

“Galatia—Revisit the Blessing (Part II)”

By Brother Parrish Lee

Sunday, September 29th, 2013

Giving honor to God, who is the Head of my life, the Creator, the Great One, the Lord of Hosts, He without whom could nothing be that is. Meanwhile, that true, wise God, that same God that we know... Giving honor to those who have gone on before us: Our founding pastor and his family, our bishop, he and his family, Pastor Wilson, and Brother Kenneth, and his family. Giving honor to all of y'all, who came to present yourselves before the Lord, that He might answer accordingly in your lives.

We have been talking about the Book of Galatians this whole month. Brother Tom Hanson started us off, of course, followed by Brother Bob Heirtzler, who preached Galatians chapter 2, followed by Brother Chris Ulrich, Galatians chapter 3. Last week we began with a revisit of the book of Galatians. We were going to try to get through chapter 2, that, of course, wasn't happening. It wasn't supposed to happen, in fact they have built college courses around chapters of the Word of God. They spend six months, and they might go over one book. How are we ever going to cover so much in thirty minutes? I'm watching the clock, just in case you're timing me; I'm watching. Our prayer is that you might be able to benefit from what we go over today; that it might be instructional and beneficial for our spiritual lives. We're revisiting; we left off at Galatians 2:10.

Galatians 2:11-14 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

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?

If you could just bow your heads with me for just a moment: Lord, we thank you so much for Your ministering Spirit, for you are doing everything for us. You have said in Your Word, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights...” and we just say, “Thank You, Lord.” Thank You for Your Presence, thank You for Your Spirit, thank You for Your ministering Word. Thank You for Your direction, Your correction, for putting up with us when nobody else would. Thank You for saving us from our sins. Thank You for Your blood, for Your sacrifice. Thank You for being faithful to us moreso than we ever could be to ourselves. God, we come before You and just say, “Thank You.” We ask, Lord, we ask—we come and present ourselves before You, Lord, so we ask—it said in Your Word that Your Word, it would not return unto You void, but that it would accomplish what You sent it to perform. We trust in that. So, Lord, build us up; teach us, use us, correct us.. God, have Your way in this time of Your worship; in Jesus name, we pray. And everyone said, “Amen.” Amen.

So, over the last month we went over Galatians, last week we went over—this is called a

quick synopsis—We talked about Galatians chapter 1, we mentioned Paul giving glory to God, how he didn't do it alone (he talked about the other brothers and sisters that were there ministering with him), third, how he said “I marvel that you are so soon removed from what God has put in your lives into something else.” So, Apostle Paul was talking to the Galatians, and last week, we had the maps up here, and we talked about Galatia is in present-day Turkey. It isn't all of Turkey--Turkey's a mighty big place—but we went through the travels of Apostle Paul, and how he went through these different areas. As he went through these different areas, he encountered different things, and if I could just do a little to set the stage: Israel had been in captivity for hundreds of years; generations and generations. They had been dispersed; they couldn't do just what they had wanted to do anymore. They had been dispersed, and, you know, if you weren't a Jew, but you were around the Jews, you kind of picked up on their customs, some of the things that they did. It's kind of like, I might not know how to work a certain machine, or know how to cook a certain meal, but if I watched somebody, see how they do it, I can get the general idea. If you teach me, then I'll really know, but if I just watch, I can get the idea. If I see that you cooked this meal, and it turned out really great, hey, I can just try and copy that, I can go along with that, because there's a benefit to following that. If I see that you work on your car a certain way, and, after you're finished working on it, the car works, then I know that there's a benefit to following that. The same thing would happen to those who were around, who watched the Jews; who just watched them. They could see, “Well, I might have had certain customs here, but I notice that when those people do this sort of thing, this is what happens.” Galatia had many Jews, but they also had many Gentiles who had like customs to that. Here we go: In the middle of all those customs, there were some Jews that, they had their own customs, okay?

This particular Scripture here, it talks about a certain—well, it's not really easy to describe it, because we're going to get to a certain way, I guess... It talks about how there was something that these two great men of God had to come together on. One of them, he might not have been doing things quite right, and the other one, he had to go and he had to get things right. What do you do? In verse 11, “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.” What? Apostle Peter? Kings to the Kingdom Peter? Walking on water Apostle Peter? “Lord, I will never deny You,” Apostle Peter? “**Feed My sheep,**” Apostle Peter? Yes, that Apostle Peter fell, and made a mistake.

