



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Galatians 2:11-18

SUMMARY:

Church conflicts are ugly & painful; yet they happen. Scripture eschews a utopian ideal; it realistically reports conflict, even among church leaders—e.g., Paul, Peter, & James. We can learn from their actions & reactions. The church's emergence from Judaism produced tensions—some soon resolved, others not. The 'Antioch incident' was no 'tempest in a teapot;' it was a major watershed. Both major players had divine revelations. Paul testified, "*I did not disobey the heavenly vision.*" Peter couldn't say that. When James' delegation arrived, insisting Jewish believers segregate from Gentile "sinners" at fellowship meals, Peter retreated, splitting the church between Jews & Gentiles. Paul reacted, rebuking Peter to his face. This was no power play. Paul saw that this violated the gospel truth—all believers justified by faith, are equal members in God's family. Paul's rearguard action, despite the other leaders' defection, prevented Christianity from being reabsorbed back into Judaism. The other leaders' intransigence left Paul isolated, yet Church history vindicates Paul. In the church old distinctions along ethnic/racial lines can't coexist with faith in Christ—new creation's sole distinctive. At Antioch Paul was a 'midwife' birthing the church out of Judaism.

I. 'Christian church birthed out of Judaism (Acts 11:19-21)

- "The Christian church was birthed out of Judaism."—Timothy Tennent
- "In its 1st generation, Christianity was a Jewish movement, & [there was a]...*painful process of separation.*"—Martin Goodman
- "Christianity began as a Jewish [renewal] movement fulfilling Jewish hopes, promises, & expectations...The continuity between Judaism & Christianity seemed so seamless to the earliest believers that they...never...thought of themselves as changing their religion from

Judaism to something else. They understood Christianity as an extension & fulfillment of their Jewish faith. Yet, the NT records...unnamed Jewish believers in Antioch who took the risky—& controversial move—to cross major cultural & religious barriers & share the gospel with pagan uncircumcised Greeks.” [T. Tennent, *Theology in...World Christianity*, p. 3]

A. Cornelius’ case sets the precedent (Acts 10:1-11:18) He was a ‘God-fearer’ associated with the Jewish synagogue (Acts 10:2)

- “With the acceptance of Cornelius by Peter, the Jerusalem Church followed...a path already established. But did that make *Cornelius equal to Jewish believers* in...the Jerusalem Church? Acts 15 makes a positive answer *unlikely*.” —Bruce Chilton

B. Real Gospel breakthrough to pagan Greeks by Anonymous Refugees in Antioch (Acts 11:19-21)

- “Those...scattered as a result of the persecution [by Saul & Co.]...because of Stephen made their way as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus & Antioch, *speaking the word to no one except Jews*. 20 But...some of them, men from Cyprus & Cyrene, who came to Antioch... *began speaking to the Greeks also*, proclaiming the good news about the Lord Jesus. 21 The Lord’s hand was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.” (Acts 11:19-21 CSB)

II. Apostle Paul the Midwife: the Christian Church Birthed out of Judaism (Gal. 4:19)

- The midwife motif “reminds NT readers of Paul’s own imagery of childbirth...in...Gal. 4:19: ‘I’m again suffering labor pains for you until Christ is formed in you.’...We must not forget the intense pastoral pain...[Paul] experiences as the ‘apostolic mother’ in birthing a spiritually fully-formed Galatian community of believers.” [James R. Harrison, *First Urban Churches*, pp. 101-2]
- “Without [Paul’s] mission [it’s] questionable whether Christianity would have emerged as a predominantly Gentile religion.”—James Dunn
- “Without [Paul]...a Jewish renewal movement would hardly have become...a world religion...”—Udo Schnelle
- “Paul is substantially responsible for the Jesus movement’s not ending up as a movement of Jews only.”—Charlotte Fonrobert
- “Paul was chiefly responsible for expanding the early Jesus movement to include Gentiles (non-Jews) as well as Jews.”—Robert Vande Kappelle

