

Articles and Sermons :: Paul Confronting Peter A Senior Leader of the Church by Zac Poonen

Paul Confronting Peter A Senior Leader of the Church by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/11/11 12:5

We read in Galatians 2:11 Paul confronting even Peter. "Peter came to Antioch, and I opposed him to the face". Remember, Peter was the man who had publicly welcomed Paul recognising that he had a God-given ministry (Gal. 2:9). Yet Paul confronted him. There is something wonderful we see here about Peter, James and John. Paul who was much younger than them, began having a wider ministry than them and they had the grace to recognise it and encourage him in it. It is very rare to find older servants of God like that today, who have the grace to recognise an anointing upon a younger brother. Paul then confronts Peter, the senior leader of the church, and tells him that he is wrong. That would be like a junior worker confronting the top leader of his denomination and saying, "You are wrong."

Why are there so few like Paul? Because; most Christians are diplomatic and seek to please men. They mistake their compromising attitude for gentleness and humility. When it comes to the truth of the gospel, we must not seek our reputation. Truth is not our property. It is God's and so we have to defend it. Most Christians would fight tooth and nail for their earthly property. But when it comes to God's property the truth that is being stolen, most Christians just keep quiet. That proves that they just love themselves. They don't love God or the truth. But Paul loved the truth.

If someone was only stealing Paul's coat or shirt, he would have let him have it. But when they were robbing the truth of God's word, he fought for the truth. That is how every godly man is. He cares more for God's truth than for his own property. If all of you had valued God's truth as much as you value your own property, you might have progressed much further than you have. I find there are very few people who are willing to take a stand for the truth. Most preachers are men-pleasers. So God cannot make them His prophets. God will test you in many different circumstances to see whom you want to please. God tested Paul here to see if he would seek to please Peter. Peter was a senior apostle, but what he was doing was wrong (Gal. 2:12). He used to eat with the Gentiles. But when some people came from James (the elder at Jerusalem), he became afraid of what James would think and withdrew. That was when Paul stood up to Peter. Even Barnabas was carried away by Peter's hypocrisy (Gal. 2:13).

Barnabas also was senior to Paul. He was a gentle, gracious person. His attitude may have been, "Brother Peter is a senior brother. So let me not say anything and judge this godly man." Paul's attitude, however, was, "It's not a question of whether he is more godly. I am not comparing myself with him. What he is doing is contrary to the gospel message that we are preaching. What's wrong with eating food with the Gentiles? Why should we be afraid of what Brother James has to say?"

Are you afraid like that of some elder brother's opinion? It was because there were brave, fearless men like Paul in the first century that we have the pure gospel in the New Testament. Because there were fearless men in all these 20 centuries, who stood for the truth of the gospel, and did not seek to please men, we have the pure gospel message today. Thank God for such men.

Re: Paul Confronting Peter A Senior Leader of the Church by Zac Poonen - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/11/11 13:21

Amen brother Greg!

May we be such men.