

Galatians 2:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

Analysis

And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. The verb *synypekrithēsan* (συνυπεκρίθησαν, "joined in hypocrisy") uses the compound *hypokrinomai* (ὑποκρίνομαι, "to play-act, pretend")—the same word for actors wearing masks. *Hoi loipoi Ioudaioi* (οἱ λοιποὶ Ἰουδαῖοι, "the rest of the Jews") indicates Peter's influence spread—other Jewish believers followed his example in withdrawing from Gentile fellowship.

Most shocking: *hōste kai Barnabas synapēchthē autōn tē hypokrisei* (ὅστε καὶ Βαρναβᾶς συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει, "so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy"). The intensive *kai Barnabas* (καὶ Βαρναβᾶς, "even Barnabas") emphasizes the tragedy—Barnabas, Paul's longtime ministry partner who had defended Gentile freedom at the Jerusalem Council, was swept along (*synapagō*, συναπάγω, "to lead away together"). The dative *tē hypokrisei* (τῇ ὑποκρίσει) identifies the instrument of their being carried away: *hypokrisis* (ὑπόκρισις, "hypocrisy, play-acting").

This verse reveals sin's contagious nature and leadership's amplified influence. One apostle's fear-driven compromise infected the entire Jewish Christian community, even ensnaring Paul's closest partner. When leaders model gospel-contradicting behavior, the damage multiplies exponentially through those who follow their example rather than their doctrine.

Historical Context

Antioch's church had pioneered Gentile-Jewish unity, sending out the first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3) and modeling integrated fellowship. Peter's withdrawal and the subsequent mass defection by Jewish Christians threatened to destroy this unity, creating separate Jewish and Gentile congregations. Such division would have invalidated Paul's entire Gentile mission and suggested the cross failed to create one new humanity in Christ (Ephesians 2:15).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does the sinful example of respected leaders exponentially multiply temptation for others?
2. What does Barnabas's capitulation teach about the danger of people-pleasing even among mature believers?
3. In what church contexts might you be participating in subtle forms of segregation that contradict gospel unity?

Interlinear Text

καὶ συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ Ἰουδαῖοι
And dissembled with him And G3588 the other Jews
G2532 G4942 G846 G2532 G3062 G2453

ὅστε καὶ Βαρναβᾶς συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει
insomuch And that Barnabas was carried away with him dissimulation
G5620 G2532 G921 G4879 G846 G5272

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 15:33 (Parallel theme): Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Ephesians 4:14 (Parallel theme): That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Hebrews 13:9 (Parallel theme): Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

Acts 4:36 (Parallel theme): And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

Ecclesiastes 10:1 (Parallel theme): Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.

1 Corinthians 8:9 (Parallel theme): But take heed lest by any means this liberty of your's become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

1 Corinthians 5:6 (Parallel theme): Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?