

Acts 15; Two wordly views about Jesus

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Date: 23 August 2015

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and welcome to church this morning. It's good to see all of you and it's good to see a number of visitors who are worshipping with us today. There will be tea and coffee served at the end of the service today and all are welcome to that.

And tuning in to coffee and tea time. Parents, please remember just to keep an eye on the children and make sure they're not getting into difficulty around the back of the church or on the main road. The evening service will be at 6 this evening and will be conducted by myself, God willing. One thing I'll just say about the evening service is being encouraging to see some of the older, younger people coming out in the evenings. And I want to encourage that and encourage the parents who've been doing that.

And to that end, I'm going to endeavour to make the service time in the evening round about the hour. Maybe slightly over, but closer to the hour than I have been in the past months. So, young folks, be encouraged to come. I will be mindful of you in the service and mindful of you in terms of the time of the service. This evening, there will also be a big youth fellowship, which has been organised by the Tea Church and Scalping.

[1 : 20] And I used to get a notification from Andrew Proggie. There's to be a big YF on the evening of the March Day, 23rd of August, in the Target Community Centre here. Starting at 8.15pm, all young people from P7 upwards, from all the churches in Harris, are warmly invited to this event.

It's not the non-national, I will include some food, fellowship and testimony. So, please, if that relates to you, or if there's those that you're aware of that you can pass this on to, please do so. In the course of the week, as usual, the release Bible study meets at 8pm tomorrow at 32 on the Queen Street. All are welcome, all ladies are welcome to that. First group fellowship meets in the Church of Scotland Hall on Tuesday at half past seven.

Prayer meeting on Wednesday at half past seven here in the Community Centre. And the service is next Sunday, next large day at 11 and 6. The morning service will be conducted by, not quite a Reverend, but soon to be Reverend, David MacDonald.

David's been here before and he led us in prayer. David's fame probably is perhaps in the fact that he's engaged to be married to Jane, Jane Brown.

[2 : 35] So, David will be taking the service next Sunday morning in English, and I understand Farrakhan will be taking the service in the evening. It sits next Lord's Day in Gallagher.

And I think there will be an evening English fellowship at 8, but we'll confirm that next Lord's Day morning. The reason that I'm not taking services next weekend is because the YF are going a weekend away to Uist.

If you think I'm slapping, I have to preach in Uist. And I've also been asked to preach on Thursday night in Pre-Church and Storway, so have them for you. They're still working me hard. But the services will be as intimated now and next Lord's Day. Last then is the information I've been given from Margot and Agnes.

Fundraising Cafe. There will be a fundraising cafe in the Community Centre on Saturday 29th of August. All funds raised from this cafe will go to the Macdonald family in Newmarket and Storway.

[3 : 39] Agnes Macdonald was born and brought up in Tarbert, and himself, Linda and her family lived in Yachkin until a few years ago. And Linda in particular was very involved in the local community.

Linda has battled with ill-health for years, and has been hospitalised in Glasgow since October last year. The family travelled from Storway to Glasgow on a regular basis to be with her, and this incurs great expense for accommodation and travel.

All funds raised, and the 29th we passed on to the Macdonald family to help with this. And we would be grateful for any support you can offer. We hope to have a waking stall as well, as the usual cafe, and anyone who wishes to contribute in any way can do so on the day, or contact Margot or Agnes. Thank you. Thank you. And these, I think, are all the information. So let's worship God now, and we sing to his praise from Psalm 96.

Sing a new song to the Lord. Sing all the earth to God. To God, sing, bless his name, show still, his saving health abroad. Sing all the earth to God.

[5 : 12] Who was in blessing fleshly permanence. So let's worship God now. In And believe the nations, His glory you hear.

And unto other people show His works and wonders are.

For grace the Lord hath made me His truly love in life.

In our need truly fear is He A heart of God's beside.

Of the gods of the idol's love His blinded nations fill.

[6 : 38] And our God is the Lord by whom The heavenly angel pray.

In our hearts before His face And might yet see Him alive.

Send His grace and His holy grace And let the beauty shine.

