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A1003 – January 17, 2010 – Galatians 2:11-14 – The Case Of Peter

Alright, let's clean up what we said last week in Gal 2:1-10. The issue of circumcision has been broached with Titus and we were light on the issue of circumcision so we want to clarify what's going on here before we get to Peter.

What we want to see is that circumcision was a ritual of obedience that accompanied the Abrahamic Covenant. The background of all this is the OT. You want to pick up on how much the NT authors presuppose you know the OT. This stuff didn't come in a vacuum. This stuff has loads of background in the OT. Does anyone read the OT? No, we only read the NT, the NT is for us. Well, you can't understand the NT without the OT; the NT authors presuppose you know the old. So I want to mention five things about circumcision, four that are theological in nature and one that is national in nature. The first thing is that Circumcision revealed that the fallen flesh is present from birth so it was administered in Israel to infants rather than to adolescents. Circumcision wasn't practiced only in Israel. It was practiced down in Egypt. It was practiced other places. But in the other places it wasn't administered until adolescence. So here's a tremendous difference. People never think about it today, but this is a difference. In the Bible circumcision was moved from adolescence to infancy, a major shift. Why? What does it say? It says that from the very beginning we have a sin problem that needs to be corrected surgically. We don't get a spiritual problem when we commit our first conscious sin; we are born with a sin problem, Ps 51: in sin my mother conceived me. Second, Circumcision identified sexual propagation, particularly the male sperm, as responsible for linking all mankind into the sin of Adam. There are passages like Rom 5:12-14, in Adam all sinned, and Heb 7:4-10, where Levi paid tithes while he was yet in Abraham's loins that seem to suggest that propagation is through the male. And especially the sin nature is propagated through the male. If that's so, then it makes sense why

Jesus had to be virgin born. It says through Adam all died and in Christ all are made alive, it doesn't say through Eve all died, in Mary all are made alive. It says of Eve: she's the mother of all living, it doesn't say Adam is the father of all living. So there are indications of this and further when you compare the sperm cell with the egg cell you find the egg cell is very viable, lots of nutrition and the sperm cell is this weak thing that dies off rather quickly. Some Christian physiologists have just pointed that out, maybe that's significant. Third, Circumcision did not necessarily imply that the child was regenerate, you can have unregenerate circumcised children in the Bible, the Bible is full of them, so you can't say that just because somebody went through the ritual they were automatically regenerated, that they were automatically believers. The Bible denies that. Now some in the early church got off saying now that the Church has replaced Israel and therefore the ritual of infant baptism has replaced circumcision. And so that's where you get into this thing called infant baptism, they're linking it to infant circumcision. They say we've got to have some initiatory rite. Now there's no parallel biblically, it may be an interesting thing but it's not biblical. Infant baptism is not an initiatory rite into the house of faith. It doesn't regenerate either. Augustine really dropped the ball on this one because Augustine said infant baptism removes original sin. So if you didn't have your little one baptized Augustine said you're a bad parent because he was looking at it that you didn't care if they went to hell. And that's what Augustine said, an unbaptized infant, if he dies, goes to hell. A baptized infant goes to heaven. And this has plagued the church ever since. Now infant baptism has nothing to do with regeneration. And neither does infant circumcision. What circumcision accomplished, the reason for it, was the Jewish parents were saying we're hoping and we're praying that our son will walk in the footsteps of Abraham; we're hoping and praying that he'll walk in the footsteps of faith and be justified by God's grace. And the circumcision in his flesh was simply a reminder of Abraham's faith. Fourth, and most importantly, Circumcision of the flesh pointed to the need of circumcision of the heart. Because in the Mosaic Law this phrase occurs, and it's picked up by Jeremiah and it comes all the way to Paul in Romans. Oh that they would be "circumcised in their heart." Why did God say that? Circumcised in the heart, how do you get circumcised in your heart? There must be something inherently wrong with the heart if it needs corrective surgery. If you think of circumcision as a picture of corrective surgery, that something corrupt is being corrected, you get the theological picture. Fifth, the national issue: Circumcision of the flesh

was required to be a part of the national entity of Israel. This went whether you were an Israelite or a Gentile. When a Gentile wanted to join himself to the people who worshipped YHWH he would do that because he worshipped YHWH. But to enter into the assembly and worship he had to be circumcised. It did not make him a physical Jew, he remained a Gentile, but as a circumcised Gentile he could worship as Jews worshipped, a very important point when we get to the NT because this creates a lot of confusion. Does a Gentile in the NT have to join himself to the nation Israel through circumcision before he can worship YHWH? Is entry into worshipping the true God through Judaism?

