

“GRACE ON TRIAL”

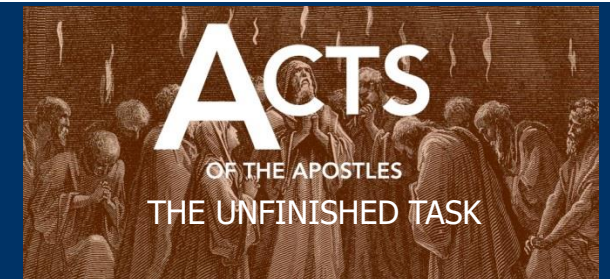
(Acts 15:1-12)

Expository Sermon of Acts - Sermon 33

Speaker: Rev. Bobby Lam

Date: December 22, 2019

Place: Hope Community Baptist Church



INTRODUCTION:

Reformers



Martin Luther

Luther's writings smell of gun powder; his words are like battle call; he overwhelms his opponents with a roaring cannonade of argument, eloquence, passion, and abuse.

INTRODUCTION:

Reformers



Philipp Melanchthon

Melanchthon was always ready for compromise and peace . . . and sincerely labored to restore the broken unity of the Church.

"[He] declared that with tears as abundant as the waters of the river Elbe he could not express his grief over the distractions of Christendom and the "fury of theologians."

INTRODUCTION:

Reformers



Richard Baxter

In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity.

INTRODUCTION:

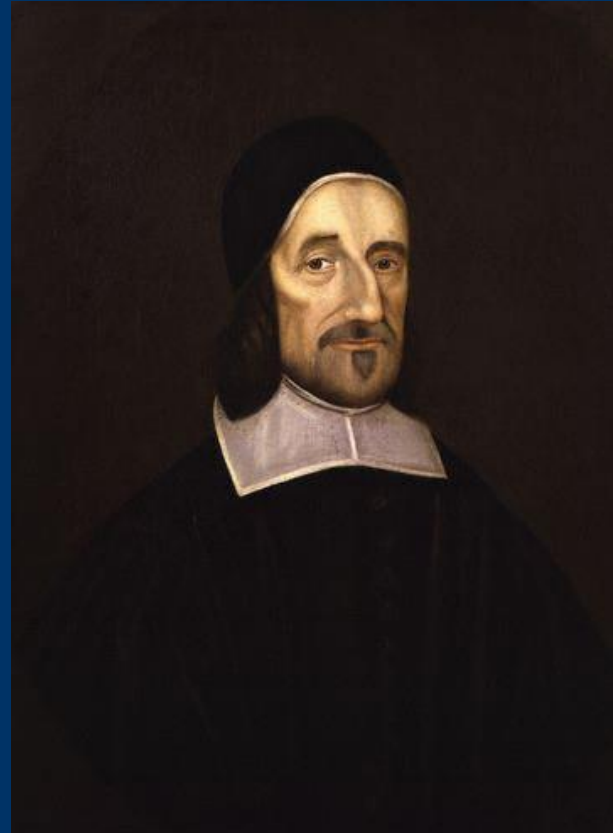
Reformers: Grace, Unity, Liberty & Charity



