

Galatians #4

Galatians 2:1-10

Introduction and Goal:

Like Paul, Christians must clearly define and courageously defend the gospel.

Outline:

A. The Purpose of Paul's visit.

a. The purpose of Paul's visit was to defend the gospel.

b. Explanation:

i. Background of visit:

The timing of this visit to Jerusalem is debated—scholars are divided whether it occurred in Acts 11:2-30 or Acts 15:1-5. Either way, the problem of adding circumcision as a requirement to be saved was having influence.

ii. Necessity of DEFINING the Gospel:

Paul laid before the apostles "the gospel [he] proclaimed". It's helpful to think through the contrast of hearing examples of "the gospel" expressed through Acts 1-13, and what strikingly occurs in Acts 15:1.

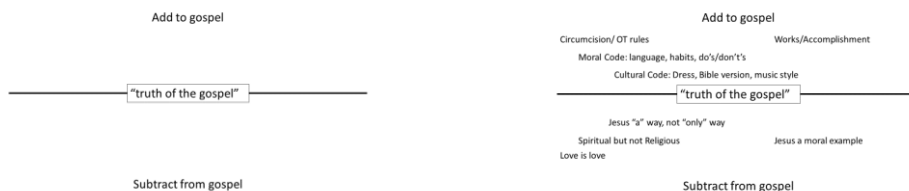
Gospel:	Heresy:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts 2: Jesus was crucified, and was raised from the dead. God made him Lord and Christ. • Acts 4:12: There is no other name besides Jesus by which we must be saved. • Acts 5:31: God raised Jesus, who was killed, and exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. • Acts 8:12: Good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. • Acts 8:35: The good news about Jesus. • Acts 10:36, 43: The good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)...everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. • Acts 11:18: God has granted repentance that leads to life. • Acts 13:39: Everyone who believes in Jesus is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts 15:1: But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

- iii. Necessity of DEFENDING the Gospel: Paul's motive was to make sure he wasn't running in vain. NOTE: Paul was not defending himself, but holding the Apostle's accountable:

"Nothing was threatening Paul's *certainty*, but something was threatening his *fruitfulness*...Paul's trip was not "for fear" that the Jerusalem apostles didn't have the true gospel. What he did fear was that the Jerusalem apostles might not be true to that gospel. They might not stand up to the false teachers, but rather, allow their own cultural prejudices to entice them to let these teachers continue to make such damaging claims." (Timothy Keller, *Galatians for You*)

B. The Problem Paul faced.

- a. The problem Paul faced was the addition of circumcision to the gospel.
- b. Explanation:
 - i. See 2:3-5.
 - ii. Reflect on the contrast between "Gospel" and "Heresy" in the chart above.
 - iii. Consider that all people have "sincerely held beliefs" that undermine the gospel.
- c. Application:
 - i. Consider "the truth of the gospel" as a line. How do we "add" to the gospel? How do we "subtract" from the gospel?



C. The Partnership Paul received.

- a. Paul received the "right hand of fellowship" from the apostolic "pillars".
 - b. Explanation:
 - i. See 2:6-10.
 - ii. The important detail to notice is that the Apostles "added nothing" to Paul.
 - iii. The comment about "remembering the poor" (2:10) is something of an aside, however it's a challenging reminder. Consider two requirements for remembering the poor: **STRATEGIC SACRIFICE.**
1. **Strategy:** What's your plan for remembering the poor? Do you give to a ministry? To you volunteer? Do you carry extra cash? Remembering the poor requires strategy, intentionality, readiness.
 2. **Sacrifice:** The American standard of living is embarrassingly high compared to most of the world. Don't you agree? What's your standard of living? What are you giving up to fulfill God's desire to help the poor? What are you willing to give up?

Considerations:

- Have there been times in your life when you have begun to think that your performance counts toward your salvation? What caused you to think this way?
- Do you ever feel guilty or insecure in your relationship with God? What might this be telling you about how you view your acceptance with him?