In verse 12, “For before that certain came with James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.” So, the situation is, here's Peter, and, while the big, specific people weren't there, he followed certain ways to help bring more people in. When the Jewish hierarchy people—yeah, they were Christians, but they had the Jewish way of thinking deep inside of them; they had been raised that way, they had been shown that way—He kind of said, “You know, I've got an affinity to the Jewish side,” and he withdrew himself and started being more with them than he was to the brothers and sisters that he was ministering to. It's kind of like, maybe we had some people here this morning from Baltimore. It's like, “God, I love my brothers and sisters, but, what's up, home?” “Things are great.” “How's them pies? How's this and that?” The brothers and sisters are like, “The Lord's been doing wonderful things...” “Yeah, yeah, yeah; I know about that, but I'm talking over here, with my homies.” You got to love that, getting the whole culture thing. Yeah, I'm being a little extravagant, but I'm trying to make the point. The big issue here is division. Division.

Verse 13: “And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him...” So, not only did

Apostle Peter start and separate himself, but the other Jews separated also, there became a separation. This is the big deal, because if this is God's family, we should be one.

Verse 14: "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all..." When I saw, not that they preferred cheeseburgers over hot dogs, not that they preferred condos over apartments, not that they preferred Fords over Chevy's (ain't nothing wrong with that), but when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth—according to the truth!—I said to Peter before them all, when I saw that there was an error...

When I was younger in the Faith, people told me, "Apostle Paul was greater than Apostle Peter." "Oh yeah; was he?" "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, don't you know that Paul withstood Peter?" completely changing the focus of what this message is trying to say. Oh, yeah, he withstood him, and he did it publicly before them all! Oh, yeah, the "great Apostle Paul" was "over" Peter. Made it something that... When I was younger, I thought, "I guess you can get to the place where you've outgrown your leadership. You can walk up, and you can rebuke your pastor. What a high level that might be." Like I said, I was much younger in the faith. I thought, "I need to get more understanding behind that whole thing; I need to learn a little bit more about that." I had some misunderstandings about where I belong in God, and what I should strive to, and how I should correction, how I should treat humility, how I should treat seeking God, and how I should treat our leadership. I had some misunderstandings about that. As we go, we see that, yes, he withstood him, and yes, it was because he wasn't walking uprightly. It doesn't go on and talk about how there was a great fist-fight afterwards; it doesn't go on to say that Peter took the great scepter and knocked Paul up side the head... It doesn't say that. But, if we were to go over to 2 Peter, chapter 3, down towards the last (I can't remember which verse it is), he talks about his brother, Apostle Paul, and he talks about how he says many hard things, which are hard to be understood (2 Peter 3:15-16). He's bringing up the fact that Paul is establishing some things that we need to listen to. And he says, "You know, if you're unlearned, you wrestle with them. If you're ignorant and unlearned, you wrestle with them to your own destruction. To something that will tear you down." So, even Apostle Peter is saying you can't just put a faith value on this thing. I guarantee you that, after the end of this, they hugged and they talked about how this Gospel was going to go forth; they talked about how great their God was. But here, Paul talked said that he withstood him because there was something that needed to be corrected. There is a much bigger issue here. What really saves us? Is it adherence to the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or the works of the law that will do it? What really comes about? He had to ask him in verse 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?" It's not about works, and you can't let your own righteousness—you know what? it would be easy to fall into that. "You know what? You've got to wear a suit to church if you want to be righteous, or at least a tie." It would be easy to fall into one of those traps. "Your dress has to be a certain number of inches above or below your knee." So, yeah, it would be easy when, the fact of the matter is, I need my sins washed away. I need Jesus to intervene in my life. That's the issue.

So, after this whole thing transpired—we're not going to go over every verse, because I'm already running out of time—let's skip on down here to verses 20 and 21.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself

for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

If I could get holy enough by myself, then I don't need Jesus. that's not how it is; I need Jesus. Going on to chapter 3:

Galatians 3:1-2 0 foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

We've all heard about witches and everything, right? He says who hath bewitched you... But here, among the definitions, bewitched doesn't mean that they were like, wearing a Wizard of Oz hat, or flying on a broom; 'bewitched' means charmed; he's asking, who hath *charmed* you. Who has put something before you, that made it attractive enough that you have turned your attention, you have turned your walk, your heart, your mind away from the Gospel. Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth? The specificness is that they did it to draw you away from the truth. They didn't do it so that you would get bigger muscles; they didn't do it so that your tongue would be more happy; they didn't do it so that your skin would be softer. They didn't do it for any of those reasons; they did it to draw you away from the truth. Don't be fooled, there's a reason that it's written down; it's because it's to the church in 2013. It's to us, today.

Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth...? In other words, there is evidence. Don't you know that there is evidence that the Lord Jesus has been set before you? Evidence? Where? Where is the evidence? You know where that evidence is? Right here (pointing to himself). If you are here today point to yourself and say one time, "I am the evidence." You are the evidence. We are the evidence that He has been brought forth and crucified, because, if it wasn't the Son of God, I could have been baptized in His name, and been called on to read His Word, and her would be no change. The Spirit would not be with me. If it wasn't the truth, then the evidence wouldn't be there.

