

Introduction

Over the past thirty-eight years as a pastor, I have brought correction several different times to pastors. It is never an easy thing to do, and the situations requiring such action are never ideal. I usually give a lot of grace to people, and especially in non-essential doctrines. I agree with 1 Corinthians 13:12 that we see dimly now. When the perfect comes, we shall know fully, but right now, we see dimly. There will always be some differing opinions on some things, especially end-time eschatology. However, when it comes to the gospel message, an essential doctrine, I have been very direct and quick to bring correction. I do not want people in the congregation believing a false gospel. I have also been quick to respond when people have been hurt or offended by a false teaching.

(1 Co 13:12) “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.”

On one occasion, we had a young minister come preach at our church. He shared some things about the gospel, and in particular, what was required to be saved. He said if you say that you love God, you are saved. He also said that repentance is not part of the gospel message. The Scriptures are clear that we must believe in our heart that Jesus was raised from the dead, and we must confess Jesus as Lord. Many people in other religions say they love God, but that does not make them Christians, and it does not save them. Jesus preached that people should repent and believe the gospel because the kingdom of God is at hand.

(Ro 10:9–10) “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; {10} for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

(Mk 1:15) “and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’”

At Pentecost, people asked what they needed to do to be saved, and Peter said that they needed to repent. Repent means to have a change of mind, to do an about-face, and go the opposite way. People need to stop trusting in works, or in other ways, and put their trust in Christ; that is the repentance that Jesus and Peter spoke about. The gospel message is an extremely important message, and I had to bring correction to the teaching that was given so that people did not walk away with this false gospel.

(Ac 2:37–38) “Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” {38} Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

In our passage today, the Apostle Paul brings correction to the Apostle Peter in the presence of all. There were four reasons why he corrected Peter. First, Peter was not living out the gospel message. He was doing something that contradicted the gospel message. The gospel message was of utmost importance to Paul, and to all of us; it is an essential doctrine. Second, Paul corrected Peter because others were joining him in his sin. Sin is like leaven, and it spreads unless it is properly dealt with. Third, the message of the gospel was being perverted. Fourth, the life of faith after salvation was being nullified. Our text is Galatians 2:11-21, so open your Bibles and let us read the passage.

Why Paul Reproved Peter

1. He was not living the gospel message
2. Others in the church were joining in
3. The message of the gospel was being perverted
4. The grace of God was being nullified (set aside)

(Ga 2:11–21) “But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. {12} For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he *began* to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. {13} The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. {14} But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how *is it that* you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? {15} “We *are* Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; {16} nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. {17} “But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be! {18} “For if I rebuild what I have *once* destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. {19} “For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. {20} “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. {21} “I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”

1. He was not living the gospel message (Gal 2:11-15)

Our passage begins with “But...” This is a continuation of the passage last week. Something has taken place that does not line up with what was previously discussed. Paul has just finished talking about the meeting in Jerusalem. In that meeting, not even Titus, who was a Gentile believer, was required to be circumcised. They were in agreement that you do not have to be circumcised to become a Christian. You do not have to follow the Law to be saved. It is by faith that both Gentiles and Jews are saved.

(Ga 2:11) “**But** when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.”

(Ga 2:3) “But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.”

At that meeting, Peter, James, and John had given Barnabas and him the right hand of fellowship, and had recognized the grace that had been given to him to reach out to the Gentiles. Peter and the apostles in Jerusalem were in agreement with the gospel message that Paul was preaching. But, in light of that, something has taken place that does not line up with that meeting in Jerusalem.

(Ga 2:9) “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.”

When Peter went to Antioch, Paul opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. The Greek word for condemned is *kataginosko* (Strong's G2607), which means to find fault with blame. Peter has done something, and is at fault; he is to blame for something that has happened in the church at Antioch, so Paul has opposed him to his face.

(Ga 2:11) "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned."

Peter had come to Antioch, and he had been eating with the Gentiles. However, when certain men from James came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. Men from James refers to men from the church in Jerusalem, where James is the lead pastor. Peter was initially the leader, but at some point, he stepped aside and James, the half-brother of Jesus, became the leader of the church. At the meeting in Jerusalem, it was James who gave the final decision, and wrapped up the meeting. These men may have come from the church James was pastoring, but they were not acting on his behalf. At that meeting, they had all agreed that circumcision and other parts of the Law were not required. These Jewish men who had come were obviously not onboard with that decision, and the ramifications of that decision. When these men came to Antioch, Peter withdrew himself, and did not eat or fellowship with the Gentile believers. He was treating these Gentile believers in Antioch as unclean and second-class people. It was arrogant, insulting, and very divisive. So, Paul opposed him to his face for doing this.