III. Crisis & Confrontation in Antioch (Gal. 2:11-18)

- “The confrontation at Antioch...*marked a very important watershed* in the history of earliest Christianity.”—James Dunn
- “The *Antioch incident was a watershed in the early church. It forced Paul to split from the Antioch...church*, to pursue mostly Gentile converts...& to socially separate his Gentile-majority [churches] from Jewish communities.”—Michael Bird
- “The face-off in Antioch was the expression of the *core conflict at the heart of 1st-century Christianity*: If Jesus...fulfill[ed] the Jewish Law, & circumcision was vital to that Law, what [about]...Gentiles who wanted to follow Jesus?”—Robert Orlando

- “The Antioch incident [is] *one of the greatest defining moments* in Paul’s theology & indeed in Christian theology”—J. Dunn
- “Gal. 2 Paul confronts Peter in 1 of the *most intriguing, &...debated interchanges* between 2 individuals in Scripture”—J. Gibson

A. Paul—an ‘Alpha Male’? A ‘Rogue Apostle’?

- “Paul uses Peter’s hypocrisy...*to show his authority as an apostle* and subsequently make his case to the Galatians.” [“*Smack Down: Peter vs. Paul,*” *Bible Study Magazine*, V. 2, #6]
- “Human nature being what it is, Paul *may have harbored some envy* against [Peter, the] ‘acknowledged pillar’—*Paul displays all the characteristics of an alpha-male.*” –Larry Helyer
- We are “interested in...whether Paul was a *Rogue Apostle* (as some thought in the early church...)” –David Wenham
- “Paul had inherent apostolic authority because of his calling & commissioning by Jesus on the Damascus road, but he was *not some rogue authoritarian...*” –Scot McKnight
- ‘Guarding his turf’? Based on “a territorial understanding of [Jerusalem] agreement...*Paul was furious when representatives of James* came to Antioch (*Gentile territory*) & treated it as an extension of their apostolate...” –Margaret Mitchell

B. Apostle Paul: ‘not disobedient to the heavenly vision’ (Acts 26:19)

- “I was traveling to Damascus...At midday, I saw a light from heaven brighter than the sun, shining around me & those traveling with me. 14 We all fell to the ground, & I heard a voice speaking to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?...’ 15 “I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ “The Lord replied, ‘I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. 16 But get up & stand on your feet. For I’ve appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant & a witness of what you have seen & will see of me. ...’ 19 “So then, King Agrippa, *I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.* 20 Instead, I preached...in Damascus...in Jerusalem...in all...Judea, & to the Gentiles, that they should repent & turn to God, & do works worthy of repentance.” (Acts 26:12-20)

C. Peter—the ecumenical ‘Bridge-Man’? Or Church-divider?

- “Peter was probably in fact and effect *the ‘bridge-man’*...who did more than any other to *hold together* the diversity of *first-century Christianity*. James the brother of Jesus & Paul, the 2 other most prominent leading figures in 1st-century Christianity were too much identified with their respective ‘brands’ of Christianity...in the eyes of Christians at the opposite ends of this particular spectrum. But *Peter, as shown particularly by the Antioch episode in Gal 2, had both a care to hold firm to his Jewish heritage*, which Paul lacked, & *an openness to the demands of developing Christianity*, which James lacked...So it is Peter who becomes the focal point of unity for the whole church.” [James D. G. Dunn in J. A. Sanders (ed.) *Canon Debate*, p. 577]
- “Peter drew back from the Gentile believers. And other Jewish believers...followed Peter’s example. This action...*divided the church into 2 camps*...No doubt Peter’s action & that of the Jewish minority...hurt the Antioch believers personally. It implied that Gentile believers were 2nd-class citizens in God’s kingdom. But Paul saw more than the momentary hurt &...the hypocrisy. Paul saw the deadly intrusion of the Law into the Gospel message. Paul reacted.” [L. Richards, *Bible Teacher’s Commentary*, p]

