

“God Will Rebuild”

Sermon Notes

Question (1-5): Is salvation by grace alone through faith alone?

Answer: Church leaders agree (6-19)...

➤ **Since God is rebuilding the tent of David for “all peoples” to enter in through the gospel of Jesus Christ...**

1. Don't cut off believers from the grace of Jesus (10-11, 19, 24)

2. Don't bring your old idols into your new home (20-21; 28-29)

Next Week: Acts 15:36-41 “There Arose a Sharp Disagreement”

Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of April 14th -20st

Getting Started

1. What markers of true conversion are you looking for, when you meet someone who claims to be a Christian?

2. Think of a modern theological controversy in the church. How is it being handled and addressed? Who is involved? How and where is it debated?

Context

1. Review Acts 10:1-11:18, reading especially Acts 10:34 and 11:17-18. [Note: You could visit the Mound Free sermons webpage, at moundfree.org/sermons. The sermons on February 4 and 11 addressed these two chapters.] What did God do to redirect Peter? What did Peter learn about God's plan to reach the Gentiles? What evidence did God give that the gospel had come to the Gentiles? How did the minds of the Jewish Christians change?

2. Read Acts 13:1-3. Read Acts 14:27. Recall the highlights of what God had done through Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey.

3. What happened at the Jerusalem Council, as recorded in Acts 15, is connected to other events and teaching in the Apostolic NT era.
 - a. Read 1 Corinthians 8-10 and Romans 14 to consider questions about the Law, conscience, and food.
 - b. Read Galatians, especially chapter 2. What do you learn about the problem of the "Judaizers".

Observation

1. Read Acts 15:1-6. What is the problem? What is the theological debate about?

2. Look at the three speeches, from Peter, Paul/Barnabas, and James. What was God doing? Who was being impacted by the gospel?
 - a. How did Peter rebuke his listeners? What was so dangerous about what they were doing? What is a yoke?
 - b. What signs and wonders did Paul/Barnabas speak of?
 - c. What contribution did James make? What was his main point?
 - a. Read Amos 9 to understand the context of the original prophesy.

3. What were the prohibitions that the Jerusalem church advised the church in Antioch, especially the Gentiles, to “do well by keeping”?

4. What was the end result of the council in Jerusalem? How did things resolve? How was the church in Antioch impacted?

Meaning

1. What is circumcision (see Genesis 17)? How did the importance of this sign of the Old Covenant change as we entered into the New Covenant era (see Galatians)?

2. What do you learn about the triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) in this passage?

3. What was the significance of the four prohibitions? Consider Leviticus 17-18 as a backdrop. How do you make sense of Mosaic Law prohibitions that weren't communicated? What pagan idolatry practices did Greco-Romans engage in? Consider 1 Cor 8:4-13 or 10:14-22, as well as Rev 2:14-15, 20-21.

4. List all the good things the church in Jerusalem did to respond to this theological debate.

Application

1. What is true conversion? Is salvation by grace alone through faith alone? Do you believe in additional requirements in order to be saved; if so, what? What requirements have you heard people add to faith?
2. As you relate to other Christians, are there any ways in which you are tempted to question people's salvation? What behaviors or theological beliefs tempt you to call into question whether someone is truly converted? Do you have a way of triaging essential or first-order doctrines from secondary or non-essential doctrines?
3. Are there old ways of living, even idolatrous worship practices, that you still struggle with? What ways of the "old man" are hard to put off and abstain from?
4. What lessons do we learn from how the churches in Antioch and Jerusalem handled theological debate? How does their example change how you engage in debate today?