

Money! (with children)

- *Image: money! (coppers)*
- How much money do I have here?
 - get kids up to count it!
 - there's a lot of effort in counting and in looking after money!
- What do we use money for?
 - **what do you think the church uses money for?**
- We give each week to enable God's work to continue:
 - *image: stack of pound coins*
 - the building, the people, the resources...
 - out of thankfulness for all that God has done for us!
 - and in obedience to the Bible's teaching which says which should set aside a proportion of what God has given to us for his work each week...
- Church financial year runs to January to December, and we've just finished "counting" last year's money!
 - *image: stack of pound coins, with giving total*
 - around £60,000 pounds, which is incredible!
 - including Gift Day of over £6,000
 - *image: stack of pound coins, with giving total and giving account*
 - our commitment in these last two or three years is as a congregation to tithe, **or give away a tenth**, of what God gives to us
 - and since we made that commitment, God has been incredibly gracious to us...
 - able to support Gerard and Sarah Charles, Jayne Crawford, Amanda Christie (who will be here in June or July we think) and the work of Friends International here in Dundee (Malcolm and Ruth), as well as occasional things like the crises in Burma and the China earthquake
 - **(Stated Annual Meeting for all the details!! 19th March, 7:30pm)**
- **Prayer of thanksgiving**

Introduction: Peter and Paul

- *Image: Church of St Peter and St Paul, Krakow, Poland*
- What image do we carry around of Peter and Paul?
 - very upright, examples to be copied and followed?
 - people worthy of having churches named after them?
- It wasn't really like that - they were just as prone to mistakes and errors and failures as us!
 - interesting conversation at Alpha on Thursday night about how encouraging it can be to know that others also fail...

Two Sins: Separation

- *Image: pencil line, separation*
- Christians from two background: Jewish and Gentile
 - probably in many places still majority Jewish...
 - within the Christian community there was a tension between those who were comfortable with Gentiles being Christians, and those who were suspicious
 - this "suspicious" group is here labelled the "circumcision" group (v.12) because they insisted that to be saved you had to undergo the Jewish rite of circumcision in order to be saved
 - in other words, they said, you **had to become Jewish** and have faith in Christ **to be saved**
- And the outward sign of this error was separating themselves, holding selves aloof

from, non-Jewish Christians

- Peter gets drawn into this error
- because of peer pressure (v.12,13)

- Acting as if we are better, separate, superior from some other believers is a sin:
 - whatever the point of contention
 - baptism... church government... charismatic gifts... end-time theology... style of worship...
- Peter was in the wrong

Two Sins: Hypocrisy

- *Image: masked man, hypocrisy*
- Peter was doubly in the wrong because he was going back on what he said he believed
 - acting in a way out of keeping with his profession
 - v.14 is part of Paul's confrontation of this behaviour
 - at heart saying your background is Jewish yet (through Christ) you have come to realise you don't need to be constrained by merely Jewish rituals (live like a Gentile): how is then that you are going back on that freedom?

One Response: truth

- *Image: faces, "I opposed him to his face"*
- What was in danger was salvation!
 - how are people justified - made friends with God?
 - by Jewish customs?
 - by coming to church?
 - by being good?
- None of these matter compared to knowing Christ and through faith in him being justified!
 - (we'll explore more of this theme in future weeks)
 - but notice for now how Paul confronts the issue
 - face to face
 - not through a sniping campaign, speaking to others about Peter's standards have slipped...
 - *courage, integrity, truth, boldness, accountability* were all present in his approach
 - for the salvation of the Galatian believers was at stake!

One Result: Salvation

- *Image: adult baptism in lake*
- What Paul wanted was true freedom for the believers in Galatia
 - what Paul wants for us is that same freedom - to know we are saved, and not to feel we have to conform to some external pressure and code to be good Christians!