



Sermon Notes

Topic: “What Good News”

Bible Passage: Acts Ch 15:1-21

Preacher: Ps Paul Curtis

Date: 23 August 2026

Study Guide Overview

- Understanding God’s grace is hugely important (v2)
- For many try to corrupt it (v1)
- But this God’s way (v6-8)
- For our hearts are made pure by faith alone (v9-11)
- Releasing us to a freedom that blesses others (v19-21)

Small Group Questions/Discussions

If we hold to the belief that God’s love for us is linked to our behaviour, we have a wrong view of God. What effect does this have on our relationship? How does this change how we see ourselves, and how we see God? What happens when we hold to this statement “There is nothing I can do for God to love me more, there’s. nothing I can do for God to love me less” God’s love for us is ridiculous. Do you agree that this limitless and unconditional love creates a desire to obey God more than any other motivation?

How we live our lives is really important to God. Grace, however is the only motivation that gives us the freedom to willingly obey God and live a life that pleases Him. Grace alone creates such a “pure” heart.

Jesus became sin for us, so we could become righteous. Jesus put himself at a distance from God, so we could come closer. Jesus took on our sin, so we could become saints. For many, God’s grace is just too good to be true, so they add conditions. We read here (v1 & v5) how the Pharisees added extra requirements of the Gentiles. What “extras” do we add today over saved by faith in Christ alone? The Pharisees wanted the Gentiles to become Jews. What expectations do we put on others?

God’s grace is indeed too good to be true. But Peter reminded the Jewish council, this was God’s choice (v6-8) Why do we struggle so much to accept this ridiculous act of love? The other insight Peter shares is that God knows our heart. Do you agree that God is more interested in our attitude, rather than our actions? How else can we explain King David’s “a man after God’s heart” ? Do you give yourself this same freedom?

Peter reminded everyone that the law of Moses didn’t bring freedom from sin. It was just a burden that no-one was able to overcome. What did Peter mean by this? What then did the law of Moses achieve? Why were the Jewish leaders so keen to stick with law, even though it’s only ever been a burden? What does this say about human nature and “law keeping”?

James clarifies that circumcision and the law of Moses is not needed for salvation. But he suggests that the Gentiles follow a number of suggestions. Only one of them, refraining from sexual immorality seems to apply to those not under the law. If the Gentiles were free to eat whatever they wanted, why did they need to hold back when eating with their Jewish brothers? What is it about grace that encourages us to be gracious to others?