D. James the brother of Jesus (Acts 15:13, 19; 21:10-21)

- At the Antioch incident, “the absent *James was a more powerful influence than the present Paul*”—C. K. Barrett
- “This James was the eldest of the four (half-) brothers of Jesus (Mk. 6:3). He rose to prominence in the leadership of the Jerusalem church as the Twelve [apostles] ceased to fulfill that role. He then occupied a *unique position as head of the Jerusalem church for over a decade* from ~49 AD until his martyrdom in 62 AD... [That] gave him a role in the worldwide Christian movement since Jerusalem was the ‘mother church,’ which for most Jewish Christians...occupied the position of centrality & authority...” [Richard Bauckham, *James*, pp. 16-17]
- “James appears [in the NT] as the defender of traditional Jewish faith, upholder of the Torah [Law], willing to accept Gentiles into the Christian community, but insisting that Jewish Christians continue to abide by the Jewish Law [Torah] & traditions.” [M. Eugene Borings, *Introduction to NT History, Literature...*, pp. 435-6]
- “The Church in Jerusalem as headed & represented by James, became the center of the traditionalist & conservative wing of the Messiah Jesus movement as it expanded through the missions of Peter & Paul.” [Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, pp. 1085-6]
- “During James’ lifetime the Jerusalem Church remained focused on Jesus’ mission to renew the life of Israel.”—John Painter
- “After they stopped speaking, James responded, ‘*Brothers, listen to me...Therefore, in my judgment...*’ (Acts 15:13, 19)
- “When [James & Co.] heard [Paul’s report] they glorified God & said, “You see, brother [Paul], how many *thousands of Jews there are who’ve believed, & they are all zealous for the law.* 21 But they’ve been informed...that you are teaching all the Jews ...among the Gentiles to abandon Moses...not to circumcise their children or to live according to our customs.” (Acts 21:19-21)
- “The ‘apostolic decree’ [Acts 15]...*was not accepted by Paul*, for it veered away from the gospel of grace, salvation through faith. Evidently, Paul left Antioch without any resolution...” [John F. O’Grady, *Pillars of Paul’s Gospel*, p. 31]
- “Paul would’ve disagreed vehemently with all the theological presuppositions...[of] the Jerusalem Council.” —David Aune

IV. How the Antioch Crisis Unfolded (Gal. 2:11-18)

- “But when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned. 12 For he regularly ate with the Gentiles before certain men came from James. However, when they came, he withdrew & separated himself, because he feared those from the circumcision party. 13 Then the rest of the Jews joined his hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that they were deviating from the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas [Peter] in front of everyone, ‘If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile & not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?’ 15 We are Jews by birth & not “Gentile sinners,” 16 & yet because we know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we ourselves have believed in Christ Jesus. This was so

that we might be justified by faith in Christ & not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no human being will be justified. 17 But if we ourselves are also found to be “sinners” while seeking to be justified by Christ, is Christ then a promoter of sin? Absolutely not! 18 If I rebuild those things that I tore down, I show myself to be a lawbreaker.” (Gal. 2:11-18 CSB)

A. Preview of the key act: Paul confronts Peter. (Gal. 2:11)

– “But when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.” (Gal. 2:11)

B. Beginning: Peter regularly eats with Gentile believers. (Gal. 2:12a)

– Peter “regularly ate with the Gentiles before certain men came from James.” (Gal. 2:12a)

– “Peter’s act of eating with Gentiles was not a single instance. It was his normal practice. [Gk. *sunesthio* to eat together; the imperfect [tense] expresses the habitual action of the past; ‘he used to eat regularly with the Gentiles’ (Rienecker)] [Plus] this was *not the first occasion... Peter eats with Gentiles*; he had *done so previously in the household of Cornelius* (Acts 11:2).” [Jack J. Gibson, *Peter, James*, pp. 244-5]