He ascribe unto the Lord The people now may die A heart of battle Go away through the earth let's unite our hearts and pray our heavenly family we thank you for this your day and we thank you that you are the god who calls us to come into your presence and we thank you father as we come we come with a song in our hearts because we look to you as our father and we thank you that we can look to you as our father because of the finished work of jesus the son and we thank you for the holy spirit who has been active in us opening our eyes to see jesus and in need of him we thank you that only in christ is there saving health only in christ is there salvation from sin only in christ can we come into the presence of the father and be assured of eternal life and so lord we thank you that this morning we come not in our own name but in the name of jesus and we come not to proclaim and assert our own righteousness but we come to give thanks for the righteousness of christ and his finished work we thank you for the amazing grace of jesus and lord we pray that you would enable us to see it and give us faith so that each one of us would lay hold of the gift of that amazing grace we thank you for our being here this morning we thank you for each one who has gathered for those who are visiting with us as well and we ask your blessing upon them and that they would know your presence as they take time in harrison holiday and lord that you would know refreshment and rest and recuperation in their break we thank you for this day your day where we are enabled to stop work and commanded to stop work and find rest in you and lord we pray that you would still our hearts now and that you would clear our minds of all that would distract us and enable us we pray to wait upon the lord to look to the lord the one in whose presence we find their strength is renewed and joy wells up within our hearts so lord we commit this hour to you and ask lord that you would meet with us and touch our hearts and lead us and guide us and bless us and encourage us and correct us and rebuke us and enable us we pray in this hour to glorify your name we pray for those who are not with us today but who would wish to be and we commit them to you in particular we think of those who are in hospital who have had procedures operations over past days and we bring them especially to you we think of neil cameron in glasgow we think of joe mccasco in inverness and we pray for them in particular both of them and so recently after such big procedures we ask lord that your hand would be with them and lord that you would bring them to full recovery and health and strength we thank you that you are the god whom we can trust and we thank you that the matter of what we are going through and you have promised that you will never leave us nor forsake us so we pray for those in particular need and we ask lord that you would join here today we pray now that you would continue with us that you would cleanse us from our sin empty us of all that we seek to exalt ourselves and focus inwardly on ourselves and fill us with the holy spirit that we may see and that we may worship christ and we pay these things in jesus name amen boys and girls would you like to come forward please okay oops oh we've got some runners how are you all today all fine are you all fine let me hear you all fine are you all fine do you notice anything different today that's in the church here he comes do you notice anything different today about the church or about well the church is the place where god's people are this place where we are any any differences that you can spot if you look about no nothing different no anything different let me give you a clue do you know what this is a music thing a music thing do you want ronnie a walkie talkie it's not a music

thing and it's not a walkie talkie really although it's kind of a little walkie talkie i can't go like this 10-4 10-4 over out it's not like that you put it in your mouth no no this is this is a microphone it's a microphone that you speak in and do you know where the microphone was last sunday it looked different didn't it last sunday where was the microphone last sunday show us natalie where was it it was up there and it was fixed on there and so when i had to speak to you last sunday i would have to speak like this morning boys and girls are you okay today this sunday i can i can sit down here and i can speak to you and i can you can hear me fine say i want a shot of the microphone come on then keila oh not so brave now anyone want a shot speaking into the microphone come on alistair cami and gosalek you see the fear in the right right how about that we'll put that there you we actually need to do a wee test can you say hello hello can you walk over to your your grandpa your shenna and gosalek walk over there this is a test okay okay can you say hello yes well let's hear it say hello hello hello can we hear him can we hear him can you go over to the chairs at the back there please okay stop there stop stop stop can you say hello hello can we hear him yes can you go over to where dj is

[15:34] okay can you stop stop stop can you say hello hello can we still hear him yes come back where maria is Say hello. Okay. Can we still hear him? Right. Run over to scout me.

You know that last Sunday, you couldn't have done that. Last Sunday, if you were going to speak into the microphone, and if I wanted people to hear what I was saying last Sunday, I had to stay right here. Couldn't move.

And if I wanted to go over there, you just wouldn't hear me. But now, you can take the microphone and you can go there and there and there and there. And you can hear whoever's voice is coming through the microphone everywhere.

And you know what, boys and girls? There's some people and they think that they can only hear God in one or two places.

Some people think they come to church and they can hear God in church. But when they walk out that door, they don't expect to hear God speaking again for the rest of the week. Does that make sense?

[17:11] Where is God, boys and girls? Heaven. Heaven, yeah. Jesus is in heaven. God the Father is in heaven. Where is God, Katie? Pardon?

Where is God? Everywhere. Everywhere. Everywhere. Everywhere. And if God is everywhere, where can you expect to hear him speak? Everywhere. Everywhere. Everywhere.

And so whether you're in church and you've got your Bible open and you're saying and you're listening to a sermon or you're in Sunday school or whether you're in school or whether you're in school or whether you're in work or whether you're out playing somewhere, whether it's a Sunday or a Monday or a Tuesday or a Wednesday or a Thursday or a Friday or a Saturday.

God can speak to a Sunday. God can speak to a Monday. God can speak to a Sunday or Tuesday or a Thursday or Thursday or a Sunday or a Sunday.

to him and let's listen to him every day. Will we pray? Let's pray. Dear Lord God, we thank you that you are everywhere. We thank you that your spirit is everywhere in the world. We thank you that when we pray, whether we're at school or at home or in church or on the top of a hill or the bottom of a hill or out on our bikes or kicking a football, we thank you that you are with us.

[19:10] Help us to remember always that you are with us and help us always to be speaking to you in prayer and always to be listening to your voice because we thank you that you are the God who loves to speak to us and we thank you that you spoke to us about how much you love us by sending Jesus into the world.

We thank you that he came to the world and died in control to take away our sin so that we could know you, Lord God, and speak to you and listen to you and enjoy being with you every day that you give us in this world and then forever and ever in heaven if we trust you.

