



# BE FREE

A STUDY IN GALATIANS



# BE FREE

## DEVOTIONAL

### WEEK 3

Of all the inventions of modern man, arguing on the internet may be the most idiotic. Just think about it - let's create a forum to allow anonymous strangers to talk about hot button topics with little or no relationship foundation. Wow! What could go wrong?

When we argue, we want to win. But that is not healthy. Our interactions with others are not designed to be about winning and losing. That is not a good way to have a fruitful relationship. Conflict and disagreements are inevitable, and that was certainly true for the early Christian community. To turn an old saying: Ask two Christians, get three opinions. Disagreements are not the problem, they are part of life, but something in the debate highlighted in Galatians caused the Apostle Paul to cry foul. To Paul, this went beyond a difference of opinion and entered into a violation of the Gospel.

As we dig deeper into the second chapter of Galatians, we see Paul stirring up trouble. When he saw compromise negating the Gospel, he confronted the issue. Paul would not settle for a status quo peace or a unity based on compromise with sin. He would not allow the community to be divided by the creation of an inner circle within Christ followers.

Read Galatians 2:1-14

Have you ever confronted someone who was compromising? How did it go? Did you go about it like Paul? What can we learn from Paul's response?

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Why did Paul confront Peter? What was the compromise that Peter was guilty of?

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What makes a person right with God and part of God's family? This question has always had huge ramifications for the Church at large. The varying answers have been the catalyst for the creation of more than 20,000 denominations. "To be made right" is the meaning of the word justified. It is full of theological weight. We could use the words *vindicated* or *rectified* as synonyms for justified. Paul contends that we are not vindicated before God by observing the law, but by faith in Christ (or, the faithfulness of Christ).

As Christians, we are not commanded to live in observance to the law of Moses. Instead, we are living out our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul's main argument is summarized well in Galatians 2:15, 16. If Jewish Christ followers believed they were made right with God through faith in Christ and not through law observance, then Gentiles were also made right with God through faith in Christ and not through law observance.

Read Galatians 2:15-21

Thinking of the way Paul contrasts works of observing the law and grace through faith, summarize Galatians 2:19-21 in your own words:

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Can you think of other observances or standards of holiness Christians add today as requirements for being part of the “in group”? The people who are really saved?

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Paul argued that observance to the law was not a requirement for salvation, only faith in Christ. Does this mean Christians are exempt from good works? Why?

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