– “Jewish Christian objections to eating with Gentile Christians in...2:11-21 are not about what food was served, but about having meal fellowship *with Gentiles* whom they regarded as incompletely converted. This issue was not [food] ‘purity laws’ but the requirements for treating Gentiles as fully converted...” [Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, p. 162 #18]

– “We [must] recognize the enormous significance that first-century Christians attributed to their fellowship meals. If a group of Christians wished to signal their strongest disapproval of an erring believer, they could exclude the person from their meal fellowship (e.g. 1 Cor. 5:9-11).” [Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, p. 162]

C. Catalyst: Men from James arrive (Gal. 2:12b).

– “However, when [certain men came from James] came...” (Gal. 2:12b)

1. The influence of James—“absent James was a more powerful influence than the present Paul”—C. K. Barrett

– “Peter in this [Antioch incident] *obeys James rather than relying on the conclusions that he had previously reached* on a similar matter [i.e., Cornelius] (Peter [said]: ‘Now I truly understand that God doesn’t show favoritism, 35 but in every nation the person who fears him & does what is right is acceptable to him.’ Acts 10:34-35). This is the behavior that Paul, perhaps harshly, calls hypocrisy.” [P. McKechnie, “*Jewish Christianity to AD 100*,” in M. Harding (ed.) *Into All the World*, p. 146 #68]

2. The Issue—Not the Menu, but the Meal Companions

– The issue “was not... simply a matter of teaching... It was about practice, the practice that revealed an underlying belief. The original practice in Antioch... reflected the belief that *all Jesus-believers*, whether circumcised or not, *belonged at the same table*. The people who came from [James] to Antioch were clearly saying that *table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentiles was wrong* & that Jewish Jesus-followers, as loyal Jews, should withdraw... [But] Paul had come to believe that Jesus couldn’t simply be added on to the [OT] picture.. The

Messiah's death & resurrection, coupled...with the outpoured divine Spirit, meant that everything had changed. A new world had been launched." [N. T. Wright, *Paul: A Biography*, pp. 145-6]

– At Antioch “the problem was not with the food but with *the company in which the food was consumed* i.e., with uncircumcised Gentiles. The common fellowship meals ignited...debates about the limits of acceptable table fellowship between [believing] Jews & Gentiles. What [scandalized] ‘*certain men from James*’ was that *the meals identified Gentiles as equal with Jews without...*[their becoming] *proselyte[es]*. The [catalyst] was...that Peter ate with Gentiles as if they were covenant-faithful Jews...To include Gentiles as equal participants [at] communal meals was to *lower the currency* of Israel's election & to *deny the superiority or advantage* of the Jew.” [Michael F. Bird, *An Anomalous Jew: Paul*, pp. 193-4]

D. Actions: Peter's withdrawal from Gentile believers

- “When [certain men came from James] came [Peter] withdrew & separated himself...” (Gal. 2:12c)
- “The refusal of fellowship, or withdrawal there-from, has definite implications for the relationship between the parties. Deliberate separation is never between parties who consider themselves equal. *The act of separation* is at least implicitly hostile and *constitutes a claim to privilege...*and the *assertion of superiority over the rejected party...*In the case of Jewish Christians declining table fellowship with Gentile Christians who do not observe Jewish dietary laws, the gesture is, at the very least, open to interpretation as *an assertion of superiority.*” [N. H. Taylor, *Apostolic Identity & Conflicts*, in S. Porter (ed.) *Paul & his Opponents*, p. 116]
- Peter's motivation – fear (Gal. 2:12d) He “separated himself, because *he feared those from the circumcision party*” (2:12d)
- Peter's negative influence (Gal. 2:13) “The rest of the Jews joined [Peter's] hypocrisy...even Barnabas was led astray” (2:13)
- Paul's stand: “Peter withdrew...The rest of the Jewish believers followed suit. *Paul alone...* remained undeterred.”—E. C. Park