So help us to trust you, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you, boys and girls, you listen very well. We're going to sing again, Life in God's Praise.

And it's 1209 in Mission Praise and it is also on the screen. We have sung this before and we'll sing it again this morning.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain, who plumbed the depths of my disgrace and gave me life again. And then the second verse, my heart is filled with thankfulness.

[20:24] Listen to this, boys and girls. We're singing to God. My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who walks beside. He walks beside us every day, wherever we are.

And so we're going to sing that to his praise. And this will play through once and then we'll stand to sing. Acts chapter 15 and we read from verse 1. Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers, unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.

This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed along with some other believers to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders of our discretion.

The church sent them on their way. And as they travelled through Phoenicia and Semenia, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad.

When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders to whom they reported everything God had done through them. Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, the Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.

[21 : 43] The apostles and elders meant to consider this question. After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed him. Brothers, you know that some time ago, God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe.

God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted him by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. Now then, why would he try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? No, we believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.

The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles to them. When they finished, James spoke up.

Brothers, listen to me. Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles the people for himself. The words of the prophets are in agreement with this as it is written.

[23 : 02] After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord. And all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things that have been known for ages.

It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them telling them to abstain from food, food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood.

For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest time in his reign in the synagogues in every Sabbath. Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.

They chose Judas, called Barsabbas, and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers. With them they sent the following letter. The apostles and elders, your brothers, to the Gentile believers and Antioch, Syria, and Solution, greetings.

We have heard that some went out from us without our authorisation and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what you said. So we all agree to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul.

[24 : 25] Many have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements.

You are to abstain from food sacrifice to idols, from blood, from meat and strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

The men were sent off to Medica and Antioch where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people of Redman were glad for its encouraging message. Judas and Silas who themselves were prophets said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

After spending some time there they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch where they and many others taught and preached the word of God.

Amen. And may God bless to us for reading of his holy and his father where we join you to God again in prayer and with you'll be led by in prayer.

[25 : 42] Amen. Thank you. Last week God bless Babi telephone But, because we are in touch with our eyes, we are in touch with our brother and charger kuwait no need. We would love to change our hearts fuer g ■■■ gel against an voud chun voi■ Nare nare koonychator 19 20 21 21 23 24 movement he now you see him live■■■■■■■■■■ face-to-face,

OH HE WILL BEEN SHUT UP ON WE ■■■■■■ WHAT DEO complete is a good Works On the way in the last yard.

Just out with the quotid. One of those people and a ■■■■■■■■lady lived for us. Howler come of the day of you can live. You died on how you feel. Because of it you syrans. As you do man as you feel. The wisdom of millet that gave some money for the ■ She is a disabled girl in her control of her, She is alive and there is adisciplinary She is a person who was all alone I would, to be sump promised my Lord back to me everyone my beloved self for me.

[28 : 59] I would get very lucky to be invested in me. But what would his feeling upon me when Jesus raised me so ar pizzas?

Or will, myí I s■■■ Então ■■■■ zab his H perí . 686-UNheads For others, we grew up at the church in Chirp ainsi, an ensuring that in the world you got about it.

The trees were Dieu divided into alien colours ... not to give you a huge joy wing ... and the elephants of the family. The previously■v design asked the family, and they declared they were asks of the natural■■■■■ to ocean.

I went to dinner and sat at our who left the world, For Siwam, our yummy dinner has us of the first ■■■ation and is known for our illness .

In not knowing that we remain your home, your honey, your noisy gaz■■■.

[30 : 34] fully good forum but to start the personality of the p Ho■aysan.

So those heart devastatingava sorrows. ausilia I stand with him saying it's different how the sound Amnes of the foolishness of the Nicholas of the Easter in the way of the infant said in 1 15 and 12 so that we don't them.

...

... we■■■mg, we get■■■■■■■, if we catch them, we don't get people love, we don't get water from the moon, we don't get, if we catch them, if those minds aren't gonna, we'll get them out ofaten, Amen.

Amen. You praise God. We continue singing from Psalm 96, and you listen to verse 8, to your men, all that, stand in Gavit this time and we remain seated as we sit in Gavit. Psalm 96 verses 8-9 and that reads as follows, Give me the glory to the Lord, that through his name is due, come ye into his courts and bring an offering with you, and the beauty of his holiness, O do the Lord the Lord, like that all the earth throughout tremble in space before. These two stand in Gavit.

[33 : 28] Ah Tiagan Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[36 : 28] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. that there is for us to embrace that grace. We do it in Jesus name. Amen.

[38 : 29] Sometimes in life a question will come up and it's a question that is so significant and so weighty, so far reaching that everything needs to stop until there is a clear answer like that.

Two illustrations come to my mind. I think back to past life on a building site. Sometimes when you're on a building site and construction is progressing, there will be an emerging question regarding the design. Somebody may raise the issue that they have a fear that part of the design of the building is flawed. The calculations that the structural engineer passed over may be skewed. So what happens in that scenario? Well in that scenario tools are set down. Men walk off site and emergency meetings are held until clarity is reached.

