



September 3, 2017  
Pastor Bruce Adrian

## Beyond Borders

Lesson One • Acts 15:1-35

### A Gospel Worth Defending

#### The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Acts 15 depicts the missional MESSINESS of going beyond borders with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### The Gospel of Jesus Christ

The Gospel is always worth DEFENDING; indeed, when it is threatened, it must be defended no matter what the cost.

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Romans 1:16*

#### A Gospel Worth Defending

### 1. We Must Affirm that Salvation Is by GRACE! (Vs. 1-5)

#### The Gospel of Grace Is Attacked

You cannot be SAVED unless you are circumcised and keep the Law of Moses.

*And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." Acts 15:1*

*But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Acts 15:5*

#### The Gospel Can't Be Amended without Destroying It

The Gospel, plus or minus ANYTHING, is not the Gospel.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9*

### 2. We Must Acknowledge that Salvation Is of GOD! (Vs. 6-18)

#### The Question in Dispute

Are Gentiles saved by grace plus works or by grace alone in Christ alone?

*So the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. Acts 15:6*

*"Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they." Acts 15:10-11*

#### Salvation by Grace Versus Works

➤ Salvation by grace is seen in the eternal PLAN of God.

➤ Salvation by works is seen in the universal FAILURE of man.

### 3. We Must Appreciate that Salvation Is for GENTILES! (Vs. 19-35)

#### Our Response

We should REJOICE that Gentiles don't need to become Jews in order to become Christians, but neither can they remain pagan.

*When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Acts 15:31*

#### Our Responsibility

We should ABSTAIN from idolatry and immorality for the sake of purity and unity in the church.

*"Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in synagogues ever Sabbath." Acts 15:19-21*

#### The Impact of the Jerusalem Council's Decision

The Gospel of grace was affirmed once and for all, the unity of the church was strengthened, and the mission of going beyond borders proceeded without hindrance.