

Galatians 2:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Analysis

But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? The verb *orthopodousin* (ὀρθοποδοῦσιν, "walk uprightly") means to walk straight, not deviating—they were walking crookedly relative to *tēn alētheian tou euaggeliou* (τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, "the truth of the gospel"). Paul's response: public confrontation *emprosthen pantōn* (ἔμπροσθεν πάντων, "before all")—since Peter's sin was public, correction must be too.

Paul's argument devastates Peter's position through logical exposure: *ei sy Ioudaios hyparchōn ethnikōs kai ouchi Ioudaikōs zēs* (εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἔθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῇς, "if you, being a Jew, live in Gentile manner and not Jewish manner"). The participle *hyparchōn* (ὑπάρχων, "being/existing as") acknowledges Peter's Jewish identity, while the adverb *ethnikōs* (ἔθνικῶς, "Gentile-wise") describes his previous lifestyle—eating non-kosher food, fellowshiping freely with Gentiles.

The devastating question: *pōs ta ethnē anagkazeis ioudaizein* (πῶς τὰ ἔθνη

ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν, "how do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?"). By withdrawing fellowship unless Gentiles adopted Jewish customs, Peter effectively forced them to "live like Jews" for acceptance. His actions spoke louder than his theology, communicating that faith in Christ wasn't sufficient—Jewish cultural conformity was necessary for full fellowship.

Historical Context

"Judaizing" meant adopting Jewish identity markers—circumcision, food laws, Sabbath observance—not merely believing in the Jewish Messiah. Peter's behavior sent the message that Gentile converts were second-class Christians unless they became culturally Jewish. This contradicted the Jerusalem Council's decision (Acts 15:19-20) and made salvation depend on ethnicity plus faith, destroying the gospel's universality.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What cultural conformity do modern Christians subtly require beyond faith in Christ for full acceptance?
2. How can your actions communicate theological messages that contradict your stated beliefs?
3. In what ways might you be "compelling others to Judaize" by making your cultural preferences conditions for Christian fellowship?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλ'	ὅτε	εἶδον	ὅτι	οὐκ	ὀρθοποδοῦσιν	πρὸς	τὴν
But	when	I saw	that	not	they walked	according to	G3588
G235	G3753	G1492	G3754	G3756	G3716	G4314	
ἀλήθειαν	τοῦ	εὐαγγελίου	εἶπον	τῷ	Πέτρῳ	ἔμπροσθεν	
the truth	G3588	of the gospel	I said	G3588	unto Peter	before	
G225		G2098	G2036		G4074	G1715	
πάντων	Εἰ	σὺ	Ἰουδαῖος	ὑπάρχων	ἐθνικῶς		
them all	If	thou	a Jew	being	after the manner of Gentiles		
G3956	G1487	G4771	G2453	G5225	G1483		
ζῆς	καὶ	οὐκ	Ἰουδαϊκῶς	τί	τὰ	ἔθνη	ἀναγκάζεις
livest	and	not	as do the Jews	why	G3588	the Gentiles	compellest thou
G2198	G2532	G3756	G2452	G5101		G1484	G315
Ἰουδαΐζειν							
to live as do the Jews							
G2450							

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 2:5 (Truth): To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

Acts 10:28 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Psalms 84:11 (Parallel theme): For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Proverbs 2:7 (Parallel theme): He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

1 Timothy 5:20 (Parallel theme): Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

Galatians 6:12 (Parallel theme): As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

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