

Paul Confronted Peter

Galatians 2:11-21

The apostle Paul worked hard to share the good news with people everywhere he went. He told both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) about Jesus. Paul also wanted to make sure that people did not believe things that were not true.

To help them know what is true, Paul wrote a letter to the believers at the church of Galatia (guh LAY shuh). Galatia was a part of Rome. The Christians there were mostly Gentiles. In his letter, Paul told the believers about Peter's poor choice.

Peter was a follower of Jesus. He knew that God accepted Gentiles and Jews, and he ate meals with the Gentile believers. But when the Jewish believers were around, Peter did not eat with the Gentiles. He pretended to believe that Gentiles were supposed to follow certain Jewish rules, even though that was not true.

Paul wrote that Peter was wrong to do that. Peter let people, instead of God, push him toward acting a certain way. And when Peter did what was wrong, other people started doing what was wrong too.

Paul wrote that we are saved through faith in Jesus alone. He explained that Peter was not showing that he believed this. Paul met with Peter and said in front of everyone there that God does not accept people because they follow His law or obey certain rules. So why would Peter want the Gentiles to obey all the Jewish rules? God accepts both Jews and Gentiles who have faith in Jesus.

The law showed Paul that he needed Jesus to save him from sin. Because of Jesus, Paul and Peter and every other believer can choose to live for God.

Paul wrote to the believers, "Now my old way of living is dead—as if I too were crucified with Jesus. Jesus gave me new life." Faith in Jesus means saying no to sin. It means trusting in Jesus alone for forgiveness and eternal life. Faith means remembering God's grace and kindness toward sinners. "If we could be saved by obeying the law," said Paul, "Jesus did not need to die."

Christ Connection: Peter was wrong to separate himself from the Gentiles. The gospel is for everyone, and we should show love to everyone. Paul reminded Peter that only Jesus can save people from sin. God accepts people who have faith in Jesus, not people who try to earn salvation on their own