

Defending the Gospel - Part 2

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[0 : 00] Please turn your Bibles to Galatians chapter 2. This morning our attention will be focused on verses 11 through 14.

! And before I read those verses, just to give a bit of context. For some of you it's a reminder. What the Apostle Paul writes in these four verses is part of his case that he's making to the Galatians.

Those of you who are joining us for the first time this morning, we have been in a sermon series in the book of Galatians for several weeks now. And this is the section that we have come to this morning.

And the Apostle Paul had founded this church and this was a church that he himself had preached the gospel to. And when Paul left this church, there were legalists or Judaizers.

There were people who believed that you had to, in addition to accepting Christ, you had to keep the laws of Moses. You had to be circumcised. You had to follow the dietary laws.

[1 : 12] And Paul got wind of it. And so Paul writes to this church to correct them, to say to them, you had a good start, but you are now on the wrong path.

And he had begun to help them to see that both his ministry and his gospel were authentic. And last week we considered how Paul recounted this very important meeting that they had in Jerusalem where he addressed the apostles and all the leaders in the church in Jerusalem.

And how he laid before them his gospel and how they evaluated his gospel and in the end they commended his ministry as well.

And in these verses that we have come to this morning, the Apostle Paul recounts yet another occasion. This one in the church at Antioch where he further defended the gospel.

And that is what we are going to now consider this morning. So please follow along as I read Galatians chapter 2, beginning in verse 11.

[2 : 30] But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned. Before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles.

But when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?

Again, this passage is a continuation of Paul's defense of his gospel and his ministry before the Galatians.

And the point that I believe is very clear that Paul brings out in this passage, which is similar to what we saw last week in his first defense, is this.

[3 : 49] A true commitment to the gospel requires a firm defense of the gospel. A true commitment to the gospel requires a firm defense of the gospel.

And this is what we see in the Apostle Paul's life. We see this commitment to the gospel. And we see this willingness to defend the gospel.

He did it in Jerusalem before the great apostles and before all the leaders there. And now in this passage, we see him doing it before the apostle Peter. He defended the gospel whenever it was under attack, either by words or by actions.

And this morning, I want us to consider this account of Paul's confrontation of Peter under two headings. And please forgive me, I totally forgot the slides, my fault altogether. So I'll try to make sure that those of you who are taking notes can capture the main points.

So the first heading is this, Peter's betrayal of the gospel. Peter's betrayal of the gospel. Paul tells the Galatians that's what Peter did in verses 11 and 12.

[5 : 06] So essentially after this great ministry in Jerusalem, this great time where Paul met with these men and Peter was there as well.

They recognized that Peter was an apostle to the Jews and Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles. We see in this passage, these two great apostles are clashing.

And Paul tells us why they were clashing. He tells us that Peter used to enjoy fellowship with the Gentiles before some men came from James in Jerusalem.

Peter would eat with them and that was a clear indication that he was not following the dietary laws of the Jews. And then when these Judaizers came from Jerusalem, Peter ceased and he separated himself from these Gentiles and he would not eat with them.

He separated himself from brothers and sisters in Christ in the church in Antioch because of these men who came from Jerusalem.

[6 : 20] Now I think it's important that we would recognize that the fact that they are said to be from James does not mean that James endorsed what they were doing.

They simply came from Jerusalem and perhaps they were given the impression that the things they were teaching were endorsed by James. But scripture does not support that.

And in fact, when we look at the account in Acts 15, James takes quite a different position from these legalists. Now it's very clear that these men had to be influential.

They were so influential that they were able to influence Peter, the apostle Peter, to act in such a hypocritical way.

And I think the question should arise for us, why? How could they influence Peter to act in this way that is so wrong and so hypocritical?

[7 : 27] To answer that question, we need to turn to the book of Acts. So if you would, would you turn? We're going to look at Acts chapter 10 and parts of Acts 11.

