

Freedom from a Fake Faith Galatians 2:11-14

Be ready to condemn any fake faith. Galatians 2:11

“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.”

- Opposed = *antihistime*: to stand against, inhibit
- Condemn = to know by experience and be against it

Acknowledge the compromised nature of a fake faith. Galatians 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”

- Acts 10:43; 15:8-11
- Compromised faith:
 - When I change my convictions to keep my prestige or position with some people.
 - When I withdraw from certain classes of people to avoid criticism.
 - When I cover up my conduct out of fear that others will judge me.
 - When I create false standards for others that I do not keep.

Understand the devastating consequences of a fake hypocritical faith. Galatians 2:13

“The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.”

- Hypocrisy = used of an actor wearing a mask

Correct any false belief and return to the foundational truth of the gospel. Galatians 2:14

“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?’”

- Straightforward = *orthopodeo*
- Proverbs 4:27; Joshua 1:7; 23:6; Isaiah 30:21

Some practical application:

- Be warned, even the most mature believers can stumble from hypocritical fake faith like Barnabas.
- We must believe what is true, but also remember to live that truth authentically before other people.
- It is acceptable to adjust the way you live your life to not offend people and to reach out with the gospel. (See 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)
- Be willing to engage with every person because God loves them all and do not withdraw from them because you may miss the opportunity to present the gospel to them.

Digging Deeper:

Historical background for today's passage: Today's passage deals with some problems in that first century church as they moved from being primarily a Jewish emphasis on the rituals and regulations of Judaism into a greater freedom from some of those practices. A group of Jewish believers known as Judaizers were attempting to force Gentiles to be circumcised and follow the laws of Moses. They believed that following these regulations was required in order to have a proper relationship with God. Peter and Barnabas fell into that trap and appeared as hypocrites because they used to eat with the Gentiles; but when certain Jews arrived in Antioch, they slowly withdrew from fellowship with those Gentiles to avoid criticism from these new Jewish critics. For more background on when God moved from Jewish regulations to freedom in eating all foods and with the Gentiles, read Acts 10 and 11. Peter was the first to receive this vision and revelation from God so it is strange that he would be the one stumbling in today's passage.

LifeGroup Discussion:

What are some man-made standards today that some Christians impose on others to show how a mature Christian should live?

What standards have you had to overcome to find true freedom to live your life for Christ?

To help avoid creating man-made standards that are not really from God, try to view all beliefs and practices through what I call my pyramid to find unity as described below.

- **There are foundational truths in the Bible:** Deity of Christ, His death, burial and resurrection. His second coming. The inerrancy of Scriptures. Trinity. *What other beliefs would you put here?*
- **There are supplemental truths where we might agree to disagree.** What translation of the Bible you use, role of women in the church, styles of music in worship. *What others would you add here? Are there issues for which you are uncertain whether they are supplemental or foundational?*
- **There are incidental truths where what I believe should not matter.** What kind of clothes I wear to church, Hair length, beards, hymns or praise choruses, which instruments are used in worship, pews or chairs in the worship center. *What else would you add here?*

Which of the above areas creates the most conflict in churches or in your life?

What does Paul teach us in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 on adjusting how we live? What is the goal in being so flexible on supplemental or incidental issues?

Next Steps:

1. **Attend the Discover Your Purpose class: Wednesdays, May 17-31 · 7:00-8:30 pm · Room W-209**
In this class, you'll explore your unique God-given spiritual gifts through taking insightful personality tests. You'll also learn what the Bible has to say about purpose and be equipped to make a difference at Calvary, in our community and around the world. Learn more at calvarylife.org/purpose
2. **Share the gospel with a friend.** Start praying that God will give you love, courage, opportunity and the words to say. Invest and invite your friends and family into a relationship with Jesus.