



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians

Chapter 2

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Introduction

- In chapter 1, St. Paul expressed his anger toward the Judaizers because they wanted to change the gospel of Christ.
- God asked St. Paul to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this issue; this was the reason behind the council at Jerusalem.
- A clear canon was made regarding the heresy of the Judaizers.
- Then confrontation happened between St. Peter and St. Paul.



Jerusalem Council (2: 1-10)

- Fourteen years: from his conversion.
- Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)
- Barnabas, a Jew living in Cyprus (Acts 4: 36), is St. Mark's mother's brother, a companion of St. Paul for the gentiles (Acts 13: 2).
- Titus, a gentile from Greece, became the bishop of Crete.
- The importance of the one mindedness, the approval of the church, and the spirit of council.
- In vain: if the people doubted the apostleship of St. Paul.

Jerusalem Council (2: 1-10)



- Who were of reputation: the twelve apostles, the leaders of the church who were entrusted with the faith.
- Privately: lest those who have weaker faith cause trouble.
- The apostles accepted Titus without circumcision to support that the works of the law are needed for salvation.
- St. Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16: 1-3), may be because of his Jewish mother but Titus was a pure gentile.
- The reason of the revelation is because of the false brethren (the Judaizers).

Jerusalem Council (2: 1-10)



- Secretly brought in, who came in by stealth: not called by God.
- Spy out the teaching of St. Paul.
- Liberty: from the symbolic Jewish law and not from the virtues of the law (Gal 5: 13).
- Bondage: to the deadly works of the law.
- Our submission is to the Lord only and to the TRUTH of the gospel.
- The TRUTH that we will be saved by the Blood of the Lord away from the deadly works of the law.

Jerusalem Council (2: 1-10)



- St. Paul confirms that God has no partiality of favoritism.
- St. Paul was sure that his call and teaching was a divine one, so the apostles did not add anything to his teaching, instead they approved his doctrine.
- St. Paul was approved to be the apostle for the gentiles as St. Peter for the Jews.
- It is the same God who worked in St. Peter and St. Paul.
- James was mentioned first because he is the Apostle of Jerusalem.
- God calls His servant through the church.

Jerusalem Council (2: 1-10)



- Pillars: leaders of the church.
- Right hand of fellowship: received them as fellows.
- Our new life in Christ will be manifested in the way we conduct our lives.
- One important aspect is the care for the needy.
- The gentiles cared for the needy from the Jews (fellowship of love beyond race or place).
- St. Paul started this ministry by himself.
- The Apostles confirmed the importance of attending to this ministry.

Confrontation in Antioch (2: 11-21)



- St. Peter went to Antioch (most probably) after his imprisonment (Acts 12: 17), where he had confrontation with St. Paul.
- Eat: may be regular food or Eucharist.
- Fear usually leads to other sins like hypocrisy.
- Hypocrisy is seeking to please men more than God.
- The conduct of St. Peter and Barnabas was public, so the confrontation has to be also public.

Confrontation in Antioch (2: 11-21)



- St. Peter after preaching Cornelius (Acts 10: 15, 28) realized that there is no need for the deadly works of the law, so he lived as the gentiles.
- If he is convinced that the deadly works of the law are not needed, why then he asks the gentiles to keep them!
- The Jews considered the gentiles as unclean and sinners.
- Both St. Peter and St. Paul realized the failure of the law in their justification, so they believed in Christ to be justified by His blood.

Confrontation in Antioch (2: 11-21)



- If while seeking to be justified by Christ, I am found to be a sinner and in need for the law to justify me, this means that:
 - ❖ The faith in Christ is not enough for justification.
 - ❖ The faith in Christ made us forget the law and this is a big sin and Christ will be responsible for that.
- So the conclusion would be: Christ is a minister of sin.
- So returning to the works of the law is depicting Christ as minister of sin and this is certainly not.

Confrontation in Antioch (2: 11-21)



- So building again the law that was destroyed makes me a transgressor.
- I, through the good understanding of the law, died to the law, realizing its inability to justify me, that I might live to God through my faith in Christ who will justify me.
- This death to the law is by being crucified with Christ in baptism and dying daily to the passions of the Lord and living to God or most accurately Christ lives in me.

Confrontation in Antioch (2: 11-21)



- My life now in the flesh is not my life but it is the life of Christ in me. Christ, whom I believe in, who loved me and died for me.
- If I return back to the law as a means for justification, then I am setting aside the grace of God
- If righteousness comes through the deadly works of law, then Christ died in vain.



Conclusion

- How Many times did St. Paul meet St. Peter? And what is the reason for each time?
- What is the difference between this visit and the previous one?
- Who are meant by false brethren? And why St. Paul gave them this name?
- What does the word "the right hand of fellowship" means to you? Why?
- What are the main items that St. Paul gave to us for the new life in Christ (v19-21)?