

WEEKLY CATECHISM

According to Colossians 1:12,

I am qualified in Christ to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints.

According to Colossians 1:13,

God my Father has delivered me from the power of darkness and transferred me into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

According to I John 4:17,

As I live in God, my love grows more perfect. I can face Him with confidence on the day of judgment because I live like Jesus here in this world.

FIVE SMOOTH STONES

“The Book of Acts: The Gospel, No Doubt and No Debate”

(Acts 15:1-31)

From Romans 1:1-6, we were able to see that ...

The gospel is the good news that Jesus is King. He revealed this through His life, death, resurrection, ascension, and coronation in heaven. Our response to the gospel is through repentance and faith. Repentance from our sin and faith in the divinity and sovereignty of the risen Christ, our Lord.

Living a gospel-centered life is simply living in such a way that this gospel truth is central to everything in one's life.

This Great Debate gives us three insights:

How the Gospel Saves (vv. 7-11)

How the Gospel Frees (vv. 28-29)

Where the Gospel Leads (vv. 30-31)

❖ **How the Gospel Saves** (Acts 15:7-11)

“And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days, God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, 9 and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. 10 Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the

test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? 11 But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."

- Through the Gift of the Holy Spirit
 - God Comes to Us in Force
 - God Cleanses Us by Faith

REGENERATION means that because we are dead in trespasses and sins, we cannot respond to the gospel unless the Holy Spirit regenerates or brings to life our hearts. This is the work of grace by the Spirit's power.

- Through the Grace of our Holy Sovereign

"Why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." (Acts 15:10-11)

- A Heavy Yoke

The law was something no one could ever obey perfectly. It was a heavy yoke. But when Jesus shows up he calls out to the world,

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28)

- Humbly Yield

Paul says in Galatians,

“For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.” (Galatians 5:6)

- Holy You

❖ **How the Gospel Frees** (Acts 15:28-29)

The Jerusalem council drafts a letter and sends it to the Gentile believers. It says,

“For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: 29 that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.” (Acts 15:28-29)

- The Gospel Frees Us from Self-Salvation

But God saves us by grace in Christ. So it doesn't depend on you anymore. It depends on God.

- The Gospel Frees Us to Sacrificial Service

The gospel also frees us to obey God.

“For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: 29 that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.” (Vs. 28-29)

Until you are saved you can never really obey God.

❖ **Where the Gospel Leads** (Acts 15:30-31)

“So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. 31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.” (Acts 15:30-31)

It leads to ...

- The Unity of the Church

The gospel keeps us together and it also pushes us out to others.

“And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.” (Vs. 12)