

The Church Council's Ruling

1. The Council Interprets Their Experience *By Scripture*.

2. God *Always Planned* to Include the Nations in His People.

3. Inclusion in God's Family Should *Change Our Actions*.

CONCLUSION: When there was a serious theological dispute at the church in Antioch, the congregation sent elders to confer together prayerfully with the other elders in Jerusalem. Together they investigated what was going on and sought direction from the Scriptures. Their ruling was sent back with elders to the congregation in Antioch, in accordance with God's Word. We too should be seeking Christ's direction for our lives from His Scriptures together with His appointed elders.

Amos 9: 11 – 12

“In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name,” declares the Lord who does this.

Leviticus 17: 1 – 16

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the people of Israel and say to them, This is the thing that the Lord has commanded. ³If any one of the house of Israel kills an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or kills it outside the camp, ⁴and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it as a gift to the Lord in front of the tabernacle of the Lord, bloodguilt shall be imputed to that man. He has shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people. ⁵This is to the end that the people of Israel may bring their sacrifices that they sacrifice in the open field, that they may bring them to the Lord, to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and sacrifice them as sacrifices of peace offerings to the Lord. ⁶And the priest shall throw the blood on the altar of the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting and burn the fat for a pleasing aroma to the Lord. ⁷So they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices to goat demons, after whom they whore. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.

⁸“And you shall say to them, Any one of the house of Israel, or of **the strangers who sojourn among them**, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice ⁹and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, that man shall be cut off from his people.

¹⁰“If any one of the house of Israel or of **the strangers who sojourn among them** eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. ¹²Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, No person among you shall eat blood, neither shall any **stranger who sojourns among you** eat blood.

¹³“Any one also of the people of Israel, or of **the strangers who sojourn among them**, who takes in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. ¹⁴For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life. Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off. ¹⁵And every person who eats what dies of itself or what is torn by beasts, whether he is a native or a **sojourner**, shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening; then he shall be clean. ¹⁶But if he does not wash them or bathe his flesh, he shall bear his iniquity.”

Acts—Series Overview

The Expansion of the Gospel Witness with Power

Acts records God’s faithful accomplishment of all that He promised in taking the gospel to the nations. It lays the groundwork for all that will take place as His Church awaits His return. Just as Jesus lived and spoke as the Father commanded, we now are called to do in the power of His Holy Spirit. While Jesus did this perfectly, we will strive imperfectly, constantly in need of the Holy Spirit’s direction, power, and correction. Nevertheless, our faithful God will work even through our failing efforts and His gospel witness through us will prevail and penetrate every nation, tribe, & territory. For the praise of our King!

Taking Gathered Worship Home

Our unity is based on God's truth. We don't just get along through compromise. Rather we need to seek the Lord's leading through His Word and live together accordingly.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to praise Christ. Ask Jesus to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday Morning

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17-18; Amos 9:11-12**. DISCUSS, The elders all agreed. Gentiles do not have to be circumcised and become Jews to follow Jesus. In fact, God's Word had pointed to this reality all along. How does this challenge your thinking about following Jesus? PRAY "Jesus, Thank You for working through Your Church and leading Your elders to instruct us in Your ways."

Sunday Evening

Young Adults Fellowship at **6:00** pm. *Please come to FCCW's Library!*

Monday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17:1-9; Exodus 20:1-6**. DISCUSS, Why is worship of other gods forbidden? Why is God alone worthy of worship? How are you (we) tempted to engage in idolatry? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, "Thank You, God, we only want to worship You. Protect our hearts from delighting in any other."

Tuesday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17:10-16; Genesis 9:4-6**. DISCUSS, Why is the lifeblood of animals significant? How does bloodshed point us to Christ? How do we obey this today? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, "Jesus, thank You for shedding Your own blood for us. Teach us how to respect life and to join You as life-givers. We long to be like You in all our ways."

Wednesday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 18:1-5; John 14:15-24**. DISCUSS, What is the relationship between love and obedience? Are we saved by how much we love God? Why do we love Him? How does faith in Christ free us to love God as we should? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, “Lord Jesus, we long to love You fully as You love us. Change our hearts!”

Thursday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 18:1-30; First Corinthians 6:12-20**. DISCUSS, Why all these restrictions about nakedness? Why does God care about with whom we get naked? Why so specific? How does immorality defile us? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, “Jesus, help us to order our affections according to Your Word.”

Friday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17-18; Amos 9:11-12**. DISCUSS, How has God been teaching you from these passages this week? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY for renewal and revival across our land.

Saturday

PREPARE today for the worship service tomorrow. *Both live-stream & in-person services are available.*

READ **Acts 15:1-41**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for either the *live-stream or in-person service*. Ask Jesus to help us love our neighbors well.

Ephesians 4: 1 – 3

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”