And then that clarity is communicated. I was listening to the news this week and I heard a story about a water treatment plant somewhere in South England I think it was.

There was a bug that was identified. Cryptosporidium I think it was. Now what happens when such a bug is identified in one of these plants that are producing water that we are consuming? Well the production doesn't is not only is not only. But as we continue everything stops. Bottled water is tankered in until an investigation is carried out and a clear sacrifice And then there's something that we are using. There's something of that is not only. There's something of that going on here in Acts chapter 15.

[40 : 13] Because this is a chapter that kind of crashes in the plot of Acts that we've been following. This is a chapter that rushes in on the missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas as we've been following over these last few weeks.

The mission is disrupted. The mission is disrupted. Paul and Barnabas are stopped in their tracks. They are summoned back to headquarters in Jerusalem. And the question that they have to deal with as part of the church of Jesus Christ at that point was the question, how can I be saved? How can I be saved? How can I be saved? It says in verse 1, certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers, unless you are circumcised, it's the mark of the covenant, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved. And this brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. Sometimes these things are necessary when crucial matters of salvation are at the heart of it. We know that. But it strikes me that saved is one of these words that has become somewhat corrupted in our culture and in our mindset as we think about things today. When we think about the words saved, at the cultural level, we have images that are conjured up in our minds of US evangelists who are saying, write a check for X amount, send it out to this satellite TV channel and you can have assurance of salvation.

[41 : 51] Or we can have images of people walking down city streets with sandwich boards, shouting and yelling furiously at passing bystanders about the need to be saved without ever speaking about the grace of Christ.

And because of the stigma that comes with the word saved, I think there are many today who simply avoid the word. I've been to many services and many churches that speak endlessly about journeys of faith and spiritual exploration and discovery, but they never ever talk about the need for you and I to be saved.

And consequently, they never talk about the reality of being lost. And that's an error. And if we are to take the Bible seriously as a text, we need to talk about and reclaim some of these words that have become polluted at the cultural level and we've shied away from as a consequence. Even if you do a quick count in the book of Acts, which I did, you'll find that the term saved or salvation comes up over 15 times.

If you do a search of scripture, it's way in excess of 200 times that the word saved or salvation comes up. So as much as some people might want to try to keep pushing this word down below the surface, like a car, it just keeps bobbing on back up.

[43 : 32] Because it's crucial and we have to address it. If we look at Acts 13 and 14, which we've been doing, we see Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey.

Even as we listen to the way that they've preached, we see that they were sent out by the Holy Spirit with the good news of salvation through Christ.

Not self-improvement through Jesus, but salvation. Salvation from sin and sin's deadly consequences and salvation into this right relationship with God through Christ.

And so everything depends upon our being saved. The way that we live. The way that we die. Our eternal destiny depends on our being saved. And so the question of how can we be saved is as much our question today as it was their question back in Latte in Acts 15.

[44 : 51] And so we join this debate concerning salvation. And there are two main views on salvation which I'd like to explore. The second view is the main focus of the Jerusalem Council.

The first view is a view that has been raging in the chapters prior. It's a view that we find threaded all the way through Acts to this point.

And so we see two views on salvation. There were some who were saying that you need less than Jesus to be saved. First point. And there were others who were saying that you need more than Jesus to be saved.

And we'll look at both these points hopefully in the time that we have. So first of all let's consider this group. These groups of people who believed that you needed less than Jesus to be saved.

And as I said this is not so much the discussion point in the council. But this was a discussion point on the street. And this was a discussion point in the marketplace.

[46 : 00] Paul and Barnabas as we followed their course through these chapters. Were men who were always in trouble. Even a survey of the last two chapters illustrates that point.

If you look at Acts chapter 13 and just flick through that. We see in the time in Pisidian Antioch. As that comes to an end.

It comes to an end. Not with the city waving goodbye to them and saying come back soon we enjoy the state. The city is in a riot. And Paul and Barnabas are being thrown out by force.

Physically and legally. And in chapter 14. We see in Iconium. There's this plot that arises to ill treat them.

And stone them. Hence Paul and Barnabas have to leave in a hurry. And then as they move on to Lystra and Derby. They find themselves to be Mr. Unpopular again.

[46 : 57] And they're stoned. And dragged out of the city. And Paul is left for them. Now what is causing these men to come under such fierce attack?

It was the message they preached. And the message that they preached. Was. That you need Jesus.

Paul and Barnabas went in trouble. Because they kept saying. If you have anything. Or anyone. Less than Jesus. There is no salvation. No Jesus.

No salvation. And that really got waxed up. Because many believed that you could be saved with less than Jesus. Think about the Jews.

These religious Jews. They were getting beaten. Paul and Barnabas. By the Jews. Why were they getting beaten by the Jews? Because. Well it was because many of the Jews believed.

[48 : 04] Because they were Jews. Because they were of a certain background. Because they lived in a certain way. Because they followed a precise legal code. Because they were experts. In scripture.

