

The Acts of the Apostles

Part II: Paul and His Companions Witness in Asia Minor and Europe (Acts 13:1-21:16)

Session 3: The Jerusalem (Apostolic) Council (Chapter 15:1-35)

Videos of this Bible Study may be found on YouTube under "Joseph Polzin" or through this link: <https://bit.ly/2WWBV1t>

- I. What were the "men from Judea" teaching? (v. 1)
 - a. How had the Holy Spirit already answered this question in 14:27?
 - b. What did Paul and Barnabas do? (v. 2)
- II. What do Paul and Barnabas declare in v. 4? (cf. 14:27) Why is this a significant point for the question at hand?
 - a. Who disagreed with them this time in v. 5? What else did they say is necessary for a Christian believer?
- III. To what is Peter referring in v. 7? (cf. 11:15-18)
 - a. What difference is there between Jews and Gentiles? (v. 9)
 - b. By what are our hearts cleansed? (v. 9)
 - c. To what, in v. 10, does Peter compare the requirement to follow the Law of Moses in order to be saved? Has anyone actually been able to do that?
 - d. By what are we saved? (v. 11) What does this mean about our own works?
 - e. Who could Peter be referring to by "they" in v. 11? Why is that significant?

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- IV. After Barnabas and Paul speak, what does James (the leader of the Jerusalem Church, cf. 12:17) say God is doing with the Gentiles? (v. 14)
- a. What does this passage from Amos 9 show from the Old Testament?
 - b. After affirming that Gentiles (or Jews) don't have to follow the Law of Moses in order to be saved (v. 19), what does James recommend Gentiles do? (v. 20)
 - c. Why do you think this is the recommendation? (Think what effect it would have on Jewish Christians to see their Gentile brothers or sisters in the faith doing these things.)
 - d. Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-24 and Romans 14:13-15. How might we at times apply this same principle in our lives with things that are not required, but would still be best?
- V. What was the reason to send Judas (Barsabbas) and Silas along with the letter? (vv. 22-23, 27)
- VI. To whom was the letter addressed? (v. 23) Why is this significant?
- VII. What is made possible by the work of the Holy Spirit in v. 33?