But before we read it, I want to just give you a brief summary of the book of Acts up to that particular point where we'll start reading. Acts chapter 1 through 7, what we have is the early history of the church.

It was a Jewish church. And even though the Lord had told them that you're going to be my witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth, this was a Jewish church.

They were happy to be a Jewish church. And they remained in Jerusalem. And that's basically Acts 1 through 7. When we come to Acts chapter 8, it opens a new chapter in the life of the church.

And if you want to look at Acts 8 verse 1, this was shortly after the stoning of Stephen. And we are told in verse 1, So what happens at this particular point is God begins to cause them to obey the Great Commission.

[8 : 59] And he brings persecution and they're dispersed out of Jerusalem. And they go into the other areas, into Judea and Samaria, the Gentile territories.

And this began the Gentile mission. You notice that only the apostles stayed in Jerusalem. So what we have in Acts chapter 8 is we have this account of Philip taking the gospel to the Samaritans.

And then we also have this account of him preaching the gospel to this Ethiopian eunuch who was on his way back to Ethiopia. No doubt who would have taken the gospel to Ethiopia.

And then over in Acts chapter 9, something significant happens. God saves a Jewish man, a Pharisee, by the name of Saul, as he was on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians that he would find there.

And God appoints him as the apostle to the Gentiles. And so Saul, he was called both Saul and Paul, he is now appointed as the apostle to the Gentiles.

[10 : 10] And then in Acts chapter 10, we have this account that brings the apostle Peter into view. It's the conversion of Cornelius and his household. And the Lord chose that Peter would be the one to bring the gospel to this man by the name of Cornelius, who was a Roman centurion of the Italian cohort.

And Luke tells us, Luke, the author of Acts, tells us that Cornelius was a devout man. He prayed to God regularly and gave a lot of alms.

But what we see from what the Lord does with Cornelius is that giving and praying, as good as they are, can save us. Those good deeds cannot save us.

And Cornelius needed something more. So God moves on Peter to go to Cornelius' house to preach to Cornelius. And it happens in a rather miraculous way.

Cornelius is praying to stay. He has this vision. And this angel comes to him, tells him that his prayers and his arms have come up before God, but tells him to send some of his men to Joppa, to this house where Peter is staying, and tell Peter to come to him, and Peter will give him some particular words.

[11 : 32] And so Cornelius tells us that he sends three men out on this mission, and then the next day they arrive at Peter's house. At the same time, Peter is praying.

And Scripture tells us that he falls into this trance. So he has this vision, and this sheet, this great sheet, comes down from heaven to the earth, and on it are all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds.

And this voice says to Peter, Peter, rise, kill and eat. And Peter says, not so, Lord. I have never eaten anything that is unclean. And the voice says a second time, do not call anything that I've cleansed common.

And this happens for Peter three times, and then after that, the sheet is lifted for the final time, and the vision ends. And right at that point, these men are at the gate calling for Peter.

So Peter invites them in, they stay with him, and then the next day he proceeds to go with them. So I want to pick up now in Acts chapter 10, verse 23.

[12 : 46] And I read this this morning, it's a bit lengthy, but it's important for us to see what's going on in this situation in Antioch. There's more that's happening in Antioch that meets the eyes.

And I want us to see it this morning, and I want you to follow along as I read. So we pick up the second half of verse 23 in Acts chapter 10.

It says, The next day he arose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. And on the following day they entered Caesarea.

Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. And when Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him.

But Peter lifted him up, saying, Stand up, I too am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. And he said to them, That's a very important observation to make there.

[14 : 11] Peter is admitting that he had some particular views that were not consistent with the views that he should have had. He says, God has shown me that I'm not to call any person common or unclean.

And then he goes on, verse 29. So when I was sent for you, I came without objection. I asked them, Why you sent for me?

Cornelius said, Four days ago, So about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour. And behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing and said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your arms have been remembered before God.