And religious in the reading of scripture. Because they prayed. Openly. Religiously. Professionally. They believed that their heritage. And their conduct.

And their works. Would be enough to save them. They believed that they could be saved. With less than Jesus. That was the Jews.

And then there was the non-Jews. The Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas. Weren't just getting into hot water with the Jews. The Gentiles also were launching bazookas at them. Why? Well generally the Gentiles were very pluralistic.

In their beliefs. They didn't believe in one God. They believed in many, many gods. And so. Even if we take a day trip back to Lystra. And Derby. And remember. The situation there.

[49 : 06] In Lystra and Derby. The people believed in Zeus and Hermes. As just two. In a catalogue of gods. That they revered. And then if we fast forward to Acts 17.

Paul gets there. And he looks around. And he's in such distress. As he looks around. Because he sees. The city is absolutely jam-packed. Full of idols and gods.

False gods. And in these multi-faith pluralistic places. They believed that there were many paths to many gods.

So you could choose your own path to salvation. You could choose. Whichever God tickled your fancy. Whichever God. Gelled and messed with your worldview.

You could design and build your own salvation path. And the Gentiles. The non-Jews. Believed also. That they could be saved. With less than Jesus.

[50 : 05] It's too light. Is it? Let me turn down. I need it please. Some people are going like that. That's usually a signal. It's too light. One, two, three, four, five.

Is that okay? Leave it down for me please Alan. Take that guidance from your wife. Okay. That's fine. Okay.

That's enough just now. So we have the Jews. Paul and Barnabas. Turn it down a bit more please. Paul and Barnabas were hated by the Jews.

Because the Jews thought their works could save them. They could be saved by less than Jesus. And then Paul and Barnabas are hated by the Gentiles. Because they believed one of the myriad of gods.

That they had affections for. Could save them. And the Jews and the Gentiles. Were infuriated.

[51 : 03] By the fact. That the apostles maintained. That salvation is found in no one else. For there is no other name.

Given to mankind. Under heaven. By which. We must be saved. They were saying. In summary. You cannot be saved by. Anyone. Or anything. Less than Jesus. That. That. And that infuriated. Both parties. That caused. Outrage. And today. Still. That same message. Is still causing. Outrage. There may even be. A muted outrage. Amongst some. Sitting here this morning. I don't know. Because still today. There are many. Who stand with the Jews.

[51 : 59] Saying. My religion. Will save me. My church going. My. Family background. Haven't you heard. About my. Great uncle.

James. He was. A minister. In the denomination. He was. So well thought of. That's my family line. Surely that's enough. To save me. I come to church.

Every week. Surely that's enough. To save me. Do you know. How nice I am. As a person.

Everybody says. How nice I am. Surely that's enough. To save me. You heard.

About all the good works. That I do. The blessing. I am. To this community. Surely that's enough.

To save me. I can save myself. Say some. I don't have to.

Bow at the feet. Of Jesus. If he looks. At my. CV. And sees. My religious. And my. Social.

Diamonds. That sparkle.

[52 : 54] On my CV. Then. I'll be okay. I need less. Than Jesus. And there are. Others. Who stand. Today. Still. With the. Pluralistic. Gentiles.

Who will say. I will choose. My own. Alternative. Path. To salvation. So. I'll take. A wee bit. Of Buddhism. And a bit.

A bit. Of Hinduism. And maybe. A dash. Of new age. Thinking. And I'll roll it. All up together. And kind of. Fit it. Into my own. World view. And I've designed. My own. Salvation.

Path. I'm saved. Through. Buddhism. Plus Hinduism. Plus Sikhism. Plus whatever. And God says. No you're not. The one true God.

Says. No you haven't. Saved. Yourself. You cannot. Call. On any other. Pseudo God. To save you. Because there is.

[53 : 49] Salvation. Find. In no one else. There is no other name. Under heaven. Given to mankind. By which. We must be saved. And the Bible teaches.

No matter how. Culturally. Difficult this may be. For folks to swallow. The Bible teaches. There are not many gods. There are many idols.

There are many fake. Pseudo gods. But there is only one. True. God. And there are not. Many ways. To salvation. There are many.

Deceiving signposts. But there is. One way. To salvation. And that's through Christ. Jesus said. John 14. 6. I am. The way.

The truth. The life. No one. No one. No one. Comes to the Father. Except through me. We could sing with a hymn writer.

[54 : 54] My hope. Is built on nothing less. Than Jesus blood. And righteousness. Nothing less. We'll sing at the end. Of the service today.

What can wash away my sin? Nothing. But the blood. Of Jesus. And there are those. Even here. Who will bear testimony.

To that fact. Speaking to somebody. Just at the end of. Last week. In the congregation. Who. Spoke to me. About this. Sense of trying to find.

Peace with God. And trying to find salvation. And forgiveness of sin. And there was no salvation. Although there was much. Religious exploration. There was no salvation. And no peace.

And no assurance. And no life. Until he found Christ. And we heard. The same story from. Suraj. On Thursday night.