And so summarizing, the whole point was that we're born with a sin problem from our very conception and therefore we need corrective surgery on our hearts. Physical circumcision is just a physical reminder of that. It's pointing out to the son every time he goes to the bathroom. He's reminded: I'm corrupt and I need corrective surgery done on my heart and the corrective surgery comes through faith. So that's the background of circumcision. Physical circumcision didn't regenerate them, it didn't justify them. I mean, how could it do that? It can't do that. All it can do is get the blood-clotting cascade going. Who cares?

Well, obviously there were a lot of Jews in the 1st century who cared. We met some on the streets of Jerusalem last week who wanted to put Titus under the knife. Paul and Barnabas had to fend off these overzealous surgeons. Why? If they submitted to them they would have been submitting to another gospel. Titus had already believed the true gospel and been justified, he already had a circumcised heart. What could physical circumcision add to that? Nothing except an illegitimate contaminant to the gospel. It's going to corrupt the truth of the gospel. If you add anything to the gospel you corrupt the truth of the gospel and then it's no longer the gospel. Circumcision isn't part of the gospel. Circumcision is a physical rite. But obviously there were many Jews who were confused about circumcision.

So why then did they get circumcised in the OT? Because it was also how you entered into the assembly of Israel. If you wanted to worship YHWH in the national assembly, whether Jew or Gentile, then you had to be circumcised. Again, it didn't justify them, they were already justified, you're justified by faith. But if you wanted to join the congregation of Israel so you could

worship with them you did have to be circumcised. So Jews picked up that for a Gentile to worship YHWH properly they had to be inducted into Judaism through the initiatory rite of circumcision. So Gentiles have to come through Judaism. That's the thinking in the NT. And Paul is denying that kind of thinking. He's saying that thinking is no longer valid.

Why not? Let's think about this. There was a lot of confusion in the early church. And that should be understandable. This was a transition period. If you were here for the book of Acts you should be very clear on the fact that Acts is a transitional book. If you're not we highlighted seven transitions going on in the period from AD33-AD70 and you can get the lesson; it's the very first lesson in the Acts series. One of the transitions is from Israel to the Church. Those are not the same. Israel is not the Church in the OT and the Church is not Israel in the NT. Do not put those together or you'll forever be confused. That's why there's so much confusion over circumcision and the Law of Moses in Acts, Galatians and Romans. This was a very real issue that people were trying to get a handle on. And they were confused because something had happened that changed things.

The Gospels open with Jesus Christ, John the Baptist being the forerunner. Now is anyone going to argue that Jesus Christ was not under the Law of Moses? If you read the Gospels it is very clear that Jesus Christ is living under the Law of Moses. Everybody's arguing with Jesus over the Law of Moses. And Jesus says why are you guys arguing with Me over the Law of Moses, what does this Law mean, what does that Law mean? I was there on Mt Sinai, I gave the Law to Moses so do you think I might have a clue what I mean? You can't argue that Jesus wasn't under the Law. Jesus Christ, when He was eight days old, was taken down to the Temple and circumcised. So we don't have a problem here. Law of Moses in effect, circumcision in effect.

Now come over to the Book of Acts. Paul says in Acts 13, the Law of Moses is not in effect, the Jerusalem Council concludes that the Law of Moses is not in effect and circumcision is not necessary. Paul and Barnabas meet with Peter, James and John, and they all conclude that Titus the Gentile doesn't need to be circumcised. So we don't have a problem here either. Law of Moses not in effect, circumcision not in effect.