(Ga 2:12) "For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he *began* to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision."

When I think of Peter, I think of someone who is a bold leader. He said and did things impromptu, without thinking or contemplating his actions. It was Peter that rebuked Jesus about His words that He was going to be arrested and crucified (Mk 8:31-33). It was Peter that swore that he would never deny Christ (Mk 14:27-31). It was Peter that cut the ear off of Malcus, the high priest's slave, when they had come to arrest Jesus (John 18:10).

Peter was also a risk-taker. He was willing to lay down the family business to follow Christ (Mt 4:18-20). He was willing to step out of the boat and walk on water (Mt 14:28-33). I don't think of Peter being fearful of what others might think.

It was Peter that preached the sermon at Pentecost, where three thousand souls were saved. Peter was a bold leader, but sometimes he said and did things without thinking them through. I don't think of Peter being fearful of the opinions of others. I don't think of him fearing the party of the circumcision. Peer pressure is real, and it even affected Peter. This shows that all of us need to be careful, or we too could yield to peer pressure, or cultural pressure. We must learn to do what is right in God's sight, even if it is not the popular thing to do. We have to have a fear of God, rather than a fear of man.

Paul is a great contrast, and a great example to follow. In Galatians 1:10, he asked the Galatians if he was seeking the favor of men, or God. Then, he said, "If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." We must always fear God and try to please Him.

(Ga 1:10) "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ."

When Paul opposed him to his face, he said in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews. We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles.” Peter was not saying that Jews are not sinners, and that Gentiles are sinners. He was merely saying that they were born Jews, not Gentiles. They were born as Jewish sinners, not Gentile sinners. Under the influence of pressure of those that came from Jerusalem, he was implying that the Gentiles had to follow the Law, like the Jews. He was not being straightforward about the gospel.

(Gal 2:14-15) “But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how *is it that* you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? {15} “We *are* Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles;”

When Jesus taught the apostles about church discipline, he said that if a brother sins, go to him in private, and if he listens to you, you have won your brother. If he does not listen to you, take one or two others with you, and if he listens to this small group, you have won your brother. If he does not listen to you, go before the whole church. If he does not repent at this time, treat him as a tax collector. We do not have a record of Paul going to Peter privately first. It appears that he went before the church and rebuked Peter.

(Mt 18:15–17) “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. {16} “But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. {17} “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

In Paul’s first letter to Timothy, he gave the qualifications of elders (1 Tim 3:1-7). In chapter five, he gave some instructions pertaining to elders. The church is to give double honor to those that work hard at preaching and teaching. Then, he gave instructions about disciplining a pastor. The church is not to receive accusations against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. A pastor is supposed to be above reproach, and already tested. He gets the benefit of the doubt when it is his word against another person’s word. However, pastors that continue in sin are to be rebuked in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. Once an elder has received accusations, i.e., he has been confronted by two or three witnesses, and he does not repent, but continues to sin, he is to be rebuked in the presence of all. The process is similar to the instructions in Matthew 18, only the first step has been bypassed.

(1 Ti 5:19–20) “Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. {20} Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful *of sinning*.”

In this case, it does not appear that Paul went through these steps. When Paul opposed him to his face, that may have been in private. When Paul said that they were not being straightforward about the truth of the gospel, he reproved Cephas in the presence of all. That may have been two different encounters, but it looks like there was just one confrontation, a public one.

It took some courage to reprove Peter, especially in the presence of all. However, Paul was a man of principle and he was not going to allow this to happen in the church, by Peter or anyone else. He was going to defend the gospel. Paul was not intimidated by Paul or any of the other apostles. In 2 Corinthians 12, he wrote that he was not “inferior to the most eminent apostles.”

His public rebuke of Peter made that very clear, he was on the level with the most eminent apostles.

(2 Co 12:11) “I have become foolish; you yourselves compelled me. Actually I should have been commended by you, for in no respect was I inferior to the most eminent apostles, even though I am a nobody.”

