

Series: Acts

Lesson #: 54

Title: Rebuilding the Tabernacle

Scripture: Acts 15: 13-21

Date: January 29, 2009

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Princeton, New Jersey

“Dissension and disputation” began when men came putting the emphasis on “the believer.” Peace was given through the Holy Spirit as Christ’s witnesses declared what Christ has done and is doing.

Acts 15: 12: Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. 13: And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: 14: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15: And to this agree the words of the prophets; 15: as it is written, 16: After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

The one thing that made the believing Jew and the believing Gentiles differ from the Pharisees (who had that old spirit of legalism) was the new spirit created within them by the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit wherein they believed Christ to be their perfect acceptance with God. That new spirit was created in them through the hearing of the gospel of Christ and him crucified.

And how was this “old leaven of oppression” exposed and the brethren brought to rejoice in Christ alone? The same way that the spirit of grace was created in them in the first place, by the Holy Spirit, through the declaration of what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done.

And it was the Lord Jesus Christ working in their midst which caused these saints to handle this matter by preaching the glorious liberty of Christ our All.

The gospel declares, not what sinners must do for God, but what God has done for sinners.

Peter's Gospel

Peter declared that God, through the Holy Spirit, purifies the heart by bringing sinner's to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ who perfected his people forever by his one offering at Calvary. Peter preached salvation by the free, sovereign, unmerited grace of God—led of the Spirit from the day of conversion forward (v11.)

Then Paul and Barnabas declared all that God had done in the places where they had preached to the Gentiles.

Paul wrote to the, **Phillippians 3:3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**

Acts 15: 13: And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: 14: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

- God's people are chosen by grace—Jew or Gentile makes no difference, God respects no man's person.
- God's people are set apart in time by irresistible grace—God at the first did visit the Gentiles *to take out of them a people*
- God saves for one reason--*for his name*.

And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written

The written word is God's word to us. Some call verse **11: But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they**—the apostles creed. Their creed came from one place—*as it is written*.

Romans 3: 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22: Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26: To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. 27: Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28: Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29: *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30: Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Acts 15: 16: After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

Notice some key words in this prophecy: Return; build again; build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof; and I will set it up; I will build it as in the days of old.

Three main things are which the prophets bore witness to as they bore witness to Christ and his work:

1. A fallen tabernacle-- the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down;...the ruins thereof

David is type of Christ. David's tabernacle is a type of Christ's church. When Adam sinned Christ's church fell into ruins. The fall of David's tabernacle at the hand of the Babylonian king and the dispersion of the remnant of God's elect typified this in the scriptures. Therefore, national Israel, just as the old covenant, had served its purpose with God.

Amos 9:11: In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

Zechariah 13:7: Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Ezekiel 34:23: And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, *even* my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24: And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken *it*. 24: And David my servant *shall be* king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 25: And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, *even* they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: (what land is that? The land of promise) and my servant David *shall be* their prince for ever.

Not national Israel, spiritual Israel; not return to Jerusalem but return to the LORD of hosts their God; not to David but to David's Lord Christ our King; and all this would begin in the days when our Lord returned called the latter days: **John 10: 16: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.**

Isaiah 11: 10: And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. 11: And

it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12: And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The first work, is the laying of the foundation of the temple—Christ's work of righteousness at Calvary. **Isaiah 28: 15: Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: 16: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. 17: Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. 18: And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.**

Psalm 118:22: The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner.

2. The whole of this work is the making of a new creation—The first building is fallen (the fall of man, destruction of Israel)

- A re-creation, a new creation, a new tabernacle, built by the Lord...as in the days of old. (Christ's church)
- A new King--Christ our David.
- A new kingdom--made up of God's elect Jew and Gentile
- A new tabernacle--a new house--made of living stones--of believers
- A new nation with a new name--Christ has made this creation from the remnant of Jews and his elect Gentiles. He gives this new nation his name.
- A new life--called of God through the Holy Spirit, created anew in spirit in Christ Jesus.

For a sinner to hear the law spiritually, to behold how completely this work of Christ is accomplished, to have the spirit of grace instead of the spirit of the letter, the sinner must be made a new creation in the heart—circumcised in the heart—purified in the heart by faith—by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ—or they will never enter into Christ our Rest.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Eph 4:24: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Col 3:10 And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Galatians 6:15: For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

3. Those who are called into this new creation.

I Peter 1: 5: Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2: 19: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20: And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21: In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

ALL OF THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY GOD, IN CHRIST JESUS THE SON OF GOD TO WHOM ALL POWER IN HEAVEN AND EARTH IS GIVEN, WHO HAS BEEN THE SURETY OF HIS PEOPLE SINCE HE ENTERED INTO COVENANT IN ETENITY, INTO WHOM WE ARE CALLED TO REST BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1: Born again

2: A spiritual tabernacle is being built up

3. Finally the new Jerusalem

All things new.

