

## Acts 15:1-36: Salvation And Abstinence From Sin.

### I. (1-6) How does salvation happen?

These Jewish Christians were teaching that Gentiles may become Christians by practicing all Jewish rituals, including circumcision. Is the death of Christ enough to save from sin and hell or must we add something to it?

#### i. (7-11) Peter speaks.

Peter explains that God through Him non-Jews were getting saved and being purified, filled with God's Spirit, by faith alone. So, if they were purified by faith, then there was no need to be purified by ceremonies found in the Law of Moses.

Peter also refers to Israel's history; from Mount Sinai, to their captivity and to their day, they had failed to observe the Law completely. The Law was to point them to the coming Messiah, who would fulfill it in all ways.

***Galatians 3:24-26** - Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

#### ii. (12-) Paul and Barnabas speak.

They gave testimony that God was saving non-Jews just as He saves Jews, working supernaturally through them.

#### iii. (13-21) James, the brother of Jesus, speaks.

James quotes **Amos 9:11, 12**; God promised that He would save everyone, Jews and non-Jews alike. He suggests that a letter be written to give guidance to the Jewish and non-Jewish Christians stating that salvation is by faith alone and that Christians should not offend each other in any way and keep away from sin.

### II. (22-35) How should Christian live?

#### i. Keep away from anything offensive.

In Paul's day there was so much idol worship that some butcheries sold food sacrificed to pagan Roman gods. So, non-Jews bought and ate the food whereas the Jews did not. Eating food offered to idols was offensive to the Jews, so the gentiles were asked to abstain from it.

***1 Corinthians 8:4-9, 13** - Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other*

*God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak...Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.*

**1 Corinthians 10:31** - *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God...*

**Romans 12:18** - *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*

- ii. Keep away from sexual sin.

Sexual sin includes sex before marriage, adultery, pornography (the portrayal of sexual images for the purpose of sexual arousal), homosexuality and masturbation. Sexual sin is reason why HIV/STDs have killed more humans worldwide than war and Malaria combined, millions of abortions, millions of orphans and the disintegration of the family unit.

**Genesis 39:12** - *...he [Joseph] left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.*

**1 Corinthians 6:18** - *Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.*

**1 Corinthians 10:8** - *Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell. (**Exodus 32:28, Numbers 25:9**)*

**1 Thessalonians 4:3** - *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality.*