

OLD HABITS DIE HARD

The background of a bible verse is often overlooked because of the interest towards this one verse. In homiletic class, we emphasize the importance of studying the context of a verse. In this case, the context of 2:18 is Gal.2: 11-21. *“For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.”*

Peter had come from Jerusalem to visit the Gentile church of Antioch. He had been fellowshipping with them and enjoying God’s amazing grace that had broken down so many barriers through Jesus Christ (Eph.2: 11-22; Gal.3: 26-29).

Then legalist believers from Jerusalem church who believed that Christians should not have fellowship with uncircumcised Gentiles showed up and began to attack grace liberty (Gal.2: 4, 11-12).

This issue had been doctrinally corrected at the Jerusalem Church conference (Acts 15; Gal.2). *“But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, ‘It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.’”* (Acts 15:5)

“But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.” (Acts 15:11)

“And recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.” (Gal.2: 9)

Peter withdrew grace fellowship from the Gentile believers as soon as the legalist began to attack grace (2:13). Paul confronted Peter’s hypocrisy in the presence of all that is recorded in Gal.2: 11-21.

This is a confrontation between two spiritual mature Christian leaders. This conflict between new man divine viewpoint thinking (Paul) and old man cosmos diabolicus thinking (Peter) remind us that OLD HABITS DIE HARD.

This lesson will study FIVE aspects of this conflict: OLD HABITS DIE HARD.

- 1. “If I rebuild what I have once destroyed” is a crucial point in the problem of the conflict between Paul and Peter and Old Habits Die Hard.**

“For if (Icc) I rebuild (oikodomeo / p.a.ind / palin / again) what (hos / relative pronoun / apln) I have once destroyed (kataluo / a.a.ind), I prove (sunistemi / p.a.ind / to stand together) myself to be a transgressor (parabates / asf). For through the Law I died (apothnesko / a.a.ind) to the Law, that I might live to God.” (Gal.2: 18-19)

Paul is revealing that this specific area of legalism is still an Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) problem in Peter’s Christian Way of Life (CWL) (Acts10-11, 15) (Read - Acts 10:9-17, 34-35, 47-48) (11:1-4, 15-18).

- 2. Peter had been taught and had cycled the doctrinal truth on this specific area of problem. He had been taught by the resurrected Lord to put it off and to put on New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV) (Acts 11:15-18; Eph.4: 22-24).**

- What was Peter's Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) thinking in this area? (Acts 11:1-11)
- What was Peter's New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV) thinking on this subject? (Acts 11:12-18)
- Did Peter cycle the proper Categorical Doctrine (CD) to the situation with Cornelius? (Acts 10:17-46)

While the putting off and the putting on are aorist tense (apothemi / a.m.infin) (enduo / a.m.infin), the renewing is present (ananeomai / p.p.infin). This is very important in understanding Peter's Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) dilemma.

"Paul's logic means that a shift in belief either indicates that Peter was wrong as a Jew or as a Christian. He could not have it both ways. To support one view is to tear down its diametric opposite." (Ren. of NT, pg.27, and vol.14, Gal.2: 18)

3. By returning to Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD), Peter has set aside the effects of the operation of God's grace to this situation.

"I do not nullify (atheteo/ p.a.ind/ set aside the effects of operation of) the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly (dorean)." (Gal.2: 21)

"But if man can save himself through the law, then Christ did indeed die dorean." (Ren.of NT, pg.32)

4. Paul explains the mind of New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV) in Gal.2: 20.

"I have been crucified (sustaroo / perf.p.ind) with Christ; and it is no longer I who lives (zao / p.a.ind), but Christ lives (zao/ p.a.ind) in me; and the life I now live (zao/p.a.ind) in the flesh I live (zao/p.a.ind) by faith in the Son of God, who loved me (agapao/ a.a.ptc), and delivered Himself up (paradidomi/ a.a.ptc) for me." [*note the change from perfect to present to aorist*]

How do we live the Christ life? "*And the life I now live in the flesh I live by (en+inst) faith (faith cycle) in the Son of God (tou huios (ablative sm) tou theos (genitive sm)).*"

[Buck Hoskins suggested a fifth element to the faith cycle – ENDURANCE (hupomone) (James 1:2-4)

- Hearing (Rom.10:17)
- Believing (Heb.4:2)
- Applying (2 Cor.5:7)
- Enduring (James 1:2-4)
- Completing (James 2:22)

Circle where you think Peter failed in the faith cycle? How did Paul succeed?

5. Why is Peter still struggling with the same Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) problem several years later with the Gentile church of Antioch? Old habits die hard in spiritual mature believers but they can and must die for Christ to love in them!

Now Peter has New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV) and not just Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) thinking on this issue in the Christian Way of Life (CWL). However, remember that the renewing of the mind is in the present tense. It is based on the choices we make. Which set of clothes will you wear is your choice (Phil.3: 7-10).

When you choose the truth, New Man Divine Viewpoint (NMDV), the truth sets you set from Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus OMCD thinking (John 8:32; Rom.12: 2).