V. Paul's Discernment & Response

A. Discernment: Peter & Co. deviating from the Gospel's truth (Gal. 2:14a)

- “But when I saw that they were deviating from the truth of the gospel...” (Gal. 2:14a)
- “Paul emphasizes Peter's wavering in the face of human opposition, in contrast to his own claims...to be *guided by divine truth* [Gal. 1:11-12; 2:5, 14].” [David Brown, *Paul, Antioch, & Jerusalem*, p. 68]
- “Why [was] Peter's withdrawal...a breach of the true gospel? Because it threatens the unity of the church...By withdrawing... Peter denies [Gentile Christians as] full partners in God's grace... Paul isn't talking about doctrinal differences ...They...agree...[on] the gospel (Gal. 2:7-9). His concern [is]...‘*orthopody*’ (...‘walking rightly’)...The truth of the gospel is threatened not only by

wrong ideas, but [also] by actions that deny [the gospel].” [Stanley S. Saunders, *Philippians & Galatians*, p. 62]

– “For Paul, eating with the Gentile [believers] is *not the better of two good choices, but the only possible choice* in the current situation. The truth of the gospel has been perverted by the actions of Peter and the other Jewish Christians. They all need to be confronted.” [Jack J. Gibson, *Peter between Jerusalem & Antioch*, p. 249]

– “In Paul’s perspective the gospel...preached by Peter was the same gospel as his own (Gal. 2:7, 15-16) only...differently targeted. That’s why *Paul was so indignant over Peter’s conduct in Antioch: his action was undermining ‘the truth of the (agreed) gospel’* (Gal. 2:14) [so,] Paul did not spare Peter from his *tongue-lashing* in Antioch.” [Dunn, *Beginning in Jerusalem*, p. 1064]

B. Response: Challenging Peter: ‘You’re a Jew, but live like a Gentile...’ (Gal. 2:14b)

– “I told him in front of everyone, ‘If you...a Jew, live like a Gentile...how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?’ (Gal. 2:14b)

– “*Peter [had] changed dramatically since his encounter with Cornelius*. He [has] not simply altering his dining practices for the sake of unity with Gentiles, but has generally adopted and continues to adopt [to some extent] a lifestyle...typical of a Gentile, though not necessarily rejecting every distinctively Jewish custom or practice...It is this [situation] that makes Paul’s condemnation so poignant, for it is only in the area of eating with Gentiles that Peter & [Co.] have [now regressed,] altered their lifestyle.” [Jack J. Gibson, *Peter between Jerusalem & Antioch*, p. 250]

– “All that matters for Paul is that Peter was in the habit of eating with non-Jews in Antioch... but...afterwards under pressure (in ‘fear’), he ‘drew back’ & ‘separated himself,’ drawing ‘other Jews’ & ‘even Barnabas’ into ‘his hypocrisy’ (Gal. 2:12-13)... Paul ...applauds [Peter’s] capacity to challenge his inherited... values. It’s only when he reneged on this policy...that he & others... ‘deviat[ed] from the truth of the gospel’ (Gal. 2:14)...In Paul’s view...for those aligned with the Christ-event, the ‘Jewish [Law-based] way of life’ is no longer an unqualified standard of righteous behavior, even for Jews...[It] has been subordinated to the higher...demand that their lives be oriented to ‘the truth of the gospel’ (Gal. 2:14).” [John Barclay, *Paul & the Gift*, pp. 366-8]

VI. The Fundamental Issues

A. Gentile Believers equal members? Or, are they still “Sinners” vs. Jews—the “Righteous”?

– “Paul believed that [Christ’s faithfulness/believers’ faith in Jesus] was the vital thing. [So] *nothing that the law could say was to come between one Jesus-follower & another* [as in inner/outer groups].” [N. T. Wright, *Paul: A Biography*, p. 148]