Isaiah 65:17: For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Isaiah 66:22: For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

2 Peter 3:13: Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Re 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to whom his church was entrusted in the everlasting covenant of grace, said, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down." It was announced when he was conceived in the

womb of the virgin: **Luke 1:31:** And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. **32:** He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: **33:** And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. **69:** And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; **70:** As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

Acts 15: 18: Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

THE LORD DECLARED ALL HIS WORKS OF SALATION IN THE FIRST CREATION

Matthew 13:35: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

Matthew 25:34: Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Genesis 1: 1: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. **2:** And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. **3:** And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. **4:** And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. Now we know that the apostle Paul gives us a commentary on this passage, saying, that it declares what God does in regeneration, the new birth, when he makes one of his redeemed a new creature in Christ. **2 Corinthians 4:6:** For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. When God gives the light of the knowledge of his glory he makes us to behold the face of Jesus Christ and we behold that all the work in our salvation is done.

Genesis 2: 1: Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **2:** And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. **3:** And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. **4:** These *are* the generations (the begetting, the birth) of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, **5:** And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground.

- God worked six days—then said “It is finished!”—separation of 7th day—holy fullness, sacred completion.

- Now Adam fell in the garden, just as we fell, just as the church of Christ fell, and thus we are made alive, (a new man has to be created first, like what we just saw on the first day) created a new to hold something—what is it we are made to behold?

The only other one who used the word it is finished is when Christ the Son of God said it.

- Christ came to this earth—when he finished the work he cried, “It is finished”
- God set him apart in the resurrection—he is the believer’s Sabbath—the 7th day in which we rest...in which we are freed from all our creditors and all our debts...
- The 7th day means—holy fullness and in Christ all fullness dwells—and ye are complete in him—labor to enter into his rest.

Colossian 1:19: For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fullness dwell;...2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. 10: And ye are complete in him.

Psalm 16:11: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fullness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

Ephesian 3:19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

James is saying that we can even go back: BEFFOE ALL THIS TO WHERE GOD BEGAN: GOD PURPOSED ALL THIS IN THE ETERNAL COUNCIL

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8: Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9: Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: 11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Romans 8: 28: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. 29: For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30: Moreover whom he did predestinate,

them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

- These are all the spiritual blessings given in Christ before the foundation of the world
- Because God knows his works from the beginning, in Christ God's elect have always been holy and without blame before him in love
- The mystery of his will, the good pleasure which he purposed in himself

Acts 15: 18: Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

Acts 15: 19: Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood. 21: For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

Verse 20 describes heathen worship which was common to the Gentiles—they had many idols, committed fornication and other uncleanness ate animals strangled and even drank blood. Verse 21: Describes the worship service of the Jews, namely, the reading of the law of Moses.

The law of Moses forbid those things which the Gentiles had done in their worship service for years. So just as circumcision is being set aside so as not to put a stumblingblock before the Gentiles there practices were to be set aside so as not to put a stumblingblock in the path of the young Jewish believers.

The point is: the issue is not touch not, taste not, handle not, the issue is the heart and the spirit of grace. It is about not doing anything that will prohibit your brethren from beholding Christ alone and growing in grace and knowledge of him.

Application:

If a man has ever truly heard the spirit of the law speak and beheld a glimpse of the depth of his sin, if he's had fear strike his soul at the law's condemning sentence, "Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!" then heard the Lord Jesus Christ whisper, "**Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged**" that man will spend the rest of his days trying to mortify that oppressive, old legalist that always wrestles to yoke him and his brethren. He beholds that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink--he ceases to put confidence in the flesh or any emphasis on this flesh.

At the first advent of Christ the Jews used these same scriptures in the Old Testament in a physical sense just as they used the law--it was all material, physical, and they looked for a national restoration of Israel--this fleshly heart is manifest by those who treat the believer as if he should be getting better in his flesh--that is what the principle "except ye" was with these legalist Pharisees. So some are using the law now, as were these legalists, so some are looking for an earthly restoration as the Jews were then--but do so and you will miss Christ as they did. The worship of God is the worship of Christ in Spirit, no confidence in the flesh.

