

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* (όρθοποδοῦσιν, "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 ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, "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* (ἐθνικῶς, "Gentile-wise") describes his previous lifestyle—eating non-kosher food, fellowshipping freely with Gentiles.

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

ἀναγκάζεις ιουδαΐζειν, "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 ὥρθοποδοῦσιν 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 of the gospel I said unto Peter before G1715
G225 G3588 G2098 G2036 G3588 G4074

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 the Gentiles compellest thou
G2198 G2532 G3756 G2452 G5101 G3588 G1484 G315

Ἰουδαῖζειν
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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