IN DEFENCE OF TRUTH

**DATE: 7/8/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Galatians 2:11-19; Acts 15; John 21**

**INTRODUCTION**

Where does Compromise begin?

It begins in the little things that we don’t consider important

**I Timothy 4:1-5**

As we come to the 2nd half of chapter 2 …

Paul continues to explain the fallacies of living by the Law in order to be Saved or to Maintain Salvation

These False Teachings were even causing Good men to falter or hesitate in their Christian walk

It had been clearly determined at the Jerusalem Council that Gentiles were saved and added to the Church in the same way that the Jews were—through faith alone

**Acts 15:7-11 …**

However, it wasn't long before a new problem popped up

The new issue was between the Jews who were still holding to the law concerning dietary regulations and the Gentiles who had no such custom (**Acts 10**)

While it had been settled that Gentiles were now free to come into the church and fellowship with Jewish believers,

The new issue was whether or not a Jew was free to enter into a Gentile home and eat Gentile foods

The issue soon erupted into a controversy, with Peter caught in the middle

Paul uses this incident of rebuking Peter at Antioch, to continue the warning against the encroachment of False Teaching

Let’s stand and read **vs. 11-19** together, and then pray

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. PETER’S “COMPROMISE” – vs.11-13**

**v. 11 - *“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed”***

Fault was found in Peter

Notice first, How Paul dealt with Peter

Paul dealt with Peter to his face

He went straight to Peter

He didn't talk to others first … *about* Peter

That’s called Gossip

Paul went directly to Peter to get this matter straightened out

The word ***“withstood”*** means *to stand against, oppose, resist*

The word ***“blamed”*** means *to censure, to disapprove, to find fault with*

**Matthew 18:15*****– “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and***

***him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother”***

This Compromise brought …

**A. ‘Hurt’ – v.12**

***“For before that certain came from James, he (Peter) did eat with the Gentiles: but when they (Jewish brethren) were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision”***

This issue resulted in an unnecessary division

The text says – *“****he did eat with the Gentiles”***

That was the issue

Could a Jew eat Gentile food?

At first Peter had no problem fellowshipping with the Gentiles

But when *“...* ***certain came from James”*** problems arose

Notice that they are described as *“****certain”*** (specific)

We can presume that these were men of position

Why, because of the effect they had on Peter when they showed up

They were the big shots from Jerusalem

And when they did show up …

Peter **“…*withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision”***

Notice that they are identified as being *“****of the circumcision”***

They were Jews and from the context we see which side of the issue they were on

As always there were folks on both sides of the issue and it is obvious that that issue had become quite divisive

Peter had gotten caught in middle and was a bit wishy-washy

**James 1:8 – *“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”***

Peter's reaction tells that these were men of power and reputation and he feared them

When the big shots arrived Peter immediately *“****withdrew and separated himself”***from the Gentile believers

And notice that Peter is described as *“****fearing them”***

Peter was intimidated by their presence

Peter separated with them because of who they were

He compromised Principle for Personality

The fear of man is an awesome force

Solomon said in **Proverbs 29:25 –** *“****The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe”***

The greatness of our fear usually shows the weakness of our faith

The fear of man is one of the greatest hindrances to serving God

It is described as a *“****snare”***

A snare is an awful thing

**Snare** – is *something that entraps*

It is a place of **Detainment**

It grasps and holds its victims

It is a place of **Defeat** for the prey wears itself out trying to get free

Finally the snare becomes a place of **Death**

Fear Defeats & Destroys the work of God

**II Timothy 1:7 –** *“****For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind”***

**This Compromise Brought ‘Hurt’**

This Compromise brought …

**B. ‘Harm’ – v.13**

***“And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation”***

Every Believer is a Leader, at least to some degree

People are watching and many of them will make decisions based on what they see in our lives

The Jews and even Barnabas followed Peter's lead

When we Compromise, it influences others

Peter should have learned earlier what influence he had in other people’s lives

I think of **John 21:2, 3 …**

It was in the days following the Resurrection

There was still a lot of uncertainty in the Apostles minds

Peter says … ***“I go a fishing”***

Peter wasn't talking about getting his fishing pole and going down to the lake for a relaxing afternoon

Peter was acting like he was quitting the ministry

In his uncertainty Peter was content to give up on God's call and fall back on his old trade of fishing

But notice that as soon as Peter said – ***“I go a fishing”***

Six others said – ***“We also go with thee”***

Peter's decision not only affected himself, but everyone else that was with him

The same is true of every believer

The Decisions we make and the Direction we take, will influence others, either for good or for bad