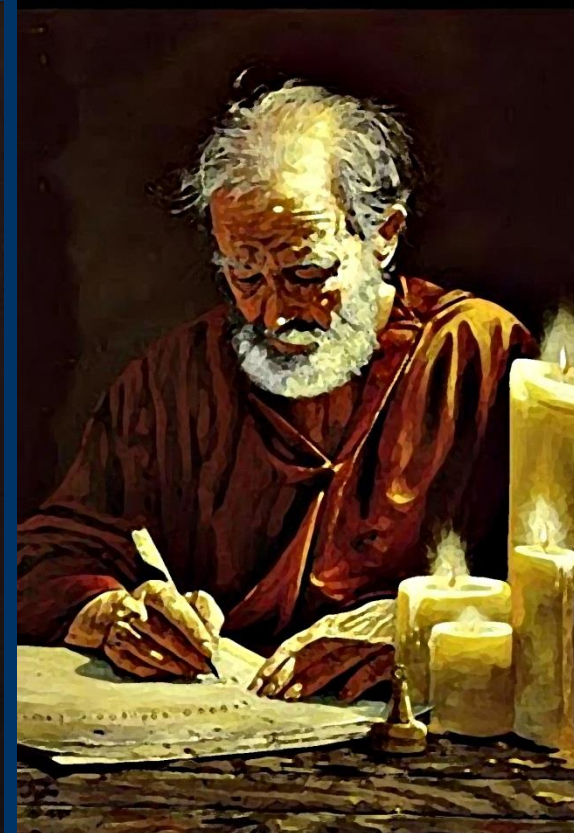
Martin Luther



Philipp Melanchthon



Richard Baxter

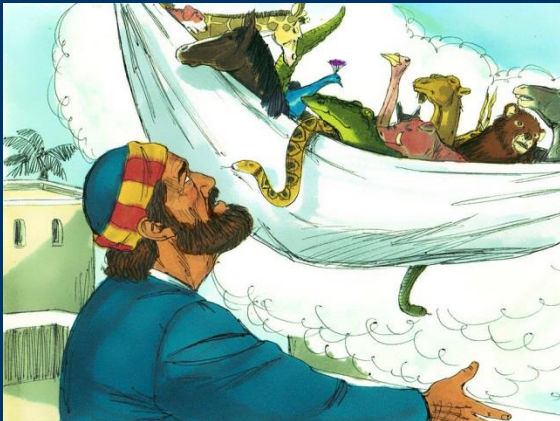
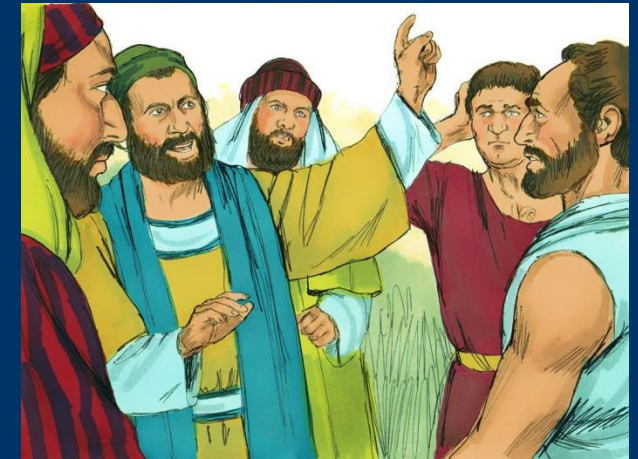


St. Paul

I. THE ISSUE: GENTILE SALVATION

A) Background Information

Acts 6:1b *"among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food."*



Acts 10:13b *"Arise, Peter, kill and eat!"*

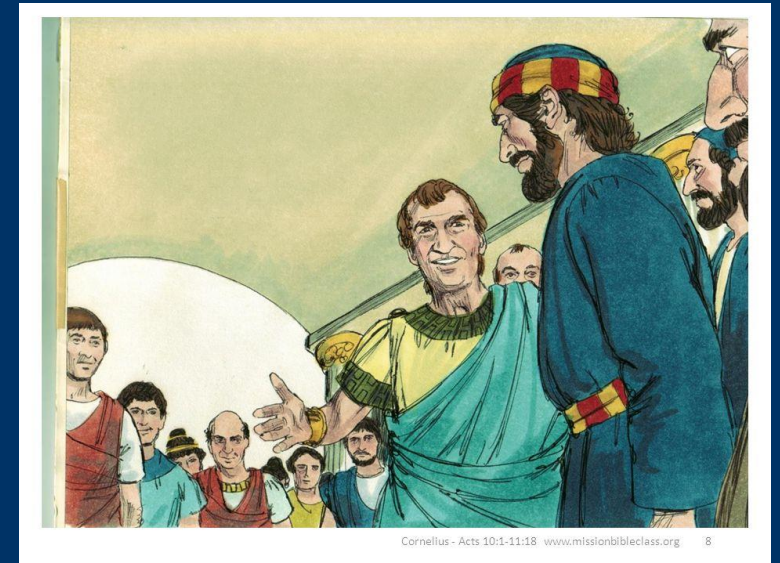
Acts 10:15b *"What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy"*

