

# The Watershed of Faith and Works

## Galatians 2:1-10

The beautiful factor in this study is that the Holy Spirit will guide into all truth. In walking with God, we do not have to wait on the approval of a “hierarchy.” There are religious powers that seek to enslave people to specific tenants of their faith, which may not be able to be proven by the Word of God. It is not good enough to ratify a religious system on the basis of “history” or ill conceived “tradition”. The genuine walk of the children of God will lead you to discover harmony with many who are true brethren. Being Spirit led does not suggest “being “self-willed, or be of the mind to disregard good judgment of true believers.” It is possible that some can never find a teacher wise enough to teach them. Paul went to other of the apostles sharing and comparing. His testimony is that the Jewish Christians had attained no more then the Gentile Christians who encouraged keeping certain laws as stated in verse six.

Being a seasoned minister of the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, Paul goes to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus. It is clear that there are those who are still wrestling with “faith plus works” for their salvation, which was their discussion. Is salvation to be attained by faith and works? In this case, ought a Gentile be circumcised along with faith in Christ? In Acts 15: 24 Paul withstands the counsel and states unequivocally that such would be the “subverting of the soul.” We have not gone very far from the same teaching of church dogmas that are added to the finished work of Christ for ones salvation. There are those who would say unless certain dictates of the church are embraced in addition to the Word, “Let him be damned.” May I inform you that you will be damned if you do! Paul’s encouragement came from his co-laborers, such as Barnabas who is named “son of encouragement.” His additional co-laborer was Titus, a Gentile who had broken with the tradition of circumcision. God had opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles, who where not circumcised as demanded by the Jewish believers. Apart from this break with tradition the church may have died in the cradle; as Paul says, “lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.” Gal.2:2.

It is interesting to note that Paul went to Jerusalem by “revelation,” rather than by command as Martin Luther was commanded to come to Rome. We wear the cross as jewelry while Paul wore it in his heart and defended true Christianity by withstanding all who did not preach that by grace one alone is saved. To this end Paul also withstood Peter, who needed to be castigated in his fickle position on these matters (2:11-14). We may be preaching “earth day but Paul is preaching the “resurrection day.” How we need to defend the true gospel today, which remains under attack, and no wonder in that Satan would seek to destroy the faith as known in the book of Acts, which was sought to be high-jacked in the third century. II Pet. 3:17 “Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” “False brethren” have always been in the church and are in the church today “to spy out our liberty”V.4. Additions to the gospel are subtractions, which lead folk into religious bondage. To the Jews, Paul made it clear that Circumcision does not belong in the “gospel” any more than “baptism” belongs in the Gospel. Baptism by immersion is for discipleship and never has been and never will be a part of the gospel that suggests salvation as he said in I Cor. 1:17 “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”

May these comments stir discussion to lead to Christ who alone is the answer to man’s dilemma in search for biblical truth. We encourage your enquiries and comments at [jandrxdv@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:jandrxdv@nbnet.nb.ca)