

Sermon #5: Galatians 2:11-21

2.22.2026

BREAKING THE ICE

Share a time when you acted differently around one group of people than another because of peer pressure. What were you afraid of?

UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH

Read the Passage: Galatians 2:11-21

1. Look at verses 11-13.
 - a. Why did Paul oppose Cephas (Peter) in Antioch?
 - b. Describe Peter's behavior before and after the "certain men from James" arrived in Antioch.
 - c. What motivated Peter to "eat with the Gentiles" but then "draw back and separate himself" from them?
 - d. What was the result of Peter's hypocrisy, and how did it impact the actions of the other Jews, including Barnabas?
2. In verse 14, what did Paul accuse Peter of doing, and what questions did he ask Peter regarding the Gentiles?
3. Look at verse 15-16.
 - a. How does Paul say a person is justified, and how is a person *not* justified?
 - b. Paul is using justification in its theological sense. Use a dictionary or Google theological definition of justification. What does justification mean theologically?
 - c. Who does Paul say can be justified by works of the law?
4. In verse 19, what happened to Paul "through the Law," and what was the purpose of this death?
5. From verse 20, who does Paul say now lives in him, and how does he live his life in the flesh?
6. What is the consequence referenced in verse 21 if righteousness could be gained through the Law?
7. Take a minute and try to summarize the key point Paul is making in this passage of Scripture. Share as a group.

SEEING JESUS CHRIST

Jesus is the source of our new life. He is also the end of all spiritual status systems. In Antioch, Peter's withdrawal implied Jewish Christians were more acceptable to God than Gentile Christians. However, the Gospel reveals our acceptance with God does not come from religious performance or cultural background, but with union in Christ.

By faith we are united to Christ. Therefore our old identity dies and His righteousness becomes our only standing before God. Jesus bore the full curse of the Law we could never satisfy, and through His resurrection He now lives in His people. Our acceptance with God rests not on our performance but on the Son of God "who loved me and gave Himself for me" (v. 20).

- Paul says righteousness comes through union with Christ, not performance. What feels more real to you day-to-day — Christ's righteousness covering you, or your spiritual track record defining you?

MAKING IT MATTER

1. Fear of man led Peter into hypocrisy. Where does fear of others' opinions cause you to withdraw from people – either in judgment, comparison or insecurity?
2. We are justified by faith, not performance. In what ways do you still try to “earn” God’s love or prove your worth through your religious performance?
3. Christ lives in you. How does the reality that the Son of God loved you and gave Himself for you change how you view your daily struggles?
4. How should clarity on how we are justified before God lead you to see those who are far from God and courageously engage them, not avoid them?

PRAYING FOR GOD’S POWER

“This is the confidence we have before him: If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we have asked of him.” 1 John 5:14-15

When we pray according to God’s will it engages the power and guidance of God to bring about our transformation. If we apply these things in our own strength, then it is just legalistic obedience. But, when we humbly ask God to change us and empower us according to His will and by His Spirit, it becomes transformational AND it glorifies God.

- Pray that God would strip away reliance on your personal performance. Ask for the Spirit’s power to live out the reality that you are “crucified with Christ” and that He lives in you.