

**Small group notes
WL for Sunday 7th Oct**

'Confrontation'
Matt CB

Two main passages we read were **Acts 15 1-11**; and **Galatians 2: 11-14**

The main point: Peter has made it very clear when Paul and Barnabas go to him in Acts 15 that gentile new believers do not need to be circumcised or follow certain food laws that the Jews have done. He sees that they have been filled with the Holy Spirit, God accepts them just because they have faith in Christ, He's purified them(so they are holy) and that in just the same way that Jewish Christians are saved through the grace of God , so have they been. However later when faced with eating with them in Antioch, because of fear of what certain men had come from James, the Lord's brother, he goes and sits at a different table to them, showing that somehow he thinks that too close an association may contaminate him, or be bad for his reputation. Paul publically challenges Peter for being a hypocrite, saying one thing, and doing another.

We too need to look carefully that our actions & behaviour echoes what we believe. That we don't show partiality, treating all people alike. It is important that we please God and not man; it can be a great temptation to come under pressure and slightly re-adjust our behaviour to make it seem more acceptable and spiritual to people we put on a pedestal of religious godliness.

Questions:

- 1) Talk about times that you have re-adjusted your behaviour out of a fear of man, rather than a good conscience.**
- 2) Paul tackles Peter, because he could see how devastating it would be to the church if they all started following his lead, in separating himself from the newly converted gentile Christians. In your own words explain why this was so important to confront. What things do you think we have a responsibility to confront in others, if we see them compromising on an important truth?**
- 3) How easy to you find it to confront? What are the things that hold you back?**
- 4) Have there been things in your experience of church that in hindsight was adding legalism to Grace? Can you talk about them as Matthew shared, about Ann and her friends being turned away from the lively Pentecostal church in her early years of becoming a Christian, due to dress codes and hair length?**