Send therefore the Joppa and ask for Simon, who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon at Tana by the sea. So I sent for you at once, and you've been kind enough to come.

Now, therefore, we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord. So Peter opened his mouth and said, Truly, I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation, anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

[15 : 31] Again, Peter makes this point. He says, I see it now. God shows no partiality, but in every nation, everyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

He goes on. As for the word that he sent to Israel preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all.

You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.

He ran out doing good, healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. But God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people, but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

[16 : 39] And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to judge, to be the judge of the living and the dead.

to him, all the prophets be a witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

While Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word and the believers from among the circumcised, these are the ones who went with Peter, who Peter took with him, who had come with Peter were amazed.

They were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. See, we're getting some insights into what they understood, how they saw the gospel, how they saw other people.

They were amazed that these Gentiles were not only saved, but God did for them what he did for the Jews on the day of Pentecost.

[17 : 49] And then verse 46 says, for they were hearing them speak in tongues and extolling God, and Peter declared, can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people?

That's a pretty curious statement, a question. He's almost like asking the ones with him, you know, who can really stop what is going on here?

Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Then they asked him to remain with them some days. Let's continue. Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

This was surprising news to them. These people got saved. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party, these are the troublemakers, these are the ones who say, you've got to keep the law of Moses if you want to be saved.

[18 : 59] The circumcision party said to him, you went to uncircumcised men and ate with them. But Peter began and explained it to them in order.

I was in the city of Joppa praying and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending being let down from heaven by its four corners and it came down to me.

Looking at it closely I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. And I heard a voice saying to me, rise Peter, kill Adip. But I said, by no means Lord, for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.

Prior to going to Cornelius' house, Peter had never broken the Jewish dietary laws as best he knew.

Never done it. Verse 9, but the voice answered a second time from heaven. What God has made clean do not call common.

[20 : 08] This happened three times and all was drawn up again into heaven. And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were sent to me from Caesarea.

And the Spirit told me to go with them making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me and we entered the man's house. and he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, send a Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter.

He will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household. As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning.

And I remembered the word of the Lord how he said, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?

Now verse 18 is a very striking statement. When they heard these things they fell silent. That includes the circumcision party.

[21 : 23] That includes those who were saying you have to be circumcised and follow the law of Moses if you want to be saved. They fell silent and they glorified God saying then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.

Now this is a this is an amazing account. This is an absolutely amazing account in light of what we read in Galatians chapter 2.

In Acts chapter 11 a little further on we see how the church in Antioch started.

In verse 19 it says now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch notice speaking the word to no one except Jews.

But there were some of them men from Cyprus and Cyrene these are not Jews these are men from Cyprus and Cyrene Gentile territories who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists or the or the Greeks who were there preaching the Lord Jesus and the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number of a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

[23 : 06] The report of this came to the heirs of the church in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came he saw the grace of God he was glad and he exhorted them to he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose.

This is quite interesting again. the Jews were not preaching to the Gentiles but the word goes to the church in Antioch Greeks in that church they hear the word and word goes back to Jerusalem so they said Barnabas you need to go and check that out to see if it's legitimate if it's really true and Barnabas goes and what Luke writes is Luke says he saw the grace of God in other words what he observed in that church he couldn't deny that it was a genuine work of God because the grace of God was evident among those people and scripture says and he was glad he was glad when he saw the grace of God working among Gentiles who Jews believed had no right to salvation and who could not be saved look at verse 25 it says so

Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul and when he found him he brought him to Antioch for a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people and in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians and let's go back to Galatians what's happening in Galatians chapter 2 verses 11 through 14 is located in this church in Antioch it happened in this church where Barnabas was able to say I see the grace of God he brings Paul and they labor in this church and they work and work so much so that these people were so transformed it's the first place where Christians where disciples were called Christians they were called those who follow Jesus Christ now you may be wondering why this long reading this morning why go into all of this detail