Now the question is what changed? In the Gospels it's in effect, now it's not in effect? What stands in between the Gospels and Acts that can take the entire Law of Moses which they'd been under for 1,500 years and bring it to an end? Answer: three key events: the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit by Christ. Those three events spell the end of the Law of Moses. They are that monumental in the course of history. You can never downplay the cross. It's the cross that started this shift. It is that important. It is the hinge on which history turns. When Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins and my sins radical things in history began to take shape. Then you have the resurrection from the dead, and this is a cornerstone of the Christian faith. A person has risen from the dead? You want to talk about the eschaton being initiated. Jesus Christ's resurrection is the first act of the New Creation. It's already begun in Jesus Christ. So yes, the goal of history, to separate good from evil, to resolve the evil problem, has already begun in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's a landmark event in history. But we can't talk about that in the classroom, gotta remain religiously neutral. Then the sending of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, and again, monumental stuff. Now the Holy Spirit is indwelling believers. He never did that before except with kings and prophets and projects requiring special skills, now it's universal among all who believe? These three events change everything, they knock the Law of Moses out, they knock circumcision out and they bring in something new. Can Jesus Christ really do all that? You bet He can. He did. If He didn't and you want to argue these things are still in effect then Jesus is not the Messiah. Go back to the Law, go get circumcised. The point is that stuff is over and a new order has arrived.

Now this was very frustrating for the Jews of that day. It wasn't easy for them. They had been raised under the Law of Moses. They had been raised to think that when a Gentile wanted to come into Judaism he would be circumcised and put under the Law of Moses. Now they're just becoming Christians without the rite of circumcision. But isn't Christianity a Jewish movement? Isn't Christianity a sect within Judaism? That was the thinking. See, they're confused over a question. The question their struggling with is now that Messiah has come, now that the Messiah has died, now that the Messiah has risen and now that the Messiah has sent the Holy Spirit, are we here in OT Israel or are we in something else? Because if we're back in OT Israel, then these Judaizers are right, you come to Christianity through

Judaism. But if we're in something new then there are new rules that come with the something new. So this is why that private meeting with Titus last week with Paul and Barnabas discussing this over coffee with Peter, James and John was such a big deal. There's confusion over what system are we under. Are we under the system of OT Israel or are we under a new system?

Now if you look at Acts 15:1 you can see quite clearly the exact issue in Galatians. There are actually two issues that are being raised so there are really two groups of Judaizers floating around. There are some Judaizers that are non-believers; their argument is in Acts 15:1. If you are not circumcised you can't be what? Sanctified or saved? You can't be saved. So the position of the unbelieving Judaizers in verse 1 is that you are saved by circumcision. Now, that is impossible even on the basis of the OT. Take Abraham for example. Abraham was saved in Gen 12. He wasn't circumcised until years later in Gen 17. Every Jew would agree that Abraham was saved in Gen 12 years before circumcision was given as a rite in Gen 17. So the Judaizers of verse 1 were out to lunch even from the standpoint of the OT.

But there's another argument being made in Acts 15:5. Acts 15:5 is not the same issue. This is another issue. And this is another group of Judaizers, these are believing Judaizers. And their argument is, yeah, you are saved by faith, just like Abraham, but it is needful to be circumcised after you believe and to follow the Law of Moses. Now what is this an argument for? Is that salvation by circumcision and the Law or sanctification by circumcision and the Law? That is sanctification by circumcision and the Law. So there are two issues being fought over here. The argument in verse 5 is not out to lunch, and there's no way you can meet this argument on the basis of the Law, and that's what the council was all about. It was a growing issue and when they finally got to Jerusalem, this issue comes to the surface. Is the Law of Moses written in the handbook of the OT God's will for the Christian? Or do Christians have another handbook to tell them how to live after salvation? Remember, the issue now is sanctification and sanctification requires law and grace. Law is the standard; grace is the means to live according to the standard. Are the believers in Acts held to Moses Law or Jesus' Law? Well, the problem was that Jesus' Law wasn't written yet; only Moses' Law was actually physically there; you could pull out a scroll and say here's Moses' Law, right here, just roll it out and you can read the verses, but where's Jesus' Law? Well, Jesus' Law was slowly being developed and that's what 1

Corinthians 13:8-10 is all about. It remains to be seen at this point in history. New revelation is being written.

But what they did know was that the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Spirit by Christ was so monumental that the Law of Moses and circumcision was no longer in effect. If it was in effect why didn't they circumcise Titus? Now it took them awhile to figure it out, we're not denying that. So let's go through some of what they went through to figure it out.