[55 : 52] Who. Is a. A gangster. From Nepal. He's now a free church minister. Somebody said. How on earth does that happen? And we'll find out.

By that point too. But Suraj. One of the lines. That jumped out for me. On Thursday night. Was. He said that. In Nepal. There was. 330 million.

Hindu gods. But he found no salvation. And no forgiveness. Until he found Jesus. But when they do look to Jesus.

In faith. We are saved. We are saved. Eternally. Irreversibly. We are saved. Saved to the uttermost.

And some may. Sit here even this morning. And say. Is that it? Is that all you have to do? You just have to.

[56 : 59] To look to Jesus. You just have to believe in Jesus. That's all you have to do. I mean. Surely. There's got to be more than that. Surely there's something extra.

That I have to do. And that takes us neatly into. Point number two. Which was. The focus of the council in Jerusalem. There were some who were saying.

That you could be saved with less than Jesus. And there were some. Who at the Jerusalem council. Were saying. That you need more than Jesus. To be saved. And that was the heart of the debate. Again. Look at. Verse one. And two. Some men came down from Judea. To Antioch. And were teaching their brothers. Unless you are circumcised. According to the custom taught by Moses. You cannot be saved. And I'm not going to go into the details of circumcision. You can look at that. With your own. Convenience. But. It was the mark. The Jewish mark.

[58 : 02] And they were saying. Unless you have this Jewish mark on you. Unless you are circumcised. According to the custom taught by Moses. You cannot be saved. And Paul and Barnabas.

Then are brought. Into sharp dispute. And debate with them. So what they were saying. Was. You need Jesus. Yes.

But not just Jesus. You need to have. Jesus. Plus the Jewish customs. To be assured of salvation. And when Paul and Barnabas.

Heard that. They were infuriated. And Paul. Characteristically. Went straight forward. To their face. And said. No. No. And so there was this.

Sharp dispute. In the church. I was alarmed this week. When. Someone told me. It's only 17 weeks. Till Christmas. And at Christmas.

[59 : 03] Every year. The girls always take out. This. This film. It's. It's the film called. The Grinch. Some of you have seen it. But. For those of you. Who haven't seen the film.

The Grinch. Is. A horrible creature. That tried to steal Christmas. The Grinch. Was a horrible creature. That came out. In a place called. Hoover. That wanted to rob the people.

Of Christmas joy. And so he did everything. To spoil. And pollute. And sabotage. Christmas. And in Acts 15. In this council.

One commentator. That I read. That says. That he sees. Gospel Grinchers. In operation. Which I thought. Was a good picture.

It's not mine. I think it's a good picture. What he means. By that. Was this. Well. The gospel. Of Jesus Christ. Says.

[60 : 00] That in Jesus. We are saved. To the. The gospel. Because of. His. Finished work. On the cross. Because of.

His. Life. Which was. Absolutely. Sinless. And pure. And satisfactory. To God. And because of. His death.

Which was. In our place. And his. Rising. From the dead. For our. Justification. Because of. The fact. That he. Became. Sin. For us.

We. Simply. Need to. Look. To him. In faith. And confess. Our sin. And trust. In his. Finished. Work. And in that. Moment. We are saved. We are. Forgiven. We are. Free. And we can.

[60 : 54] Know. Joy. And we can. Know. Peace. And all. The blessings. That flow. From that. Salvation. Through Christ. That's. The gospel. And that was.

The gospel. That Paul. And Barnabas. Were. Preaching. But the gospel. Grinchers. Said. No. No. No. Not so fast. Not so fast. We need.

To qualify. This message. That you're. Preaching. A little bit. If you want. To be saved. It's not. Just. About. What Jesus. Has done. It's also. About. What you do. There's. There's. A list. Of.

Qualifications.

And exclusions. Here. That we need. To discuss. There is. Some. Small. Print. That we need. To sit down. And work. Through. In order. To assure you. Of salvation. You've. Got to come. From the right. Kind of. Background.

And if you don't. There's. There's a certain. Degree of work. That we've. Got to. Do. To compensate. For that. You've. Got to eat. The right. Kind of food. You've. Got to. Wash your hands. In the right. Kind of way. You've. Got to.

[61 : 47] Conform. To our. Jewish rules. Or you. Cannot. Be saved. That was. The essence. Of
verse one. That was. The pinnacle. Of this. Council.

That was. Held. In Jerusalem. It was. An assault. On the gospel. It was. An attack. On the.
Finished. Work. Of Christ. And still.

That goes. On. To use. The. Illustration. I borrowed. Still. The gospel. Grinches. Are around. And.
They're. No longer. Saying. You must. Be circumcised.

They're. No longer. Saying. You have. To become. A Jew. To be saved. But. There were. Some. If
you will. Say. You've. Got to be. Part of. The right. Denomination. Or. You've. Got to.

Wear. The right. Kind of. Clothes. Or. You've. Got to. Sing. The right. Songs. The right.