I do sort of point out that Peter's racial and religious prejudice ran deep Peter's racial and religious prejudice ran deep God used him in this miraculous way to preach the gospel to Cornelius in his household God prepared him for it by giving him this vision and at the same time he was speaking to Cornelius and dealing with him God has this vision for Peter and he tells him you don't call anything common that I have cleansed these men come they tell him this amazing story Cornelius verifies the story Peter himself admits to Cornelius and his household I've come to learn that God does not show partiality but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him but still

Peter struggled with racial and religious prejudice now it's evident that when he came to Antioch he made some progress he made some progress how do we know he made progress Paul tells us he started to eat with the Gentiles he was eating with them fellowshiping with them relating to them so he put aside his Jewish strictness regarding diet until some men came from James these men came from James and Peter waffled Peter Peter's conviction about the gospel did not go deep enough to give him the courage to stand against these men from the circumcision party who had come to Antioch from James Peter no doubt believed the gospel but not deep enough to stand against these men

[27 : 36] Peter feared men more than was his conviction that God does not show favoritism to one race of people or one group of people over another and so under pressure he withdrew from his Gentile brothers to save face with the circumcision party who came from James and in doing so Peter betrayed the gospel Peter betrayed the gospel because he treated Gentile brothers and sisters in Christ as if they were unbelievers and Paul tells us that Peter's actions were not isolated just to him Paul tells us in verse 13 look at what he says in verse 13 he says and the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy all of them they joined

Peter and they refused to eat with the Gentile believers though they did before and you can imagine how troubling this must have been for Paul here's a church that he poured his life out for slaved and labored to build and now these Gentile believers are confused because Peter and Barnabas and the others are no longer relating to them and actually Paul helps us to see that they had a goal in mind Paul says that you were trying to force them to be Gentiles that's what he says in verse 14 notice how he says it he says if you live like a Jew though a Jew live like a Gentile and not like a Jew how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews that was the intent of their actions they were trying to get these Gentile believers to conform to Jewish practices that was the effect of

Peter's actions on some of the Jews and on Barnabas so what was the problem really the problem was that Peter the Jews in the church at Antioch and Barnabas were exhibiting racial and religious prejudice against their fellow Gentile believers and Paul addresses it but he addresses it in a somewhat unusual manner he addresses it in a principled manner and this brings in my second and final point Paul's defense of the gospel first Peter's betrayal of the gospel now Paul's defense of the gospel and Paul's defense of the gospel is recorded for us in verse 14 notice that Paul does not take issue with the men who came from James nor does he take issue with the

Jews and Barnabas who were led astray! Instead he takes issue with Peter himself and we see first in verse 11 that he says he opposed Peter to his face didn't talk behind Peter's back he opposed Peter to his face and then in verse 14 he says that he confronted him before them all he did it openly and the implication is that the Gentiles were able to see this confrontation as well Paul saw Peter's hypocrisy and he called him out on it he said you are no longer strictly keeping the Jewish law you've been eating with these Gentiles before these men came how is it now that you're withdrawing and you're acting hypocritically you're trying to force the Gentiles to be Jews or to live like Jews and you yourself don't live as a

Jew does but we're not told Peter's reaction we're not told what Peter said in response to that but I think we can imagine that from all that we've seen of Peter in scripture he probably was repentant and he probably acknowledged that Paul was right we could remember him weeping when he heard the rooster crow three times and the Lord had told him you were going to betray me and he went and he rapped bitterly he seemed to be a repentant man but scripture doesn't tell us the reason scripture doesn't tell us is because it's not important but we can imagine how embarrassing and how shocking it must have been for him to hear this before these men who had come from James who was trying to impress this now you may ask the question why did Paul do this why did he do it was it because there was simply bad blood between him and Peter two chief apostles competing for turf and competing for status did he want to simply embarrass