Turn to Acts 10. Acts 10 is Peter and our text today is about Peter so let's talk about Peter. Peter takes the lead in the early church. He delivers the sermon on the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 Jews believe and are saved. He delivers the sermon in Acts 3 and 4; more Jews believe and are saved. Peter is obviously the apostle to the Jews; he has great impact among the Jews. But Peter is also along in Acts 8 for the conversion of the first Samaritans, he witnesses that. So Peter's vision of the gospel is widening. And finally here in Acts 10 he's told to go to the Gentiles. Now this would be very wide indeed. He's told to go up to the house of a Gentile man named Cornelius. This is a very touchy issue for a Jew. Jews don't even step over the threshold of a Gentile house, they do not walk in a Gentile house or it renders them ceremonially unclean. They certainly don't sit down and have table fellowship with a Gentile. That was a no, no. So there's a little preparation that Peter has to go through to get him to walk into a Gentile house and sit down for a cheeseburger. The preparation takes place in Joppa. Joppa is along the coast and he was staying with Simon the Tanner. This alone shows that Peter was in transition. Peter is staying with a guy whose profession is an unclean profession, so the very fact that he's at Simon's house tells us that Peter is transitioning out of the strictness of the Law of Moses. But he's not quite ready to sit down and eat a cheeseburger with a Gentile. So he's up on the rooftop of Simon's house, he gets hungry and calls down for some lunch, I'm sure it was a kosher lunch. While lunch is being prepared he has a vision of this great sheet being lowered down and in the great sheet are kosher and non-kosher animals, all carefully separated in the Law of Moses, but in the sheet they're all mixed up. And Peter sees this and he about gets sick, that's not the menu he's interested in. Peter is a nice Jewish kosher boy. He's never eaten anything unclean in his whole life, so this menu was disgusting to him. Then he sees the vision again and then he gets it again. Three times, Peter

was always the one that Jesus had to knock over the head to get it through. But finally the message gets through. And the message is in verse 13, "A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!" And then verse 15, more of the message, "Again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." What this means is that God is changing the menu, Peter. In the OT He gave you a kosher menu to separate you from Gentiles, now He's saying all meats are kosher. And now you Peter, a Jew, are going to be able to go into a Gentile home, sit down and eat a cheeseburger. If you don't get that cleared up then you can forget ever having a single Church of Jews and Gentiles. You can maybe have two churches, a Jewish Church and a Gentile Church but you can never have one church with Jew and Gentile. And the Lord Jesus Christ is interested in having one church of Jew and Gentile, one body, not two bodies. So He gets this message to Peter. He goes up to Caesarea where Cornelius and his household are all waiting on Peter to arrive. They're waiting because Cornelius had a vision too and that's how the whole thing got started. Cornelius sent a few guys down to fetch Peter, so we have confirmatory visions, visions on both side that indicate this is of God. And Peter's obeying the word of God. In verse 24 he gets to Caesarea. In verse 27 it says "he entered and found many people assembled." Now that's a big step. That is serious and in verse 28 Peter says, you know how serious it is. And in verse 34 he begins to preach. Now what did we say were the three big things that happened that changed things? The death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit by Christ. Now pick up middle of verse 39, speaking of Jesus. "They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross." There's the death. Verse 40, "God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible," there's resurrection. And now come to verse 43, "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins." ⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message ⁴⁵All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also." And there's the Holy Spirit. Now this was a shock. Why was this a shock? The answer is hinted at in verse 45. They weren't circumcised. They were Gentiles. Now God the Holy Spirit is bypassing circumcision and He's injecting Gentiles directly into this new entity called the Church, right alongside circumcised Jews. What's the logic behind this event? Is circumcision necessary to be saved? If God the Holy Spirit bypasses circumcision then should we enforce

it? No. And Peter knows not to enforce it. And then he goes back to Jerusalem, he knows he's going to be met with opposition. He gets about five feet in the walls of Jerusalem and he's attacked. But Peter's got six witnesses, six other Jews went into Cornelius' house with him and under the Mosaic Law you only have to have two or three witnesses to establish something in a court of law. Peter takes six along just to seal the case. Now come down to Acts 11:15, here he's defending what he did at Cornelius house and he concludes, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them," the uncircumcised Gentiles, "just as He did upon us at the beginning." that's the Jew on the day of Pentecost. Verse 17, "Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" ¹⁸When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life." So at this point they're going along with it, at least this audience, Peter and his six Jewish buddies. It doesn't mean there weren't others who were skeptical out on the streets.

