

EXPOSITORY SERMON SERIES ON THE BOOK OF ACTS, #38
Section Three, “The Foreign Emphasis,” Part One
“Paul is a Pioneer for the Continuation of the Church,” #7
“Paul Exclaims the Christ- The First Missionary Journey,” Part Three
“The Completion of the First Missionary Journey,” #1
“The Conflict of Good Works,” 15:1-12
Dr. Greg Tyree, BBC, PM, January 16, 2005

INTRODUCTION:

SneakPreview: While the Church has always had to fight “liberalism,” Her biggest enemy has always been “legalism.” Though Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and Paul was taunted by the Pharisees, the “Pharisees” are still around!

SUMMARY OF RECENT MESSAGES:

We have already considered...

- 1) The Commencement of the First Missionary Journey, Chapter 13.
- 2) The Continuation of the First Missionary Journey, Chapter 14.

We now begin...

- 3) The Completion of the First Missionary Journey, 15:1-35
 - a) The Conflict of Good Works, 15:1-12
 - b) The Confirmation of God’s Work, 15:13-23
 - c) The Confrontation of Godly Workers, 15:24-35

PROPOSITION: Luke recounts four aspects of the first Christian “conference” that offer invaluable insight for today’s church in promoting unity in the midst of diversity.

I. DISAGREEMENT IS THE MOTIVATION FOR THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE. Vss. 1, 2.

- A. The Reason for the Conflict is False ***Doctrine***. Vs. 1.
- B. The Reconciliation of the Conflict is Faithful ***Discernment***. Vs. 2.

LifePoint One: While conservative Christians have won many fundamental doctrinal battles, even in this century,

it saddens one to think that these fundamental doctrinal issues were even up for discussion!

II. DISCUSSION IS THE MEDIUM OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE. Vss. 3-5.

- A. The Salvation of the Gentiles Is Reiterated. Vs. 3.
- B. The Salvation of the Gentiles Is Reported. Vs. 4.
- C. The Salvation of the Gentiles Is Resisted. Vs. 5.

LifePoint Two: Salvation is not Jesus “plus” something else. Salvation is “Jesus Only!” That would be “too good to be true” if it weren’t for the fact that Jesus is truly that good! His righteousness is all that is necessary for salvation!

III. DOCTRINE IS THE MESSAGE OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE. Vss. 6-11.

- A. The Preachers Congregate for Resolution. Vs. 6.
- B. Peter Calls for Remembrance. Vss. 7-9.
- C. Paul Calls for Reason. Vss. 10, 11.

LifePoint Three: Church or family tradition should play absolutely no part in the discussion of fundamental doctrines. The only authority by which to base our arguments is the Word of God. Period!

IV. DISCERNMENT IS THE METHOD OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE. Vs. 12.

- A. Discernment Comes by Listening.
- B. Discernment Comes by Learning.

LifePoint Four: When discussing the doctrines of God, we should want to know what God “thinks.” We need to look around at what God is doing, because His actions always affirm His Word!

APPLICATION:

PowerPoint: When “battles” about fundamental doctrines arise, the easiest thing to do is not “enlist,” to simply be a conscientious observer. But “we wrestle not against flesh and blood,” and if we don’t fight, who will? People fight what they believe in. If we withdraw from the battle we have identified whose side we are really on!