I have had the task of bringing a word of correction to a well-known apostle. He is the head of an apostolic network. He comes out of a prophetic background, and I have seen him minister very powerfully. However, one day he brought a word of correction to me and our leadership team about tithing. He said that we were robbing God because we were not giving a tenth of our received tithes to his ministry. I apologized to our leadership team, and told them that we were not robbing God, and that this correction was based on a false teaching. I also corrected that apostle in private. I explained to him that the Scriptures do not teach that a tithe of the tithe goes to the apostle over the church. I also explained that I was the apostle over that church. I was the one who had trained the leaders, and ordained them. This man had come in once a year to give a sermon, and he thought that made him the apostle over our church. He did not receive my word of correction very well. Consequently, our church cut off all financial support to that apostle.

2. Others in the church were joining in

There was another reason, a very good reason, Paul went before the whole church. Peter’s hypocrisy had spread to the rest of the Jews. Paul wrote, “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.” Barnabas was Paul’s co-worker. Barnabas had been the lead pastor at Antioch, and had brought Paul in from Tarsus. They had taught considerable numbers in Antioch. When they were sent out as apostles in Acts 13, it was Barnabas who led the team. Peter and Barnabas, and the rest of the Jews were all engaged in this hypocrisy. This had become a widespread problem in the church at Antioch; it was no longer a private matter, but a corporate matter.

(Ga 2:13) “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.”

Sin has a way of spreading to others. In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, he said that sin was like a little leaven that leavens the whole loaf. He exhorted the Corinthians to repent and deal with the immorality in the church. Therefore, this sin needed to be addressed in the presence of all so that the truth of the gospel would remain with them.

(1 Co 5:6–7) “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump *of dough*? {7} Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are *in fact* unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.”

In the meeting in Jerusalem, Paul wrote that he did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with them. Now, he is in Antioch, but he is still Paul, and he is not going to yield to this sin for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with the saints in Antioch. Paul was going to deal with the situation, and since there were many involved, a private rebuke was not the best course; a public rebuke was more appropriate.

(Ga 2:5) “But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.”

3. The message of the gospel was being perverted

Paul needed to reprove Peter because he was not living the gospel message; he was living in hypocrisy. Second, he needed to correct Peter because his sin had spread to the rest of the Jews, and even to Barnabas. Third, he needed to correct Peter because the message of the gospel was being perverted. The waters were being muddied, and the message of the gospel was no longer clear. The Judaizers had come into Galatia and taught a false gospel. Paul is writing this letter to correct this false gospel. He has used the example of Peter in Antioch to show how important the truth of the gospel is to the church. At the same time, it also let the Galatians know that Paul was of equal status with the most eminent apostles, something that the Judaizers had falsely taught about Paul.

What is the gospel message? In verse sixteen, Paul wrote, “nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”

(Gal 2:16) “nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”

Paul makes it very clear that a man is not justified by the works of the Law. Being circumcised will not justify a man. Observing the Sabbath will not justify a man. Observing the Passover Feast, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), or the Feast of Booths, will not justify a man. Ceremonial washings of pots and dishes will not justify a man. A man is not justified by the works of the Law. The Judaizers were trying to get the Galatians to be back under the Law.

How are we justified? We are justified through faith in Christ Jesus. When we believe in Christ Jesus, and place our faith in Him, we are justified. Jews, who were circumcised are justified by faith. Gentiles, who were uncircumcised, were justified by faith. “A man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus.”

There are some differing views about what is required to be saved. Some people teach that you must be baptized in order to be saved. Most theologians believe that baptism is an act of obedience that we do after receiving Christ. When Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, he said that God had called him to preach the gospel, not baptize. If baptism were part of the gospel, Paul could not have made that statement. Baptism is a picture of our salvation. We are buried with Christ by going under the water, and we are raised up out of the water to a new, resurrected life. Baptism was also a public declaration that we are identifying with Christ. The early church baptized believers immediately after they received Christ. Today, many believers do not get immediately baptized, and some have never been baptized. We should encourage people to be baptized, but we should also make it clear that being baptized does not save them. We are saved and justified by placing our faith in Christ.

When I was playing professional golf, I printed my testimony and gave it out to spectators. It had a nice color picture of our family on the cover, and I autographed them beforehand so that I

could quickly give them out. At the end of my testimony of how I became a Christian, I invited people to receive Christ. Then, I gave some follow-up steps for anyone that prayed to receive Christ. Here are the things that I wrote:

- Find a church that teaches the Bible as 100% the Word of God and encourages you in your personal relationship with Jesus.
- Ask someone in the church to water baptize you.
- Read the Bible every day. Start with the Gospel of John in the New Testament.
- Spend time each day praying and expressing your gratefulness to God.
- Develop friendships with sincere Christians.
- Tell other people about your new relationship with God and what He has done for you.