[62 : 40] Bible. Translation. You've. Got to. Be. Baptized. At the right. Time. With. The right.
Method. And. Worship. In. The right. Kind. Of. Building. And. Go. To the right. Kind. Of. Places.
With. The right. Sorts.

Of. People. And. On. And. On. Goes. A list. Of. Qualifications. And. Exclusions. And. Without. That.
They say. You can't. Really. Be saved. You've.

Got to. Conform. To. Our. Expectations. Of. They say. You've. Got to. Do. What. We. Expect. You.
To. Do. Around. Here. In. Order.

For. You. To. Have. Assurance. Of. Salvation. So. Trust. Christ. Yes. But.

Also. Pull. The line. And. We'll. Determine. Where. The line. Is. And. Then. You'll. Be saved. And.

[63 : 36] To. Cut. A. Long story short. The. Jerusalem. Council. Said. No. No. No. No. No. And.

Peter. Said. It. First. Time. Is. Gone. In. Verses. Seven. To. Verse. Eleven. You. Can. Go. Through.
It. At. Your. Convenience. And. Paul. And. Barnabas. See. It. Next.

In. Verses. Twelve. And. Then. James. Who's. The. Senior. Man. In. The. Gathering. The. Brother.
Of. Our. Lord. James. Who was.

The. Head. Of. The. Church. There. In. Jerusalem. Figurehead. That is. He. In. Verse. 13. Brings. It.
All. To. Conclusion. And. The.

Falling. Verses. And. He. Makes. Crystal. Clear. That. You. Need. Not. Do. One. Iota. More. Of.
Anything. To.

[64 : 29] Be. Say. You. Need. Nothing. More. Than. Christ. You. Are. Saved.

By. Grace. Alone. Through. Faith. Alone. In. Christ. Alone. You. Don't. Need. To. Become. A. Jew.
You.

Don't. Need. To. Wash. And. Dress. And. Eat. In. A. Particular. Way. James. Is. Saying. You. Are.
Saved. By. Jesus. He. Is. Enough.

His. Work. Of. Salvation. Is. All. Sufficient. Everything. Has. Been. Done. By. Jesus. And.

That. Means. That. People. Like. The. Thief. On. The. Cross. Can. Look. In. Faith. To. Christ. And.
Have. That. Assurance. In. That. Moment. That.

[65 : 23] Today. You. Will. Be. With. Me. In. Paradise. You. Don't. Have. To. Come. Down. And.
Join. In. A. Church. You. Don't. Have. To. Go. And. Be. Baptized. You. Don't. Have. To. Build. Up.
A. Portfolio. Of. Good.

Works. It's. All. Of. Christ. That. Is. Assurance. Of. Salvation. And.

Just. As. I. Was. Preparing. This. Message. Just. After. Prepared. I. Was. Reading. In. My.

Devotional. Message. And. I. Thought. I. Would. Just. Share. That. With. You.

It's. Octavius. Winslow. Who. Says. This. He. Says. Believer. In. Jesus. Remember. All. Your.
Confidence. All. Your. Hope. All.

Your. Comfort. Flows. From. The. Finished. Work. Of. Your. Savior. See. That. You. Unwittingly.
Add. Nothing. To.

[66 : 15] The. Perfection. Of. His. Work. Then. He. Says. Remember. Work. Of. Christ. Mars. The.
Perfection.

And. Obscures. The. Beauty. Of. That. Work. If. You. Lift. Up. Your. Tool. Upon. It. You. Have.
Polluted. It. And.

That. Was. The. Pollution. That. The. Church. Were. Meeting. To. Address. And. To. Purge. And. I.
Want. To. Just. Bring. Things. To. Conclusion.

Now. By. Showing. You. A. Picture. Which. Will. You. On. The. Screen. It. Came. To. My. Mind. Do.
You. Remember. This. Picture. From. Maybe. A. Year.

Or. Two. Years. Ago. Ago. I. Saw. The. Picture. Thinking. This. Is. Quite. A. Parable. For. The.
Church. Today. The. Picture.

[67 : 07] Is. A. Picture. Called. E. Homo. Behold. The. Man. It. Was. Painted. By. Elias. Garcia. Martínez. And. It. Held. Private. Place. In.

The. Sanctuary. Of. Mercy. Church. Near. Zaragoza. For. More. Than. A. Hundred. Years. But. As. You. Can. See. Over. Time. The. Picture. Became. Moisture. Damaged. And. So. There. Was. An. Amateur. Artist. Who. Was. In. That. Place. And. That. Amateur. Artist. Decided. That. They. Would. Make. Just. A. Few. Modifications. To. Improve. The. Picture. And. So. Over. Time. This. Amateur. Artist. Cecilia. Gimenez. Began. To. Touch. It. Up. And. Add. I. guess. It. Was. Her. I. think. Her. Strokes. To. The. Masterpiece. And. The. Outcome. Over. A. Period. Of. Time. As. You. Can. See. On. The. Far. Right. Is. This. Monstrosity. And.