The same is true in our text

When Peter compromised in Antioch, Barnabas and the other Jews followed his lead

**This Compromise Brought ‘Hurt’**

**This Compromise Brought ‘Harm’**

This Compromise brought …

**C. ‘Hypocrisy’ – v.13**

The Bible describes their actions as ***“dissimulation”***

**dissimulation** - *dissembling; hiding under a false appearance; feigning; false pretence; hypocrisy... it includes also the assuming of a false or counterfeit appearance which conceals the real opinions or purpose*

The word was originally used to describe an actor …

… someone who pretends to be someone or something he is not

The whole crowd … Peter, Barnabas, the other Jews were hypocritical in their actions

They knew better, but unfortunately, they were more motivated by Personality rather than Principle

They knew better, but they gave in to the Pressure

Those who follow us need to see genuine Christianity

The best way to Promote Principle is to live it

**PETER’S “COMPROMISE”**

**II. PAUL’S “CORRECTION” – vs. 14, 16**

Paul's confrontation with Peter was necessary in order to correct him

Not only had Peter's compromise caused unnecessary division among God's people,

It was also contrary to the Truth of the Gospel

**A. ‘Correction’ – v. 14**

***“But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”***

Now don't miss this

Notice what Paul says - *“****I said unto Peter before them all”***

Paul didn't just deal with the problem privately, he also addressed it publicly

Here is where a lot of Christians have difficulty dealing with correction (Most people don’t receive correction well)

Public Compromise many times calls for Public Correction

Don't misunderstand what I’m saying

Certainly we don't advocate that every failure and every detail be dealt with publically

However, when the error is public in such a way that it influences others,

There must be some degree of Public Correction

Paul dealt with Peter and then dealt with those (***“they”***) who had been influenced by him

**I Timothy 5:20 - *“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear”***

We learn from other people’s correction

Solomon said in **Pro. 19:25 –** *“****Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware...”***

The nature and influence of Peter’s sin required public correction

**B. ‘Conviction’ – v.16**

***“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified”***

Paul was acting on principle

He was earnestly contending for the faith

**v. 14** points out that *“****the truth of the gospel”*** was at stake

Paul gets to the heart of the matter

How is a man justified before God?

What they ate and who they ate with had no bearing on that

Paul points out that *“****a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ”***

The word *“****justified”*** speaks of being declared righteous by God

We do not become righteous by keeping the law

We are warned 3 times in **v.16** that – ***“by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified”***

**Romans 3:20 – *“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin”***

Our salvation and standing before God is not due to any merit of our own

It is not because we have met and satisfied the righteous demands of the law

Such an achievement is impossible

Paul is pointing out that Ritual does not Result in Righteousness

Justification is through Faith in Jesus Christ

**PETER’S “COMPROMISE”**

**PAUL’S “CORRECTION”**

**III. (THE) PEOPLE’S “CONFIDENCE” – vs. 17-19**

**A. Christ Does Not Cause Sin – v.17**

***“But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners,* (v.15) *is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid”***

Paul offers an argument based on the claims of Christ

Jesus Christ promised to save all (Both Jew & Gentile) who would come to Him and receive Him as Saviour

**John 1:12 – *“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:”***

Not only did Jesus Christ claim to be the way to Heaven, He also claimed to be the only way

**John 14:6 – *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”***

Here’s Paul's argument …

If receiving Christ alone fails to justify someone before God

Then the promises and claims of Christ were lies and He was a fraud

If we must keep any law or observe any ritual in order to be saved then there is only one conclusion

Christ would be the minister of sin

We know this is all rhetorical

A rhetorical question is a figure of speech in the form of a question that is asked in order to make a point rather than to elicit an answer

Paul says – ***“God forbid”***

**B. We Must Not Cause Doubt – vs. 18, 19**

***“For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor” “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God”***

The word ***“destroyed”*** means *to tear down, dissolve, bring to nought*

Paul had once trusted in the law to justify him before God

However, on the Damascus road he realized under the mighty hand of God that the law he loved and contended for was not the way to Heaven

Paul was saved by the grace of God and went out under the direction of God to preach the message of Grace to the Gentiles

When Paul put his trust in Christ the law was destroyed so far as he was concerned

To go back to a system that that no longer worked and try to build again upon it would make him a transgressor

To observe Jewish ritual after being saved is inconsistent with the message of Grace that God had entrusted to him

**CONCLUSION**

The issue today is not Judaism, Legalism, Works

But realizing that every False Teaching in some way diminishes the Grace of God by adding works for salvation

We must hold to the Truth that we are justified by Faith alone!

**PETER’S “COMPROMISE”**

**PAUL’S “CORRECTION”**

**PEOPLE’S “CONFIDENCE”**