I had a caddy that was part of a denomination that teaches that you must be baptized in order to be saved. He would not give out my testimonies, because they did not state that you must be baptized in order to be saved. Encouraging someone to get baptized afterwards was not good enough; you had to get baptized in order to be saved. One day I saw him giving out one of my golf balls as a souvenir, along with his gospel tract. I told him that he was not allowed to give my golf balls out with his tract. He was welcome to give out my balls with my tracts, but he would not do that. I believe that they teach a false gospel. If my name or anything is coming from me, it had to be the true gospel. Baptism is like circumcision, and it will not save you. We are not saved by works of the Law, but only by believing and placing our faith in Christ Jesus.

I like the way that Paul put it in his letter to the Romans. He said that “if we confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.” We must believe in Christ’s resurrection, and we must confess Him as our Lord or Master. There are no works involved. We must simply believe and place our trust in Christ.

(Ro 10:9–10) “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; {10} for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

4. The grace of God was being nullified (set aside)

The fourth reason that Paul needed to reprove Peter was that the grace of God was being nullified. Paul has just told them that by the works of the Law no flesh is justified. We are only justified through faith in Christ Jesus. Now, he asks, “But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin! May it never be!” We cannot be declared justified, or innocent of all sin, by trying to keep the Law. The Law reveals sin, but it does not justify us. If we are trying to be justified by the Law, we will be found sinners, and Christ is not a minister of sin. He did not die on the cross and pay the penalty for our sins so that we could be sinners. He paid the price for our sins so that we could become righteous. Christ is not a minister of sin. Paul said emphatically, “May it never be!” He had used that same phrase when writing to the Romans. He asked if sin should increase so that grace would abound. No, may it never be. Christ died to set us free from our sins.

(Gal 2:17) “But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!”

(Ro 6:1–2) “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?
{2} May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”

Paul went on, “For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.” When Paul became a Christian, he died to the Law. He put an end to the legalistic system and placed his faith in Christ. He died to the Law so that he could live to God. He was no longer under the Law. The Law served its purpose. It revealed that we are sinners. It was a tutor to bring us to Christ. But the Law did not justify us. Christ is the One who paid for our sins and justifies us. We simply need to place our faith in Him.

(Gal 2:18-19) “For if I rebuild what I have *once* destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. {19} “For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.”

Our life in Christ is to be a new life. In baptism, we are buried with Christ, and we are raised up out of the water just as Christ was raised from the dead. We are raised up to live a new resurrected life in Christ. Christ set us free from the Law, and our sinful past, so that we would be free to live for Him.

(Ro 6:3–7) “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? {4} Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. {5} For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, {6} knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; {7} for he who has died is freed from sin.”

How should a believer live this new life in Christ? Paul answers this question, saying, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” We live our new life in Christ by faith in Jesus. We do not live our new life by trying to earn our righteousness through works. When we place our faith in Christ, we are justified and receive the righteousness of God. It is a gift by grace, not something that we can earn. We live our life in Christ the same way we began, by faith.

(Gal 2:20) “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

Paul ends the passage by saying that he does not nullify the grace of God. God’s grace through faith is how we become righteous; it does not come by trying to keep the Law. When we try to live by the Law, which is what the Judaizers were trying to get the Galatians to do, we nullify the grace of God. Paul concludes by saying, “if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.” The fourth and final reason that Paul brought correction to Peter was that he did not want to nullify the grace of God, and effectively say that Christ died needlessly. The true gospel is that Christ paid the price for all of our sins on the cross. There is nothing that we can add to it. Our righteousness is not something we can earn; it is by grace through faith.

(Gal 2:21) “I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”

Conclusion and Applications

Paul has written to the Galatians because Judaizers had come in and spread a perverted gospel. They said they were from James, leading people to believe that the gospel they were teaching was approved by James, and they were doing this on his behalf. These Judaizers may have been from Jerusalem, but they were not sent by James, and he certainly would not have endorsed the gospel they were teaching. These Judaizers had wreaked havoc in churches all over Europe and Asia.

They had also discredited Paul and his apostolic ministry in an attempt to persuade the churches in Galatia to buy into their legalistic doctrine. Paul has been defending his ministry and the gospel. He was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles, while still in his mother's womb. His calling did not come from men, but from God. The gospel message he received was not from men, but from revelation from the Lord. Paul had gone to Jerusalem because of these revelations and had met with the apostles and elders. They endorsed the gospel message, and they extended their right hand of fellowship. They also recognized Paul's call to be an apostle to the Gentiles. By sharing these things, Paul has discredited the false narrative these Judaizers had put forth.