Then we came down to vv 27-30 last week and this is the revelation that occurred that got Paul and Barnabas down to Jerusalem for the private meeting with Peter, James and John. That's Gal 2:1-10. They all agree, Titus doesn't need to be circumcised, it's totally unnecessary. Cornelius didn't need to be circumcised; the Holy Spirit is bypassing that rite. Circumcision won't accomplish a thing for a Gentile, except put him out of commission for a few days.

Now we come to a later event with Peter in Gal 2:11. But before we leave Acts look at chapter 12. Chapter 12 is one of the famous acts of the Herod family. This is Herod Agrippa I. All the Herod's were negative to the gospel. Herod the Great tried to murder the baby Jesus. His son Herod Antipas carried on the family tradition and had John the Baptist's head brought to him on a silver platter for his daughter's birthday. And then we have Herod Agrippa I here and in verse 2 he has James the brother of John put to death with the sword. And the Jews loved this, so he proceeded to arrest Peter. Peter gets locked away in the Antonia Fortress but he miraculously escapes. So there's persecution in Jerusalem, things are heating up in and it's not safe for Peter anymore, and if you come down to verse 17, he's been over at a house where the believers were meeting and they've been praying for Peter and after waking up half the neighborhood he finally gets them outside and they're all

excited. It's about 3 in the morning so Peter is motioning to them with his hand, would you guys shut up, I'm escaped from prison you dopes, and any minute the Roman military is going to see I'm not in my cell and will be out looking for me, so would you be quiet. So "he described to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brethren." Then he left and went to another place. It ends mysteriously with that note - he went to another place. The question is what's the other place? Where did Peter go? We don't see him again until the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. So where is Peter during all this time? Turn to Gal 2:11.

But when Cephas came to Antioch, aha, so he went to Antioch. Paul is there, Barnabas is there, they're training the Gentile believers at Antioch. But some other people arrive and then something happens at the lunch table, let's read. **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?*"** Now probably Paul's speech continues to the end of the chapter but we're not going to push that far today, we just want to work through verse 14.

What we have here is the first attack in history on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. And observe, it didn't come by false teaching, it came by false behavior. Peter didn't teach wrong doctrine at Antioch, Peter lived a life inconsistent with right doctrine and that inconsistency is pointed out as heretical. Actions speak louder than words and so this is a very interesting passage. It's not just false teachers the church has to worry about, it is false living the church has to worry about. The Scriptures insist that as a believer learns doctrine he should live according to the doctrine he's learned. Now this is a principle of our sanctification and the sanctification of others. There are three principles here related to sanctification. The first is that it's very important to put into practice the doctrine you're learning. When we become a Christian we don't know all the doctrine, we hardly know anything

at all. Maybe we know a few things about getting back in fellowship, maybe we know there's an Old and New Testament, we know Jesus died for our sins, we know He raised from the dead, we don't know much but we know a little and that's what we're responsible for. Then we sit and we learn some more and as we pick up some truths about prayer, some truths about sanctification, some truths about God, some truths about nature and we learn more of the word of God and as we learn more we become responsible for what we learn. There's no such thing as just learning the word and then doing nothing, unless you want to get disciplined by God. That's why James says be not a hearer of the word only but a doer of the word. There's a hesitancy to not obey the word of God because the pressure from the culture is on and it's uncomfortable to obey the word of God. It makes us appear counter-culture and I want to get along with culture so I don't rock the boat. And that's a dangerous thing to do because God is now holding us responsible for the truth we've learned. So if we ignore it or brush it aside because it's uncomfortable, God is going to make us uncomfortable doing that. So it's critical that as a Christian grows doctrinally he is putting more and more of doctrine into action. It does nothing to just sit there and listen to stuff but never do anything with the stuff.