I. THE ISSUE: GENTILE SALVATION

A) *Background Information*

Acts 11:2 *So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him ³and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."*

Acts 14:27b *"had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles"*

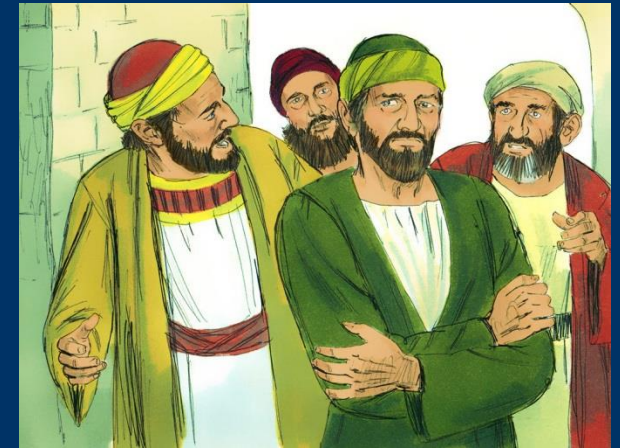


I. THE ISSUE: GENTILE SALVATION

B) Internal Dissension

***Acts 15:1** Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."*

***2a** This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them.*

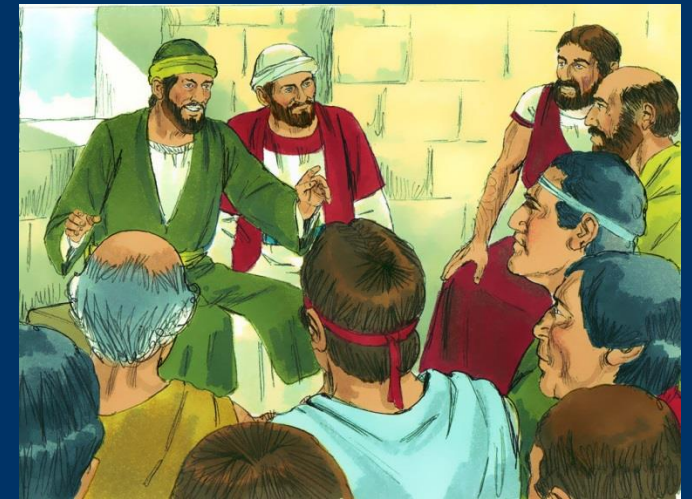


I. THE ISSUE: GENTILE SALVATION

C) *Wise Decision*

Acts 15:2b *So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.*

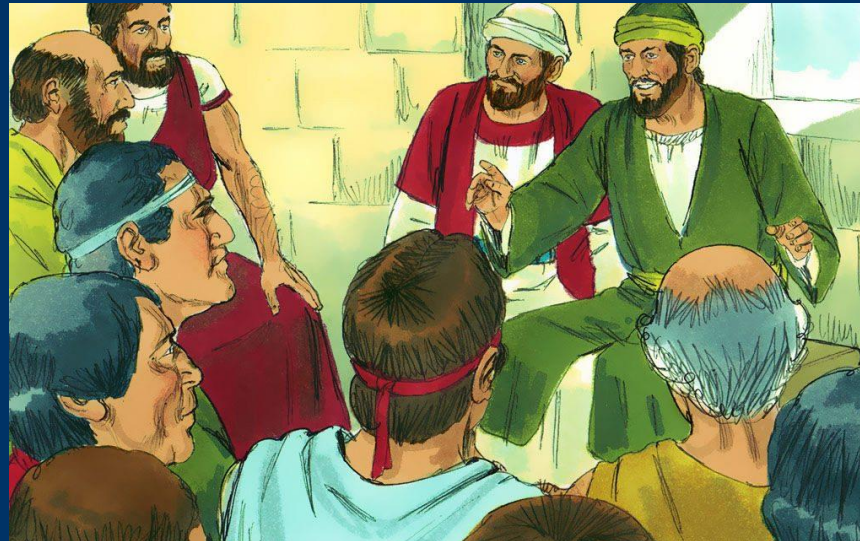
Acts 15:3 *The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad.*