[68 : 01] So. The. Picture. Goes. From. This. Dignified. Portrait. Which. Was. Critically. Acclaimed. To. This. Ugly. Monstrosity. Of. A. Thing.

Remember. When. I. Saw. That. First. I. Thought. That's. A. Warning. To. Us. As. The. Church. When. We. Start. Trying. To. Add. Our. Brush. Strokes. To. Christ. Finest. Word. What. A. Mess. We. Make. When. We. Start. To. Try. To. Add. The. Brush. Strokes. Of. Our. Traditions. Or. Our. Innovations. Our. Non. Biblical. Preferences. To. The. Masterpiece. Of. Christ. All. Sufficient. Word. We.

Make. A. Mess. We. Do. Damage. We. Negate. The. Good. News. And. We. Keep. People. Like. The. Thief. On. The. Cross. Away.

[68 : 56] From. Jesus. Because. They. Think. That. He. Would. Never. Listen. To. Them. Because. They. Could. Never. Keep.

This. Catalogue. Of. Local. Rules. I. Had. A. Story. This. Week. About. Church. Notice. Board. It. Was. In. Pride.

A. Place. In. The. Village. And. It. Had. Local. Vandals. And. Vandalized. It. By. After. All. Welcome. Saying. All. Welcome. If. Dot. Dot. Dot. The. Point. Being. You're. Not. At. All. Welcome. Unless.

You. Do. What. We. Want. To. Do. And. Measure. Up. To. Our. Standard. And. It's. A. Sad. Story. Because. It. Misrepresents. Our.

[69 : 48] God. Who. Reaches. Out. To. Jew. And. Gentile. Alike. Without. Prejudice. And. With. The. Offer. The.

Free. Offer. Of. The. Grace. Of. The. Lord. Jesus. Christ. And. Because. It. Is. The. Grace. Of. The. Lord. Jesus. Christ. That. Is. Offered. There. Is. No. One. Too. Bad. And. There. Is. No. One. Too. Good. There.

Is. No. One. Too. Grubby. And. There. Is. No. One. Too. Clean. There. Is. No. One. Too. Crude. There. Is. No. One. Too. Crass. There. Is. No. One. Too. Immoral. There.

Is. No. One. Too. Far. Gone. Who. Cannot. Be. Saved. There. Are. No. Lost. Causes. Because.

[70 : 42] Jesus. Is. Enough. And. He. Has. Done. All. On. That. Cross. And. Everyone. Who.

Looks. To. Him. No. Matter. What. Their. Past. Life. Looks. Like. No. Matter. What. Their. Present. Life. Looks. Like. Everyone. Who. Looks. To. Christ.

In. Faith. And. Repentance. Can. Be. Saved. How. Can.

A. Gangster. From. Nepal. End. Up. As. A. Free. Charge. Minister. Who. Is. Going. Back. To. Nepal. To. Seek. Out. The. Gang. That. He. Left. And. The. People. He. Assaulted. So. Brutally. How. Can. That. Happen. How. Is. That. Possible. It's.

[71 : 39] Possible. Because. Of. The. Grace. Of. Our. Lord. Jesus. Christ. His. Finished. Work. Is. Enough. For. A. Gangster. In. Nepal.

His. Finished. Work. Is. Enough. For. Every. Single. Person. Who. Sits. Here. And. Who. Will. Not. Sit. Here. And.

That's. The. Good. News. The. Good. News. That. Has. Been. Entrusted. To. Us. And. The. Good. News. That. Jesus. Has. Called. Us.

To. Take. Out. Into. The. World. We. Cannot. Be. Saved. By. Anyone. Or. Anything. Less. Than. Jesus. And. We. Are. Not. Saved. By.

Anything. Or. Anyone. More. Than. Jesus. So. How. Are. We. Saved. Well. Peter. Put. it. Succinctly.

[72 : 35] In. Verse. 11. And. We'll. Finish. With. That. We. Believe. It. Is. Through. The. Grace. Of. Our. Lord. Jesus. Christ. That. We. Are. Saved.

Have. You. Received. That. Grace. Are. You. Saved. Heavenly. Father. We. Thank.
You. For. The. Gospel. We. Thank. You. For. The. All. Sufficient. Work. Of. Christ. We. Thank. You.
That. He. Died. So. That. We. Might. Live. We. Thank. You. That. He. Became. Sin. So.
That. We. Might. Be. For. For. For. For. We. Thank. You. That. When. We. Look. In. Faith. To. Him.
No. Matter. How. Awful. Our. Past. May. Look. No.
Matter. How. Disgusted. We. May. Be. With. Our. In. The. Present. Tense. We. Thank. You. That.
When. We. Look. To. Jesus. And. Confess. into this relationship with God which begins here and
knows no end but only is enriched as we go from time into eternity to be with Christ. Give us eyes to
see that we need to be saved or we will be watched and give us faith we pray to receive the grace
of Jesus. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

[74 : 09] Just a moment what can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can
make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus
Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all both now
and forevermore. Amen.

Amen.