Galatians 3:3-5 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

He's making a point here that the Spirit of God is what's making a difference here. No matter where you are—of course, this was to Galatia, all the region, all the churches that were around there. Lystra, Derbe, all those cities that were around that region of Turkey—those places that he was talking about. He saw, as he visited, there was a drifting back towards the customs and the works; people thinking, "Yeah, yeah, I know the law has been done away," but, you see, this was *new*! They hadn't had generations and generations of being Christians. This was first-generation Christianity. There was a whole lot of stuff they had to get out of there.

Galatians 3:10-14 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

For as many as are under the works of the law are under the curse. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written... Now here's a part I really wanted to get to. The curse of the law. The law has a curse saints—Now, as they were going through Galatia, this wasn't something that was foreign, that things had curses. People would bring out these little Talismans, and you read in Scripture there was Bar-Jesus, who bewitched them (Acts 13:6-11), there were sorceries and things, so they were familiar with the idea that someone, some sorcerer or something, might come along when they had new-born children and put a curse on them, or go into people's houses a certain way, or wear things that were in disagreement with what they thought was righteous. They knew that there was a subject of curses. Now they see that the Jews, those righteous Jews, are under a curse, because, under the law, if you don't keep *everything*, then you're guilty. That was a problem, because who could be perfect? They might have all the knowledge, but they didn't have a covering for themselves, to make themselves perfect; that's why they had to keep going back and making sacrifices. So they were used to this, and they knew, and they wanted to have a deliverance from this curse, this curse of the law. He was telling them—how did he say it?—“...for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” So, they were knowledgeable about curses. This isn't something that is archaic; this isn't something that happened two thousand years ago, because the fact of the matter is, many of us don't know about the curse of the la, but many of us know about other curses—curses of addictions; can't break free... Incidentally, let me throw a quick commercial in here: Men's fellowship, this coming Saturday, we're going to talk about addictions, part II: the deliverance. End of commercial. Curses of addictions, curses from having somebody speak something over you, curses from what happened to your mom or your dad, to granddad and grandmom, curses from what happened to you when you were young, curses of what happened to other people when they were young... When I was younger in the faith, I was told, “Hey, you know what? Black people have a curse on y'all. Yes, you do, and that's why you're black.” Rocked my little world. Then I was told, “You know what? Spanish people have a curse on them, too. Yes, they do. And so do Italians, Greeks, and Asian people—they've got a curse on them; that's why they can't...” Then I heard, “You know what? women, they have a curse on them. They've got curses! There's curses on people.”

Verse 13: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:” Yeah, you've been cursed! If I was, I'd go to Jesus, and you know what He says? He says, “**I'll pay that!**” “Lord, You don't know about this curse; I just can't seem to break free!” “**Bring it to Me, and I'll pay that!**” Cursed!

He's been made a curse for us, in other words, He's the ransom. He is my evidence! He is my deliverance! He's my Bridge; He's my Way; He's my Rock! He's my Sword; He's my Shield! Jesus, delivering us from everything! You know what? "My mom, she didn't treat me right; my dad, he didn't treat me right." "Lord Jesus, deliver me from this; I need Your help!" "Come on in." Brother Parrish, you don't know, you don't even know how it is. You don't know what my curse is." You're right; I don't, but HE DOES! "He said, bring it to me." "I've got depression." "I get angry. Sometimes it just wells up in me." "I don't know what's wrong with my mind, but something keeps going on." "I just can't find it in myself to forgive." "Lord Jesus, deliver me from this!" And He says, "I'll pay that; I'll pay that!" Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Why Calvary? Why Golgotha? Why the cross? cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree. Oh, when He stretched His arms wide, it was the biggest hug the world has ever known. He said, "I'm taking you all, every one of you. This is My love, nailed to the tree." That's the biggest hug this world has ever seen. It stretches down through the years. It stretched back through time, it stretched forward through time; people not even born yet don't realize that they've already been hugged. They're already loved. The price has already been paid. That's our Savior; what kind of God is that?

Galatians 3:24-29 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

This part doesn't even need a whole lot of explanation, saints. When our Lord and Savior Jesus fulfilled the law, He made it so when we get baptized into Him, when we get baptized into Christ, He is our covering. Yes, he takes away the curse. Yes, He puts His blood in our lives. Yes, we have access to everything when we get baptized. When we get baptized into Christ Jesus, we have put Him on. We don't have to keep all those little trinkets of the law, and somebody else's righteousness, because we keep Jesus. We go where He says to go, and do what he gives us to do. We feel what He gives us to feel. We learn what He gives us to learn. We eat what He gives us to eat. We thank Him for everything that He gives us. That's the power of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Glory to God. When we fulfill Jesus, we fulfill everything else. Glory to God.