

I. THE CONTROVERSY

- A. It was a controversy over circumcision (vs. 1-7)
 - 1. There were false teachers that had moved in and were teaching error
 - a. The wolves moved in when Paul and Barnabas were gone
 - b. Would this have happened when Paul was there?
 - i. This is an important reminder – BE THERE!
 - ii. Church attendance and selfless service is a must!
 - iii. Remember Thomas “the doubter”?
 - iv. JOHN 20:24-25 – “But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.”
 - v. How would you like THAT to be your name in the Bible?
 - c. Why were the other men not standing up to it? ACTS 13:1
 - i. Where were the other men of the church?
 - ii. It is the duty of ALL of us to stand up against error!
 - 2. The false teachers were teaching WORKS for Salvation
 - a. That a man had to be circumcised to be Saved
 - i. Ever wonder how they thought women were saved?
 - ii. Did they believe a woman to fully be an everlasting soul?
 - iii. There’s a lot of ramifications of this false teaching!
 - b. It is a class-making doctrine (the Jews were better)
 - c. Peter declares that! (vs. 9)
 - 3. If anyone says that Salvation is Grace PLUS ANYTHING – they’re wrong!
 - a. Not baptism, not good works, not lifting a little finger!
 - b. It is GRACE – plus nothing, minus nothing
 - c. God’s UNMERRITED favor – it cannot be earned!
- B. These “Judaizers” seemed to hang around like a foul stench
 - 1. Paul even remarks about them in the letter to the church in Galatia
 - 2. (Turn, if possible) GAL. 6:11-15 – “Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. (12) As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. (13) For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. (14) But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the

world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. (15) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”

3. They were saying that the Greeks had to become Jews to find grace
- C. Paul and Barnabas DIFFERED with them
 1. They had just been out, WINNING the lost, both Jews and Greek
 - a. They didn't suffer from the boiled frog syndrome!
 - b. They were probably SHOCKED to see Antioch when they returned
 - c. Missionaries unfortunately suffer these shocks all the time
 - i. Rock music in their home churches
 - ii. Calvinism being preached
 - iii. Standards slipping, other Bibles being used
 2. They clean the church at Antioch FIRST and then send men to Jerusalem
 - a. This is NOT a fellowship or a denominational meeting
 - b. This is not a convention
 - c. This is one church going to another church with a grievance!
 3. The council beings and a fair hearing is had from each side (vs. 7a)

II. THE COUNCIL

- A. Peter stands up to speak (vs. 7-11)
 1. He recounts his own commission to the Gentiles (Cornelius' House)
 - a. He tells them the gentiles heard the Gospel and Believed
 - b. ROM.10:17 – “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
 - c. He tells them the Gentiles received the Holy Ghost
 - d. ROM. 8:9 – “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”
 - e. He tells them that the Gentile's hearts were purified by FAITH!
 - f. ROM. 5:1 – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”
 2. Peter is proving that these were Gentiles, UNCIRCUMSIZED but SAVED!
- B. And then Peter asks a question (vs. 10)
 1. The LAW is an unbearable YOKE
 2. GAL. 3:24 – “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”
 3. It proves you CANNOT work your way into Heaven
 4. NO ONE HAS EVER KEPT THE LAW EXCEPT JESUS!
- C. Peter declares that Salvation is by GRACE alone! (vs. 11)
 1. EPH. 2:8-9 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.”
 2. Everyone is saved the same way

3. Jude calls this the “common” Salvation in Jude vs. 3
4. Romans Chapter 4 echoes the same principle

III. THE CHRONICLE

- A. Paul and Barnabas give their testimony (vs. 12)
 1. How Sergius Paulus called for them, but Simon bar Jesus withstood them
 2. The people saved at Antioch in Pisidia
 3. People (both Jews and Gentiles) saved in Iconium, and Lystra, and Derbe
 4. The stoning of Paul and the miracle of his healing
 5. The healing of the cripple and the pagans trying to name them gods
 6. Just read the previous two chapters!
- B. They told the council the truth
 1. And everyone there was silent (they gave them AUDIENCE)
 - a. And they did it in ORDER (right and decently)
 - b. 1 COR. 14:31 – “For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.”
 - c. 1 COR. 14:40 – “Let all things be done decently and in order.”
 2. They gave space because the TRUTH always speaks louder than lies!
- C. Paul and Barnabas declared MIRACLES and WONDERS
 1. But all they declared was “WROUGHT OF GOD” (vs. 12)
 2. And among the Gentiles!

IV. THE CONFIRMATION

- A. James stands to speak on the subject (vs. 13-18)
 1. James uses SCRIPTURE to defend Salvation by Grace Alone
 2. AMOS 9:11-12 – “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: (12) That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.”
 3. Always better to use scripture over our own words
- B. If you can't find Bible to support your beliefs, you might need to rethink things!
 1. James without equivocation holds up the Judaizers to the Bible
 2. And declares them to be FALSE TEACHERS
 3. A man can say anything, but the BIBLE is the final authority!
 4. It is our all-sufficient rule of faith and practice
- C. James recognizes the program of God from the beginning of the World (vs. 18)

V. THE CAUSE

- A. So many today are trying to earn God's love, to merit God's Salvation
 1. God love need not be “earned” it is already PROVIDED

2. JOHN 3:16 – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
 3. No amount of sin can actually change that
 - a. You were not born at the beginning of the world when God decided on this plan of action
 - b. You were not alive when Jesus went to the cross
 - c. Your sin, no matter how great, has no effect on God’s love for you
 - d. 2 PET. 3:9 – “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
- B. There are three things that cannot change
1. God’s Love, Our Sin, and God’s Judgement
 - a. EPH. 2:4 – “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,”
 - b. ROM. 3:23 – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”
 - c. ROM. 6:23a – “For the wages of sin is death...”
 2. Praise God Romans 6:23 doesn’t stop there!
 - a. How hopeless if it did!
 - b. ROM. 6:23 – “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
 3. It is only by the BLOOD of the spotless Lamb of God that we can be Saved
 - a. It is not by our works, but by HIS FINISHED Work!
 - b. Don’t be fooled by faulty substitutes that cannot save
 - c. Don’t be mistaken by a false gospel
 - d. Repent of your way, come to Jesus, He IS the Way
 - e. He alone can save
- C. Be Saved Today