I. THE ISSUE: GENTILE SALVATION

C) *Wise Decision*

Acts 15:4 *When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.*



I. THE ISSUE: GENTILE SALVATION

C) *Wise Decision*

Acts 15:5 *Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses."*

Acts 15:6 *The apostles and elders met to consider this question.*

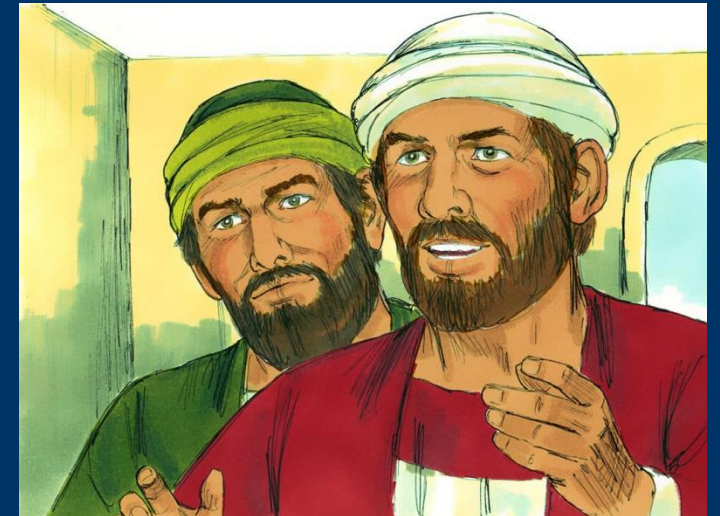


II. THE INVESTIGATION: JERUSALEM COUNCIL

A) Statement of Purpose

Acts 15:2b** So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders **about this question.

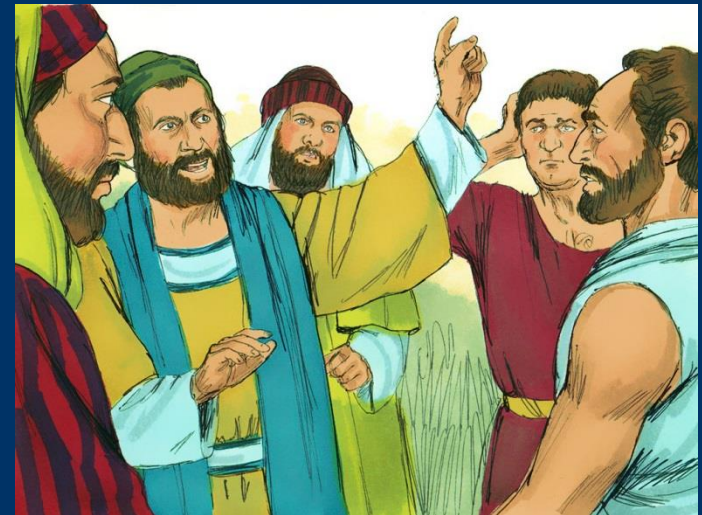
Acts 15:6** The apostles and elders met to **consider this question.



