

Study 3  
Galatians 2:1-14

1. What are the three different components of the Mosaic Law?

The Mosaic Law can be divided into three components:

1. **Moral Law** - the Ten Commandments.
2. **Ceremonial Law** - sacrifices, temple rituals, etc.
3. **Civil Law** - laws for governing Israel.

2. What were the Judaizers trying to do to the Galatian church?

The Judaizers were trying to compel Gentile Christians to adopt Jewish practices like circumcision and food laws, insisting that adherence to the Mosaic Law was necessary for salvation. This distorted the gospel by adding human works to the grace of Christ (Galatians 2:4). Paul opposed them because their teachings undermined the sufficiency of Christ's work and threatened the unity of the church.

3. What was God's original intention for the Mosaic law with its ceremonial, food laws, and circumcision and how can we distort them to our own designs?

God's intention for the Mosaic Law was to:

- **Show we are unclean** - It reveals that we are unclean with sin and our need for a Savior (Romans 3:20).
- **Shows how it's impossible to make ourselves acceptable to God on our own.**
- **Points to Jesus who will fulfill them** - It foreshadows the coming of Christ through the ceremonial laws and sacrifices (Hebrews 10:1).

Distortions arise when we misuse the law, treating it as a means to make ourselves clean or acceptable to God through our own works. This shifts the focus from Christ's redemptive work to our own efforts, making us the center instead of God.

4. Can you share the common examples of legalism that we see in the church today?
5. Legalists often are faithful to the letter of the law but they ignore the spirit of the law. What does this mean? How is this wrong?

Being faithful to the letter of the law means rigidly adhering to rules without understanding their purpose. Ignoring the spirit of the law neglects the deeper intention behind God's commands, such as love, mercy, and justice (Matthew 23:23).

This is wrong because it reduces God's commands to mere formalities, fostering pride and hypocrisy while neglecting true righteousness that flows from the heart (Matthew 15:8).

6. What does Paul mean by the circumcision made without hands in Galatians 2: 11-12 what point was he trying to put across when he said this?

Paul refers to a spiritual circumcision, the transformation of the heart by the Spirit (Romans 2:29; Colossians 2:11). He contrasts this with physical circumcision to emphasize that outward rituals cannot bring salvation.

His point is that faith in Christ, not adherence to the law or rituals, makes one part of God's covenant people. This upheld the gospel's sufficiency and inclusivity for all believers.

7. In what way was the Apostle Peter being a hypocrite in withdrawing from fellowship meals with the Gentiles and just eating with the James people from Jerusalem?

Peter's hypocrisy was evident when he initially ate with Gentile Christians which would have included non kosher food like pork but later withdrew out of fear of criticism from Jewish believers. This behavior contradicted the gospel message of complete sufficiency in Christ as there was no longer any need for the food laws or sacrifices or circumcision under the Mosaic covenant as it is Christ that all of requirements of the law are met in Christ. By separating himself, Peter implied that Gentiles were still spiritually inferior unless they followed Jewish customs but more importantly that Christ is insufficient and that the Mosaic rituals still are required and this impugns the very heart of the gospel which was so important hence the need to even publically rebuke Peter

8. Why did Paul have to confront him so openly and boldly? Why does legalism inevitably lead to hypocrisy? Can you understand how the most common complaint of unbelievers towards Christians is that they are hypocrites? How can we take care to avoid this pitfall in our own lives?

Paul confronted Peter openly because his actions were a public denial of the gospel's truth and could lead others astray (Galatians 2:13). His behavior directly contradicted the gospel message of complete sufficiency in Christ as there was no longer any need for the food laws or sacrifices or circumcision under the Mosaic covenant as it is Christ that all of requirements of the law are met in Christ

Legalism inevitably leads to hypocrisy because it sets unattainable standards that even the most devout cannot consistently meet, fostering inconsistency and self-righteousness.

Unbelievers often accuse Christians of hypocrisy when they see actions contradicting the faith they profess. To avoid this, we must:

- Live authentically, relying on grace rather than works.
- Practice humility and repentance when we fail.
- Ensure our actions align with the gospel's message of love and unity.

### Takeaway

The gospel is centered on faith in Christ alone, not on adherence to the Mosaic Law or human traditions. God's intention for the law was to point us to our need for a Savior, not to serve as a means of earning salvation. Legalism distorts this truth, leading to hypocrisy and disunity, as seen in Peter's actions. We are reminded to live out the gospel authentically, upholding its message of grace, unity, and transformation by relying on Christ's finished work.