– “The question at issue in...Antioch...is *not* how people came into a relationship with God [i.e. justification by faith vs. by works], but who one is allowed to eat with. Who is a member of the people of God? Are ex-pagan converts full members or not?” [N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, p. 141]

– In Paul’s view: “A new day had dawned...Keeping separate tables...meant turning back the clock to the ‘present evil age’ [Gal. 1:4] instead of living boldly in ‘the age to come,’ now

inaugurated by Jesus' resurrection & the gift of the Spirit...Paul argued ...the new age had dawned, in which the [Law's] temporary restrictions were...set aside." [N. T. Wright, *Gal.*, pp. 109-110]

– Paul told Peter: “We are Jews by birth & not “*Gentile sinners*”...17 But if we ourselves are also found to be “*sinners*” while seeking to be justified by Christ, is Christ then a promoter of sin? Absolutely not!” (Gal. 2:13, 17) **Note:** *found to be sinners*. Gentiles are known among Jews as ‘sinners.’ When Jewish Christians associate with them, they are liable to the charge from Jews of being ‘sinners’ themselves. Peter’s change in behavior leaves him condemned “*I prove myself to be a transgressor.*”

– “It’s the use of ‘sinner’ by the Jerusalem delegation in reference to the Gentile believers & the table-fellowship at Antioch which brought home to [Paul] the incompatibility of such language with the gospel...If the Gentile [believers] are ‘in Christ’ & yet still ‘sinners,’ then we who are with them in Christ are...sinners too, & Christ [is] an ‘agent of sin’. But *that can’t be right*. I can’t live my life ‘in Christ’ &...give the Law the significance it has when I was a Pharisee.” [Dunn, *Jesus, Paul & Law*, p. 158]

B. The Church a Two-Tier Body?

– At Antioch “The question was central...: is the [Church] *community of Messiah-believers one body or two? Which is the more important division: that between Jews & non-Jews* (because Messiah-believing Jews [can] still...eat with non-believing Jews) or that between those who believed & those who did not? Was Messiah-faith [in Jesus] simply a subset of Judaism...or did it change everything? One thing was clear to Paul: if the community of...believers was a *two-tier body*...pressure was being put on *Gentile believers to convert to Judaism*...Table-separation [implied]...*an inner-group & an outer-group*...There was an inner circle of membership...to join it...meant becoming fully-fledged Jews...proselytes...The first thing Paul...said to Peter implied this: by doing what he was doing, he was ‘forcing the Gentiles to Judaize...to become Jews... Peter was putting the Gentile believers in a position where they effectively has no choice.” [N. T. Wright, *Paul & the Faithfulness of God*, pp. 854-5]

C. Paul’s Position—Alone, Standing Firm for Gospel Truth

– Paul “ends [his account] as he does...to call his audience’s attention to something about himself: he defends the gospel even if it means confronting one of the Jerusalem apostles. Having made this point, Paul...reached...the important part of his story & therefore doesn’t need to carry it further...By doing so Paul puts his self-portrayal as one who stands firm on the issue of gospel freedom in an emphatic position.” [Tim. Wiarda, “*Plot & Character in Gal. 1-2*,” *Tyndale Bull.*, V. 55.2 (2004) p. 244]

– “Whereas Paul once stood firm with the Jerusalem leadership...*Now Paul stands alone* because the others...allow...their fear of ...other Jews to legitimate behaviors that...betray the gospel.” [Christopher D. Land, *There’s No Longer Any Place for Me*, p.]

