfulness – Part 4 of 12



A MAN WORTH IMITATING (GAL 2:1–10)

2:1 Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. 2 It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. 3 But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4 But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. 5 But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

6 But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)— well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised 8 (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), 9 and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 They only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do. (Gal 2:1–10 NASB)

# Summary

- Paul visited Jerusalem because of a divine revelation (Gal 2:1–2; cf. Acts 11:27–30, AD 47; 15:1–33, AD 50).
- He met privately with “leaders” to stay charges that his gospel was from men (Gal 2:1–2; cf. 1:11–12).
- Certain Jewish “Christians” began forcing gentiles to Judaize (i.e., adopt Jewish practices), but Paul staunchly opposed them (2:3–5; cf. Acts 15:1–33).



**Be imitators of me**, just as I also am of Christ. (1 Cor 11:1)

Therefore I exhort you, **be imitators of me**. (4:16)

Brethren, **join in following my example**, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. (Phil 3:17)

**The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things**, and the God of peace will be with you. (4:9)

**You also became imitators of us and of the Lord**, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit. (1 Thess 1:6)

# A Man Worth Imitating

- Paul refused to compromise the gospel of Jesus.
  - Paul preached, preserved, and protected the truth of the gospel (Gal 2:2, 5, 7; cf. vv. 3, 8, 14; 1:6–9; 4:16).
  - Christians must distinguish between truth and error and stand for what is right (Rev 2:12–17; cf. vv. 1–7; Jude 3).
  - Even if certain issues seem to be insignificant (e.g., imputation, institutionalism), we must not compromise the truth, for the consequences of error are never small.



# A Man Worth Imitating

- Paul made it his aim to please God, not people.
  - Paul did not allow the reputations of people to dictate his actions toward them (Gal 2:2, 6, 9; cf. vv. 11–14; 1:10).
  - Though he conceded to others where he could, Paul always honored God (1 Thess 2:3–7; cf. 1 Cor 9:19–23).
  - People-pleasing, God-dishonoring compromises (e.g., pronouns, grace-fellowship) are never worth the temporary praise (or relief) that we receive here and now.



# A Man Worth Imitating

- Paul identified and rebuked counterfeit Christians.
  - Not everyone who claims to be a brother is a brother (Gal 2:4–5; cf. 2 Cor 11:26; vv. 13–15; Matt 7:15–23).
  - Contending for the faith means calling out counterfeit Christians (Jude 3–4, 12–13, 17–19; cf. 2 Pet 2:1).
  - Though some try to broaden the bounds of fellowship, we must distinguish true and false Christians to save the latter and to protect the church (1 Cor 5:9–11).



# A Man Worth Imitating

- Paul practiced what he preached.
  - The message and conduct of Paul were consistent (Gal 2:10; cf. v. 3; 6:6–10; Acts 11:27–30; Rom 15:25–28).
  - Knowledge of the word does us no good if we judge others and practice the same sins (Rom 2:1–3; cf. 1:32).
  - We undercut the (false) accusations of the discontent (e.g., “Christians = hypocritical, self-serving, unloving”) when we preach and practice the truth of the gospel.