Paul said that if anyone teaches a false gospel, he is to be accursed. Paul was committed to the right gospel being shared with people. He did not want people led astray and led into bondage. Our passage today is about Paul's reproach of Peter in the presence of all. He reprovved Peter for not living the gospel message. Peter had withdrawn from the Gentiles and his life was sending a message that these Judaizers' message was correct. Paul would have no part of that.

Second, Paul reprovved Peter because his sin had spread. The other Jews in Antioch joined in with Peter, and even Barnabas was led astray. Paul had to bring correction in the presence of all, because all were involved.

Third, because of the false teaching, and the actions of Peter, Barnabas, and the Jews, the true gospel message was being perverted. Paul brought correction so that the truth of the gospel would remain with them.

Finally, this false gospel brought people under the Law, trying to earn their salvation and justification. It nullified the grace of God, and implied that Christ died needlessly. Paul brought correction because he did not want the grace of God nullified. He did not want people trying to earn their salvation. He wanted them to live their lives by faith.

There are many applications that can come from our text. Two great apostles, Peter and Barnabas, were led astray by the fear of men. We need to have the fear of God, not the fear of men. We need to be committed to always pleasing God, even if it means that others around us are doing something different. I pray regularly for myself and others to have the fear of the Lord.

Another application is the church is to be the pillar and support of the truth. Paul was committed to truth, whether it be the gospel or other doctrines. We need to take a stand for the truth. One reason that the church is in the condition it is in today is because we have not stood up for truth. We need to be like the Bereans, who examined everything in the Scriptures to make sure it was so. We need to know the Word. We need to read, meditate, and study the Word of God. The church is Biblically illiterate. According to Barna, only 6% of church goers in 2024 have a Biblical worldview. Sadly, only 37% of pastors have a Biblical worldview. It is hard to be the pillar and support of the truth, when we do not know the truth. We need to know God's word.

(1 Ti 3:15) “but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.”

When correction in the church is warranted, we need to know the Biblical process that Jesus taught. When necessary, we need to have the boldness and courage to bring correction, even if it is someone like Peter or Barnabas. Most churches today do not use church discipline. If we are going to be a pure bride, we need church discipline. If we are going to be the pillar and support of the truth, we need church discipline. We need to study and understand church discipline so that we can use it when necessary.

Finally, we need to live our lives by faith. We began our lives by faith in Christ, and His finished work on the cross, and we need to continue to live our lives by faith. We need to recognize that we have been crucified with Christ, and the life we now live, we live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself up for us.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for Paul’s letter to the churches in Galatia. It is rich and there are so many applications for all of us today. Help us to know that we have been justified, declared innocent and holy, and it is not by our works, but by Your finished work on the cross. You have declared us to be saints, so help us to live like saints. Help us to be a church that is a pillar and support of truth. Help us to live our lives by faith. We ask these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Questions

- If you had been in Paul’s place in Antioch, how would you have felt about bringing correction to Peter, one of the pillars in the church?
- Do we admonish or correct those in the church that are not living the gospel message?
- When sin is allowed to remain in a church, what is the result? (See 1 Corinthians 5:6-7.)
- When sin is properly handled in a church, what is the result? (See Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Corinthians 5:7.)
- Why do church leaders, and churches not take action for sin in the church?
- Peter was fearful of the party of the circumcision, and it caused him to succumb to peer pressure and sin. In the face of peer pressure, what can help us stay faithful to God? (See Galatians 1:10.)
- In the face of temptation, who is able to come to our aid? (See 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:18.)

Introduction (1 Co 13:12, Ro 10:9–10, Mk 1:15, Ac 2:37–38, Ga 2:11–21)

- 1. He was not living the gospel message** (Gal 2:11-15, 2:3, 2:9, Mk 8:31-33, Mk 14:27-31, John 18:10, Mt 4:18-20, 14:28-33, Ga 1;10, Mt 18:15–17, 1 Tim 3:1-7, 5:19-20, 2 Co 12:11)

- 2. Others in the church were joining in** (Ga 2:13, 1 Co 5:6–7, Ga 2:5)

- 3. The message of the gospel was being perverted** (Gal 2:16, Ro 10:9–10)

- 4. The grace of God was being nullified** (Gal 2:17-21, Ro 6:1–7)

Conclusion and Applications (1 Ti 3:15)