The second principle at this point is the danger to others when you don't do anything with the doctrine you've learned. It rubs off on others. And that's dangerous because everyone else sees oh, well, we don't have to do anything with what we're learning because so and so leader in the church isn't doing anything with what they're learning so we can just sit on our hands and do nothing. This kind of mentality spreads among believers and that's the problem Paul is handling here. It's not an isolated problem. The problem starts with Peter and spreads to other believers so that even long standing mature believers like **Barnabas** are carried away. So it's like poison once it get's going.

A third thing we can pick up is that this is the kind of stuff that causes a church split. They are about to have a church split right down the line of Jew and Gentile. It's this kind of thing where you start to build two factions in the church. And you know this is happening when people walk in the doors and their mentality is they see Joe sitting on the left side and they disagree with Joe and so they say, I'm sitting on the right side and some people sit on the left side and before you know it you've got the right and the left and it's more

than just seat preference; it's we're against you and now you have a church split on your hands and what are you going to do?

This is why there's a fourth thing here and that's discipline. Paul confronts the situation and says, we're not going to have a church split, we're going to answer the problem doctrinally. And this requires someone to have enough guts to stand up and say something. This is not easy. No one enjoys confrontation. But Paul's solution was to nip this in the bud, not to wait and see what's going to happen next week, he already saw what was happening and the answer was to cut it off immediately. It's the simple principle of injury. When gangrene sets in you don't wait six weeks to see how far it's going to spread, you cut off what you have to and save the rest.

So that's the operation. Now let's back up into verse 12 and get more of the situation. Peter is in up in Antioch because he's a wanted man in Jerusalem. And in v 12 we see Peter's original behavior. **For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; he used to eat** is an imperfect tense, ongoing action in the past. In other words, day after day after day Peter ate cheeseburgers with Gentiles, and this went on, they'd order in from Porky's, get the best cheeseburgers in town, that's free advertising, and this was Peter's standard operating procedure. He's got good theology. God settled this back at Cornelius' house, he ate cheeseburgers with Cornelius, now he can eat cheeseburgers with the Gentiles at Antioch. And he did, so we've got right doctrine and right practice. Peter is scoring 100%.

But then, **when they came**. Who's the **they**? They're the individuals from James. James is in Jerusalem, so these are Jews from Jerusalem, they're Judaizers. **but when they came he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision**, two imperfects, **he withdrew** and he **held himself back** and the imperfect means this was his new procedure. Lunchtime would come and Peter would go out and sit on one side of the lunchroom with party of the circumcision, no more cheeseburgers. And then Barnabas starts going over and eating with the party of the circumcision, he abandons cheeseburgers. And then all the Jews join up and now we have a nice split lunch. And here's Paul, he's the lunch monitor, he's watching all this go on until you could paint a black line on the lunch room floor, and put all the Gentiles on one side and all the Jews on the other. And finally Paul's had it in verse 11 he gives a summary. **I opposed him to his**

face, because he stood condemned. Now he didn't go after Barnabas and the other Jews, at least directly, and the reason he didn't go after Barnabas and the others is because they're just following Peter. If he corrects Peter they'll follow Peter. Peter is the ringleader of this new cult. This is a cult. Peter has just formed a new cult. You say cult? Yeah, it's a cult, Peter has his new church and it's the cult of the circumcision. Requirements are, don't eat with Gentiles, so it's a Jewish cult, it's divided the church. And you think, my goodness, this is the guy who had the vision in Joppa on the roof of Simon the Tanner's house. He knows God has declared all meat kosher. And therefore God has declared all Gentiles kosher. What's his problem? His problem is pressure. Look at the end of verse 12, there's a little note of explanation there, he **feared the party of the circumcision.** Now look, this is another principle about misplaced fear. Peter fears men. Well, if Peter fears men does he fear God? Not in the least. Now this I'm convinced is one of the major reasons Christians compromise. They really don't know who God is and they really don't know who man is either. If they really knew who God is they wouldn't be pulling this stuff, they'd be obeying the word. But as it is they have this elevated view of man, that man is so important to please and if I please men, men will look favorably on me and that will pay off in this world because man controls history and very quickly if you follow the logic you see this is the autonomous spirit of man. Now this can happen to an immature believer, this can happen to a mature believer. Here's a mature believer going apostate over lunch. This is the same guy that walked and talked with Jesus for over three years. This is the same guy that walked on water for Pete's sake. This is the same guy that led 3,000 Jews to faith in Jesus as the Son of God on the Day of Pentecost, probably had about 15-20,000 other Jews believe in Jesus as the Son of God under his ministry. This is the man who watched God save Samaritans. This is the man who went to Cornelius' house and preached the gospel and they believed and received the Holy Spirit without being circumcised. Ate his first cheeseburgers with him. And now he does this. All because he fears the party of the circumcision. Now there are a lot of things taught in the Bible. And you are going to have to decide whether you're going to live them or not. Sure there is pressure. Who do you fear? Like all questions there are only two answers? God or man? Creator or creature. Now Peter is making mincemeat of the gospel right here, he's ripping the doctrine of justification by faith to shreds. All because he fears men, because he fears what they might think, because he doesn't fear God, he doesn't respect God, he respects men. He believes that the word of man is ultimate

