

The Gospel Refined

Acts 15:1-35

PART ONE

Introduction

The Jerusalem Council

William Carey (1761-1834)

“Expect great things; attempt great things.” Wm. Carey

John G. Paton (1824-1907)

Unity remains extremely tenuous in the Church of Jesus Christ. Why? *Because the Gospel is a Polemic.*

The five stages to this event:

- I. The Dissension** (vv1-5);
- II. The Debate** (vv6-12);
- III. The Decision** (vv13-21);
- IV. The Delegation** (vv22-29);
- V. The Delivery** (vv30-35)

Jesus is advancing His Church by allowing both persecution from without and opposition from within.

In so doing, He is causing the apostles, and by extension all believers to *refine their gospel*.

I. The Dissension – vv1-5

v1

2 Peter 2:1

“*men came down from Judea*”

The issue for the Judaizers was not whether Gentiles would be included in God’s plan of salvation (11:18), it was *how* that is accomplished.

For them, God’s offer of salvation necessarily included adherence to the law of Moses first.

The longest running heresy in the Church of Jesus Christ: *Salvation by grace + _____* .

Galatians 2:16

Galatians 3:11

Galatians 5:6-8

Galatians 6:12-15

“they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.”

They had grown accustomed to teaching the proselyte. It became a matter of religious pride for them.

Galatians 2:21

Romans 11:5-6

Understand how fragile our freedom in Christ is, and what’s at stake if we fail to remain in it.

2 Corinthians 3:17

Romans 8:1-5

Galatians 5:1-6

The Spirit reveals the love and winsome character of Christ to us, so that He can manifest the likeness of Christ through us in our expressions of selfless love!

You were not saved by any particular behavior; nor do you remain saved based upon any behavior.