

Acts- Church Afire! “Let Go of the Law,” Acts 15:1-35
Sermon Summary & 5-Day Devotional Apr. 19th, 2026 By Rev. Paul Hudson

Sermon Summary

In Acts 15, the early church faces a critical question: what does it truly mean to be saved? As the Gospel spreads among the Gentiles, a group known as the circumcision party insists that salvation requires adherence to the law of Moses, particularly circumcision. This creates sharp division, leading Paul and Barnabas to bring the issue before the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. At stake is not just a cultural disagreement, but the very heart of the Gospel—whether salvation comes by grace alone or by grace plus human effort.

Through much discussion, the leaders discern the work of the Holy Spirit. Peter testifies that God gave the Gentiles the Holy Spirit just as they were, purifying their hearts by faith, not by the law. Paul and Barnabas confirm this through signs and wonders among the Gentiles, and James anchors it all in Scripture, showing that God always intended to include the nations. Together, they conclude that salvation is by grace alone through faith, and that God does not require Gentiles to become Jews in order to belong to Him.

However, the council also lovingly calls the Gentile believers to turn away from practices tied to their former pagan lives—not to earn salvation, but to walk in freedom. This passage reminds us that God meets us exactly where we are, but He does not leave us there. His grace both saves and transforms. We are freed from striving to earn God’s acceptance and invited instead to walk with Him, leaving behind what once held us captive.

Key Takeaways

1. Salvation is by grace alone, not by adding human effort

Salvation cannot be earned, supplemented, or improved by our works—it is a free gift received by faith.

2. God meets us exactly where we are

We do not have to clean ourselves up before coming to God; He comes to us in the middle of our brokenness.

3. The Gospel removes all barriers to belonging

There is no cultural, moral, or personal advantage—everyone comes to God the same way.

4. Spiritual growth often requires patience and discernment

God often works through “much discussion,” prayer, and time rather than instant clarity.

5. Grace frees us from sin, it doesn’t lead us back into it

God calls us away from the things that once enslaved us so we can walk in true freedom.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: Salvation by Grace Alone

Scripture: Acts 15:11; Ephesians 2:8–9

Salvation is one of the few things in life that cannot be earned, improved, or partially paid for. The circumcision party tried to add human effort to God’s gift, but Peter makes it clear: we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus. That means there is nothing you can do to make God love you more, and nothing you have done that disqualifies you from His grace. When you try to earn what God freely gives, you turn a gift into a burden. Grace invites you to stop striving and start receiving.

Reflection Question:

Where in your life are you still trying to “earn” what God has already given freely?

Day 2: God Meets You Where You Are

Scripture: Acts 15:8; Romans 5:8

God gave the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles as they were—not after they changed, but in the middle of their lives. That same truth applies to you. God is not waiting for a better version of you to show up before He draws near. He meets you in your mess, your doubts, your struggles, and your imperfections. His presence is not a reward for holiness—it is the starting point of transformation.

Reflection Question:

What part of your life do you feel is “not ready” for God—and how does this passage challenge that?

Day 3: The Ground is Level at the Cross

Scripture: Acts 15:9; Galatians 3:28

The Gospel removes every human distinction when it comes to salvation. Background, upbringing, culture, and performance do not determine your standing before God. Everyone comes the same way—through faith in Christ. This truth not only humbles us but reshapes how we see others. No one is “closer” to God because of who they are or what they’ve done.

Reflection Question:

Is there anyone you struggle to see as equally accepted by God? Why?

*** This experimental document contains AI generated content, fully based on the original sermon of the week. Carefully edited and approved by Pastor Paul for accuracy.*

Day 4: Trusting God in the Process

Scripture: Acts 15:7; Proverbs 3:5–6

The early church did not receive instant clarity—they came to truth through “much discussion.” God often works the same way in our lives. We want immediate answers, but God invites us into a process of seeking, praying, and discerning. In that process, He shapes not just our decisions, but our hearts. Waiting is not wasted time—it is often where God does His deepest work.

Reflection Question:

Where in your life is God calling you to trust Him through the process rather than rush to an answer?

Day 5: Grace Leads to Freedom, Not Bondage

Scripture: Acts 15:29; John 8:36

The council’s instructions were not about adding rules, but about helping believers walk away from what once enslaved them. Grace doesn’t excuse sin—it breaks its hold. When God calls you away from something, it’s not to restrict you, but to free you. The things that once felt normal may now feel like chains, and that’s the Spirit at work in you, leading you into a new life.

Reflection Question:

What is one thing God may be asking you to walk away from so you can experience greater freedom in Him?