and what man thinks is ultimate. And this kind of thinking, once it gets going in a congregation is hard to stop. Just like poison it eats away until you've got everybody doing it. That's paganism.

And then you've got Paul and Paul is the only one in that room with enough character and enough fear of God to stand up to this great leader of the Church. And it says in the Greek literally, it's emphatic, **IN HIS FACE** I got up. He's saying I got up in his face. And it's probably quite literally Paul had to get up in his face. We've got one description of Paul from early church fathers and so literally probably you've got Paul on one side, this gangly, intellectual type and on the other side Peter, this bulky fisherman, big old arms from working with nets full of fish. And can you just see Paul getting up in his face for the sake of the gospel. Why? **Because he stood condemned** or literally because this too is an imperfect, **he was** ongoing action in past time condemned with ongoing effects, perfect participle, his actions day after day were causing ongoing effects as he divided the church, more and more members came over till you had a complete division.

So Paul gets up in his face. Look at verse 14, here's what he said, **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?** Now I don't care who you are, you've got to give it to Paul. Paul, even when he's all bent out of shape about what's going on, is able to think, he's able to pinpoint the problem, he doesn't go to pieces like many Christians when the heat is on in a doctrinal issue. They just fall apart, oh, that's just what I believe, that's just what I believe, baloney! Here's a powerful believer, the heat is on and Paul is able to think and package the issue very precisely, very succinctly to where Peter can't move. I just love this because this shows what Paul did to everybody. He would pin you down so fast and so tight you'd start squirming but you couldn't escape. Peter is squirming here. By the way, we have got a full audience; this was said **in the presence of all**. Paul isn't making this a public issue. Peter made it a public issue. Peter's been doing this all week. Every day at lunch Peter does this. And as private sin requires private rebuke so public sin requires public rebuke. So that's why the public. And Paul, after several days of seeing this, rebukes him with a perfect argument. It's nice actually because Paul doesn't give Peter a chance to outmaneuver him, he's only got two options; either repent or rebel. But there's no way around the argument.

So this is how the first attack on the doctrine of justification by faith was handled. This is the first pope getting de-throned and this is the gospel being defended. You don't have to teach the wrong gospel to be a heretic; you can just live inconsistent with the gospel and become a heretic. We are what we are by the grace of God through faith and not by works, lest any man should boast.

If the Israel-Church distinction troubles you think of it like two acts of a play. Act 1 goes on for about an hour and then you have an intermission and then you come back and you have Act 2 for another hour. That's one way to think about the distinction between Israel and the Church. Israel is Act 1, the Church is Act 2, but it's all one plan. God doesn't have plan A, Israel, and that plan falls through so He has to get Himself all together and resort to plan B. That's not what we're saying. We're saying that these are two Acts in one plan. Act 1 was Israel, Act 2 was the Church, this was forever the plan of God, but that doesn't make Act 1 = Act 2. No one in their right mind thinks that Act 1 and Act 2 in a play are identical. That's all we're saying. We're saying that in the OT God was dealing with the nation Israel and now that is phasing out and God is dealing with a new entity called the Church and this is all a part of one big plan of God. And not everything is going to be the same between OT Israel and the NT Church. There are some things that are the same and there are some things that are different. One thing that is the same is the way of salvation. Salvation is always by grace through faith. That never changes.

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