II. THE INVESTIGATION: JERUSALEM COUNCIL

B) Method of Discussion

2 Tim 2:24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,

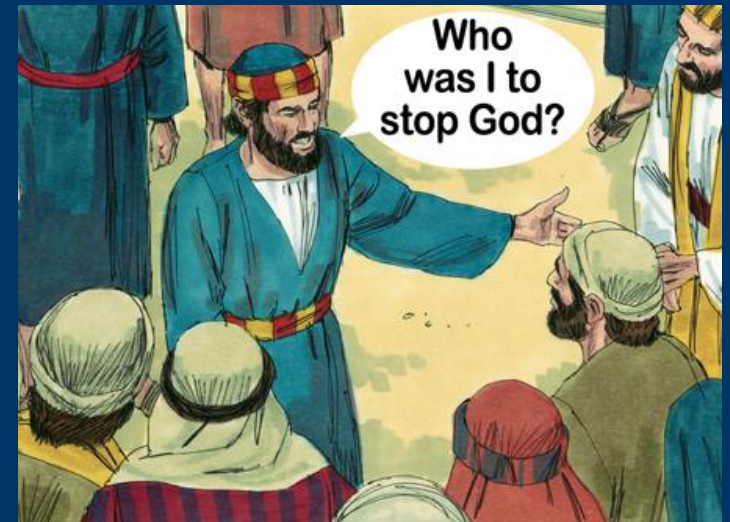


II. THE INVESTIGATION: JERUSALEM COUNCIL

C) *Testimony of Peter*

Acts 15:7b *"Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe.*

8 *God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. **9** He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.*

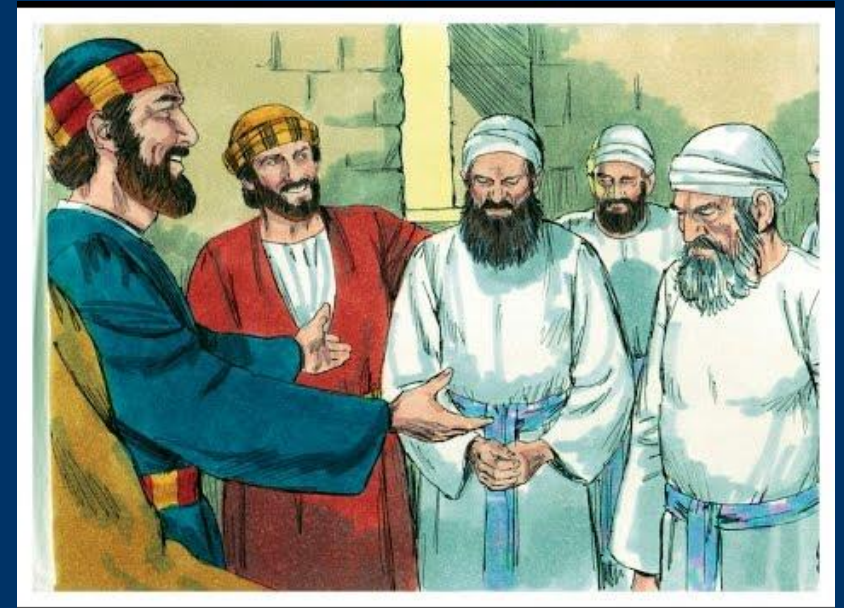


II. THE INVESTIGATION: JERUSALEM COUNCIL

C) Testimony of Peter

Acts 15:10 *Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear?*

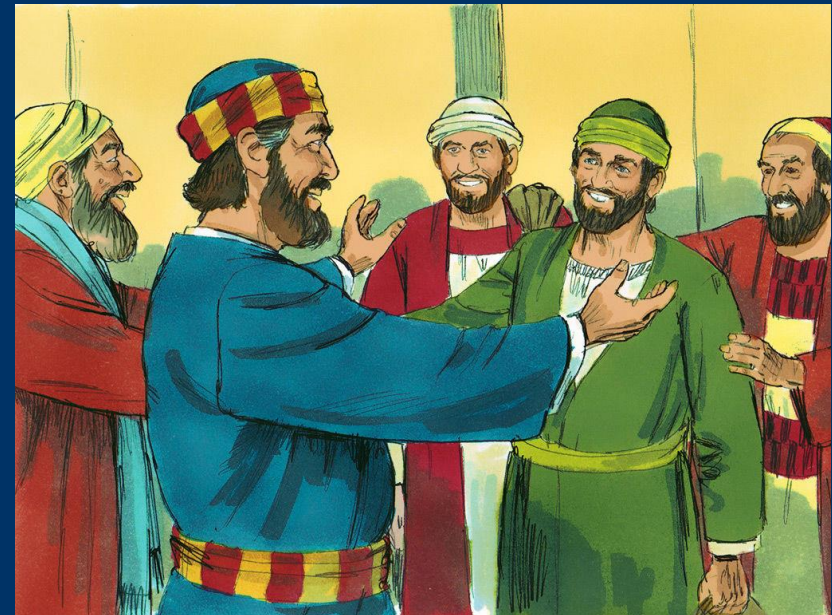
Acts 15:11 *"No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."*