– “The crisis at Antioch is not fundamentally about the split between Paul & Peter, but about the failure of the dominant parties [Peter & Co.] to ‘walk in line with the truth of the gospel’ (Gal. 2:14)...Peter is condemned [for] attending to the opinions of the ‘people from James’; & ‘the circumcision people’...Paul is not chiefly concerned to demonstrate *his* own triumphant progress (he does *not* claim to have ‘won’). His...life [is] propelled by grace &, whether he wins or not, he will witness to that truth...He ...court[s] the hostility of all at Antioch [&] he will do it again, if

necessary, in Galatia...It is the truth of the gospel that is at stake.” [John Barclay, “*Paul’s Story: Theology as Testimony*,” in B. Longenecker (ed.) *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, p. 142]

D. Peter Or Paul—Which Pattern to Follow?

– “*There’s a clear message here...How easy it is to fall from the truth of the gospel. James, Peter & John had recently supported Paul [Gal. 2:1-10]...But now Peter, at the instigating of [the party] from James, shrinks from the truth of the gospel...If the ‘pillar apostle,’ Peter can fall from the truth of the gospel...the Galatians must be [careful] not to do the same! The incident at Antioch... provides a striking contrast between two kinds of behavior. Peter turning from the truth of the gospel because of outward pressure. On the other hand, Paul stood firm in the face of outward pressure. The Galatians...must choose which example they will follow [Peter or Paul?].*” [Frank J. Matera, *Galatians*, p. 88]

Questions

A. The message Summary says “Church conflicts are ugly & painful; yet they happen.” Have you ever experienced a Church conflict? In what way was it “ugly” &/or “painful”? Paul says (elsewhere) “all things work together *for good*” (Rom. 8:28). If you’ve been through a church conflict (or split), can you identify some “good” that resulted from it? (Share)

B. Let’s focus first on the behavior of Peter (Cephas) as described in Gal. 2:11-21

1. What did Peter (Cephas) do when he first arrived in Antioch? How did he behave (related to the Antioch congregation)?
2. After some time, how did Peter’s behavior change?
3. What was the external catalyst which caused Peter’s change?
4. What was the underlying motive to which Paul attributed to Peter’s change?
5. What adjective did Paul use to describe the actions of Peter, the other Jews, & Barnabas?
6. Do you agree or disagree with Paul’s assessment (in #4 & #5 above) (Why or why not?)

C. James Dunn’s assessments of Peter (Cephas)

- James Dunn describes Peter as a “bridge man.” Moreover J. Dunn says, “*Peter, as shown particularly by the Antioch episode in Gal 2, had both a care to hold firm to his Jewish heritage..., & an openness to the demands of developing Christianity...So...Peter...becomes the focal point of unity for the whole church.*”

1. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?
2. Based on Peter’s role in Gal. 2:11-21 is Peter a “bridge man,” joining diverse people & groups together? (Why or why not?)
3. In Gal. 2:11-21 is Peter “the focal point of unity” for the Antioch church? ...for the wider church? (Why or why not?)

D. Larry Richards' assessment of Peter (Cephas)

- Larry Richards' describes Peter differently from J. Dunn. Richards says: Peter's "action... *divided the church into two camps*...No doubt Peter's action & that of the Jewish minority...*hurt the Antioch believers personally*. It implied that Gentile believers were 2nd-class citizens in God's kingdom."

1. Do you agree or disagree with L. Richards' view (Why or why not?)
2. Which points in Richards' statement deserve the most emphasis? (Why?)

E. Paul's Intervention

1. Did Paul's intervention make a "bad situation worse"? Or did it actually (or potentially) make things better?
2. Was Paul "making a mountain out of a molehill," making a big issue out of a small error/mistake?

F. Consider Paul's opening statement to Peter (Gal. 2:14):

- Paul writes: "I told Cephas [Peter] in front of everyone, 'If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile & not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?' (Gal. 2:14b, c)

1. What does Paul mean by telling Peter: "You, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile & not like a Jew" (Gal. 2:14b)? In what way was Peter "living like a Gentile"? In what way was Peter "living not like a Jew"?
2. Paul asks Peter: "How can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?" (Gal. 2:14c). In what way was Peter "compelling" (forcing) Gentile believers in Antioch to "live like Jews," to "Judaize"? Is Paul exaggerating, or being rhetorical?