

~ FALSE BRETHREN UNAWARES BROUGHT IN....

GALATIANS 2:1 – 14

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~ Psychological, self-help, seeker-sensitive Bible teaching is not what this Spiritual Safari is all about. If those approaches appeal to you, then you'll discover a never-ending plethora of content available in the world to choose from. On the other hand, I only teach one Gospel – *THE* Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ – according to Paul the apostle. Candidly, I am aware of only one other program that teaches the Bible as our safari expedition through the entire Word of God does. If you have never read through Galatians in one sitting, it doesn't take long to do — and I highly suggest you take the time to do so now.

In our last report, we learned all about the time Paul spent in the desert of Arabia with the Lord Jesus Himself – and we saw how “*the Gospel*” was revealed to Paul, Personally. Christ communicated revelation directly to Paul. Of course, Peter, and likely Barnabas, had learned the Gospel from Jesus during His earthly ministry. So, for Paul's revelation to result in the same teaching that Peter had already written – and it is word for word the same – was miraculous, to say the least....

***1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to the church at Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.***

***2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.***

***3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:***

~ Verse one is a reference to the church in Jerusalem as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. The first council of the church was still deciding if one was saved by grace, or if they should continue to embrace the law. Paul

went up to Jerusalem by revelation to make his presentation of the Gospel of grace; he just wanted to know if they considered him right or wrong!

Titus was a Gentile, and the circumcision question was going to have to be answered — one way or another — for him; and they ultimately decide circumcision was not required for salvation. That makes this extremely important to understand. The Judaeizers were saying, “... *the church in Jerusalem says we are all under law.*” Well, the Jerusalem church was an ALL-Jewish church; many of them still went to the temple to worship. That would have been their meeting place. So, it would have been easy to wrongly conclude they held a doctrine of law....

***4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:***

~ Legalizers are those who discover religion, and place themselves into bondage by handling the interpreted law incorrectly. They miss the freedom the Spirit of God provides; and they fail to experience the liberty we have in Christ. See, Titus was truly and genuinely converted. He believed as everyone else in the church did; but Titus was uncircumcised. He was saved by faith — totally apart from the law. This is a tremendous stand Paul is taking at this time. When Paul learned what the other apostles had said about the Gospel, he realized they didn’t add or revise any of the doctrine he was teaching. They were all preaching the same Gospel of grace; that which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself had given the apostles during His earthly ministry. From the very beginning, Paul’s revelation was in full agreement. This is a rather extraordinary event in the life of Paul, to be sure....

***5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.***

***6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:***

***7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;***

***8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles)***

~ Both Peter and Paul were saving souls by furthering the cause of Christ throughout the regions they were in. They were definitely preaching the same Gospel. The true test of any work is not promotion – not development – but the true test is: what results is it getting? This opens up a full can of Christian giving, but we will keep a lid on it here; but I do say we need to be very careful that we give only to the place where we receive our blessing. If your church blesses you, then you should support that church. If a teaching ministry blesses you, then you should support that ministry. Let's move on.

A whole bunch of Christians are supporting the wrong causes today, friends. They receive no blessing from their giving, and they wonder why. If the things we support do not produce real and tangible results by furthering the cause of Christ, then our giving is not going to be blessed by God. The only purpose or motive I have in this so-called safari is to give out the Word of God, beloved – that's all we do here. If the Word of God is handled properly, correctly and completely, it will get proper, correct, and complete results....

***9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.***

***10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.***

~ This is social service. Direct contact with the poor is likely the single-most neglected area of Christian service today. We cannot give a spiritual Gospel to people who are physically starving to death until we feed them first. There's no other way. The church should be doing that and a *WHOLE* lot

more to help people; particularly extremely wealthy churches. I can only do so much with what I have in this Spiritual Safari. It's difficult to get anyone excited about taking the entire Word of God the entire world – and equally as challenging to bring the rich into a realization and remembrance of the poor. That isn't the Gospel, of course — but, if we have been saved by the grace of God, we're going to have compassion for the poor, you may be sure. This is what Paul wanted to do....

***11 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?***

~ So, we're now in Antioch with Paul and Simon Peter. The church in Antioch was largely a Gentile church. In the apostolic church, they had a love feast in which everyone shared in the Lord's Supper. When Gentiles came into the church, it posed a problem, because they ate meat that had been sacrificed to idols, and meat forbidden by the Mosaic Law – or both. So, two tables were set up. Peter ate with the Gentiles — until the elders came up from Jerusalem. Then he beat a retreat back to the kosher table. His conduct indicated that he condemned the Gentile table. While he was free to eat at either table, he had no right to eat at the Gentile table and then withdraw as if it were wrong. He was, by his conduct, putting the Gentiles under law. That's precisely how the legalizer operates today, too.

Paul said we can either eat meat or not eat meat. There are many Christians who attempt to bring everyone else under their standard of

Levitical interpretation. They do not understand liberty in Christ. The Lord Jesus is our Savior. We're accountable to Him. When Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom, He will be an iron-fisted dictator. God demands everyone bow to Him. We're all going to bow to Him, one way or another. I am going to bow to Him because *I LOVE HIM*, and I desire to serve Him. I'm not interested in shallow and small-minded standards of Bible law, my little Judaizing Jesus friends. That ilk represent the biggest opposition to the Gospel on the face of the earth — and *one* of them does more harm to the cause of Christ than ten thousand atheists ever could. We'll pick right back up here in the next leg of our Spiritual Safari ~

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