II. THE INVESTIGATION: JERUSALEM COUNCIL

D) Experiences of Paul and Barnabas

Acts 15:12 *The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.*



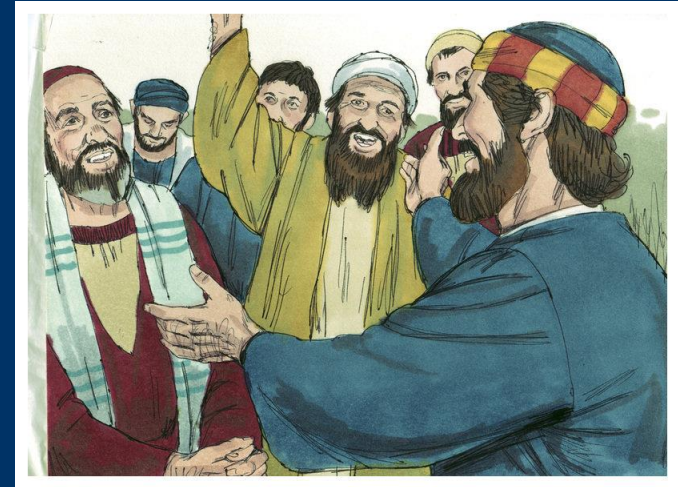
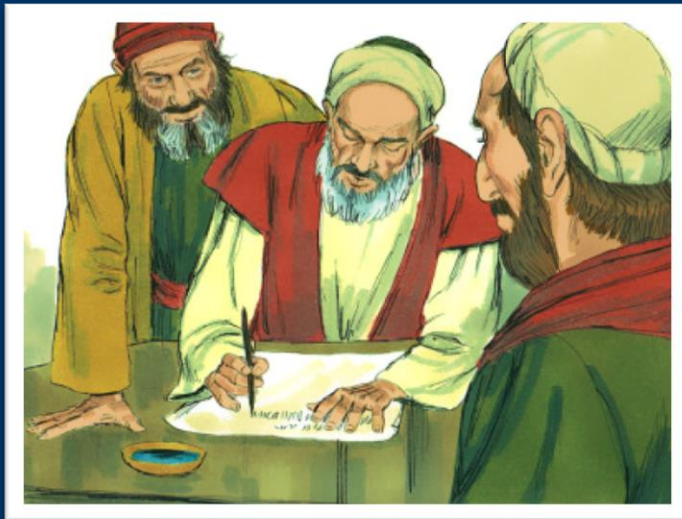
CONCLUSION:



So far we can hear three voices of truth echoing through the council chambers.

A. No conflict is ever easy.

B. All conflict can be beneficial.



C. Any kind of conflict calls for honest appraisal.



CG DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What was your respond when you first heard the statement, "For by grace you are saved through faith?"*
- 2. Why is it so difficult for the Jewish Christian to accept the Gentiles as equal in God's grace?*
- 3. What was the purpose of the Jerusalem Council?*
- 4. How did Paul resolve the conflict of observing the Law of Moses and Christ message of salvation through grace?*
- 5. What part did Peter play in resolving the conflict?*



Scripture References:

Acts 14:21-28