



PART 4: The Callout

INTRODUCTION

This week we are in Galatians 2 and looking at what has influence in our lives. Why do we do and say what we do and say? Here's a little background to set it up. In Acts 10, Peter has a confusing vision just before Gentiles show up asking him to come to the home of a Gentile named Cornelius in Caesarea. Peter agrees to go, and on his arrival says, "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile," but "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism." In Acts 11, Paul and Barnabas form a church with the diverse population in Antioch. More gentiles are joining this Jesus movement. After carrying the gift from the church in Antioch to Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas go on their first missionary journey around 47/ 48CE and start the church in the gentile region of Galatia. This first journey ends back in Antioch, and Peter (Cephas) has come to town.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some things you feel have a big influence on the typical person these days? On you?
2. **Read Galatians 2:11-21.** What all do you see as influential in vv.11-14? How do we still see that kind of influence today?
3. **Read these two translations of Galatians 2:15-16.**
 - a) ^(NIV) "We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified."
 - b) ^(NRSV) "We ourselves are Jews by birth and not gentile sinners, yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through the faith of Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law."

What differences do you notice? How do those differences impact the takeaway for these verses? Which one do you like better? Why?

4. What does Paul mean by "justification"? How does Paul's understanding of "justification" reshape the basis of belonging in the people of God and directly challenge cultural, racial, and social divisions?
5. Paul's argument is not about abstract theology but about the practical shape of the church—who sits together at the table. How does this influence the way you live?

MOVING FORWARD

The refusal to recognize and acknowledge the things that have influence in our lives, as well as, the work to justify and excuse the things that have influence in our lives is a dangerous move. From the outside looking in, the influence seems obvious in the story Paul tells, and it's not good. But what about us? What have we allowed to influence our lives today. Is that a good thing?

For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.
--Galatians 2:19-20