

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

Date: May 10, 2020

Title: "Grace On Trial"

Text: Acts 15:1-35

INTRODUCTION:

1. Reflections on the Reformation (October 31, 1517).
2. Trumpeting this cause the loudest was German monk Martin Luther.
3. Like Luther, the apostle Paul also fought for Gospel of grace.

SETTING / CONTEXT: After the First Missionary Journey (A.D. 47-48) Filled with adventure, desertion, opposition, persecution, & spiritual victories (miracles, souls saved, churches planted/established, and elders appointed).

1. Ministry on Cyprus (cities of Salamis & Paphos; 13:4-12)
2. Ministry in Asia Minor (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe; 13:13ff.)
3. Missionary Report to their sending church (Acts 14:26-28)

THE ISSUE (Acts 15:1-5)

1. The dispute that arose (vv. 1, 2a)
2. What were these legalists doing & why were they so dangerous?
They were attempting to mix Law & grace. They were saying, "A Gentile must first become a Jew before he can become a Christian. It's not sufficient for them to trust in J. Christ alone. They must also obey Moses.

Several important issues are involved here:

- A. The finished work of Christ on the cross as declared in the message of the Gospel ... the preaching of "Christ crucified."
 - B. The nature of the church's missionary program. If the legalists were right, then Paul & Barnabas had been all wrong in their ministry.
3. What was to be done? (vv. 2b-5)
"So Paul & Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question."

THE RESOLUTION (Acts 15:6-35)

1. A **defense** was made (vv. 6-18)
By Peter (vv. 6-11); by Paul and Barnabas (v. 12); and by James (vv. 13-18)
2. A **decision** was reached (vv. 19-21)
 - A doctrinal decision about salvation
 - A practical decision about how to live the Christian life
3. A **document** (letter) was drafted (vv. 23-29)
4. A **delegation** was selected & sent out with letter (vv. 22, 30-35)
 - Back to Antioch of Syria (15:30-35)
 - Throughout Syria & Cilicia (15:36-41; start of 2nd missionary journey)
 - To the churches of Galatia (16:1-5)

THE APPLICATION

1. **RESCUING** the Gospel today!
Tho'ts from Dr. Erwin Lutzer, Rescuing the Gospel (2016)

2. **APPLYING** the Gospel today!

What are you trusting in (depending upon) for the forgiveness of sins and the free gift of eternal life (an eternal home in heaven)?

- Your works, your merit, your performance, church rites/rituals?
- Christ + church rites, your works, your merit, your performance?
- Christ alone?



Works

Christ + Works

Christ

unnecessary disappointing sufficient