[32 : 54] Peter no that's not why he did it Paul tells us in verse 14 why he did it Paul did it because the conduct of Peter the Jews and Barnabas was not in step with the gospel it was not in step with the truth of the gospel it was out of step with the truth of the gospel they were betraying the gospel the gospel is that because of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross sinners can be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ alone that is the gospel nothing added to it nothing taken away from it that is the gospel but what Peter was doing was Peter was in essence adding to the gospel he was requiring these

Gentiles to now live like Jews and he was treating them like unbelievers because they had not been circumcised they were not following the dietary laws and see this is more than just some man-made rules that are being disobeyed not followed no what this is this is the gospel of Jesus Christ this is the gospel where Jesus said it is finished and Peter in essence was saying it's not finished Peter was requiring of them what God did not require of them and by forcing the Gentiles to live like Jews Peter was out of step with the truth of the gospel the apostle Paul had one aim he had one goal he had no beef with Peter he was not competing with Peter he wanted to defend the gospel you know there are times when such public confrontation of fellow ministers is necessary because the truth of the gospel is at stake but there are some who hold the view or you should not air differences in public in this way you should go in closed quarters and go behind closed doors and deal with these things no they had a closed meeting in

Jerusalem and Peter's conduct was in the open Peter's conduct was in public and therefore it needed to be corrected in public it would have made no sense for Paul to pull Peter aside and correct him over his error it was done publicly and therefore it needed to be addressed publicly you see a true commitment to the gospel requires a firm defense of the gospel and it needs to this commitment to the gospel needs to be above our allegiance to friends and our allegiance to colleagues and sometimes what we see is even in the ministry the ministry can be so much like a lodge it can be so much like a little fraternity where some would place allegiance to friends and being in the goodwill of friends above the gospel itself and they turn a blind eye when the gospel is being undermined and attacked and the truth of the gospel is not being lived out

Peter knew the gospel no doubt about that however his religious and racial prejudices ran deep and he had problems applying the gospel that was the issue that we see here Peter knew the gospel Paul didn't have to really correct him on the content of the gospel because of religious and racial prejudices that dog Peter through his ministry he had problems applying the gospel and the sad truth is that Peter is not alone history is filled with Christians who knew the gospel but who did not live in accordance with the truth of the gospel because of prejudices that ran deep in them and even in society they walked out of step with the gospel and so for example some well known pastors and theologians were slave owners during the time of the transatlantic slave trade and we should not be blind to some of our own prejudices as well some of our own prejudices that will cause us to act just like

Peter and walk out of step with the truth of the gospel and for example the same way that Peter related to Gentiles in Antioch some Christians can relate to other Christians who have tattoos or who have body piercings pierced lip or pierced eye or multiple piercings in their ears or pierced tongue men who wear earrings there's some Christians who have a problem with dreadlocks and so there's some Christians who wear dreadlocks and so their prejudice would cause them to relate to them as unbelievers to see them in a different light than they would see other Christians there's some who would dismiss

[39 : 14] Christians who drink alcohol or who may smoke tobacco and another issue that's on the horizon increasingly so in the United States and in other places where marijuana is being legalized and some who would relate to marijuana in the same way as alcohol which used to be illegal then became legal and churches are having to grapple with it as well there's some who have issues with Christians who listen to secular music and don't consider them to be Christian and the many many issues that we can think about and if we aren't careful we can be so blind to our own prejudices we can think about Peter and say oh wow how prejudiced Peter was and we overlook our own prejudices that cause us to misapply the gospel and not walk in step with the truth of the gospel but brothers and sisters whomever

God receives as sons and daughters are our brothers and sisters in Christ for some of us in the Bahamas we have a very similar situation like the apostle Peter for Peter his prejudice was related to Gentiles but for many of us our prejudice is related to Haitians in our community and many of us would we would oppose black white racism we would oppose when we experience racial prejudice at the hands of say a white person or a Hispanic person and yet we overlook our own prejudices in terms of how we relate to Haitian brothers and sisters in our own community and in doing so we become just as the apostle Peter where we do not apply the gospel we walk out of step with the gospel we do not apply the truth of the gospel and we relate to them in ways different from we would relate to other brothers and sisters who would not be of Haitian descent or who would be of

Haitian parentage and all God requires is repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ and again whoever God receives as his sons and daughters they are our brothers and sisters in Christ and see I will say to us this morning consider the apostle Peter this great apostle yet he prejudice dogged him it dogged him and I say to us this morning if you name the name of Christ let us by the grace of God slay this issue of prejudice and I'm not saying that it's going to be a situation where you say I slay it and it's done no it may be something we need to slay every single day but slay it we must not the very gospel that we so love and proclaim can be at stake and we can find ourselves being hypocrites the way

Peter was saying one thing and then living another thing walking out of step with the truth of the gospel again let's not forget what the apostle Paul is doing here we can lose it if we don't keep it in context Paul is writing to the Galatians he is trying to say to the Galatians my gospel is the true gospel I've gone to Jerusalem I've defended it in Antioch I defended it against Peter and if you think about it these men who were upsetting the church in Galatia they obviously would have had more linking to Peter than they would to Paul and Paul says I confronted Peter and I told him you're walking out of step with the gospel and the gospel that I'm proclaiming to you this is the true gospel gospel so Paul does not air this situation that happened between him and Peter in a vacuum no he's telling it to them for a reason he's saying listen what I did in

Jerusalem I did in Antioch my gospel is the true gospel this thing that you're following where you're trying to keep Jewish laws and you're trying to add to the gospel thinking that is not sufficient no that is that is wrong and so at this particular point now Paul has already laid his case before them and he begins now to transition to talk about the theology of the gospel and that's what we're going to pick up on next week well not next week but the week after we will pick up in verse 15 in his commentary on Galatians deceased pastor and theologian John Stott wrote the following and I want to conclude with this quote from John Stott John Stott writes this the gospel is the good news of the justification of sinful men by God's grace it tells us the sinner's acceptance with

[45 : 28] God is by faith only altogether apart from works this is the truth of the gospel once we have grasped it clearly we are in a position to understand our twofold duty towards it and gives us two duties that we all who have professed Christ have towards the gospel first he says we must walk straight according to the gospel we have to walk straight according to the gospel and by this it simply means that we must not only believe the gospel and defend the gospel and preserve the gospel we must also faithfully apply the gospel and that's where Peter fell down he was not applying the gospel in the church in Antioch so this means that we receive brothers and sisters as all those who know

Jesus Christ and the pardon of their sins and we do it without adding any conditions we do it on the basis of what God has done and we trust him and God has all kinds of children yet he does have them with tattoos and with piercings and all whatever kinds of things may be out there maybe not our preferences but we receive them nonetheless and we don't cause them to conform to our liking to be able to receive them if God receives them we are to receive them as well we are to walk straight according to the gospel our second duty is we must oppose those who deny the gospel this can be in so many different settings sometimes in a conversation you hear someone say something and you know the gospel is being undermined the gospel is being attacked and if we name the name of Christ we are called to defend the gospel we don't oppose issues of preference the gospel is not a matter of eating and drinking or not eating and not drinking or wearing and not wearing the gospel is about how sinners are made right with the holy

God and when the gospel is at stake we must be willing to oppose whomever it does not matter what their stature is it mattered not to Paul that Peter was the apostle to the Jews it matters not we're not looking at personalities we're looking at one thing the gospel and the glory of God in the gospel because when the gospel is undermined and we allow it to be undermined what we're really saying is what God did is not sufficient he did a defective work it's an insufficient work it's a work in progress that needs our help to it but the gospel needs no help because it is a finished work and so my prayer for us this morning is that the Lord will help us to both know and to apply and when necessary to defend the gospel let's pray together so