

**to this
agree all the
words of the
prophets**

Acts 15:13 – 41

~ What is God's program and plan for the world today? I'm sure we all have several partially accurate perspectives on an answer to that question, but since the Word of God is complete in correctness – and we aren't – let's focus on the Scriptural answer. I believe the answer will shock many Christians. Some, it will sadden. Others won't be able to accept it. Well, as the Holy Spirit leads and directs our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, He is attempting to teach the direction of leadership for our contemporary church age. Through the apostles, and in this report, God reveals His plan for us in this present moment as I write, and you read this report. Are you praying for wisdom, judgment and discernment before Bible study? Are those things important to you? Are you really interested in what God has to say – or are you only interested in what YOU want to hear?

In our previous report, we began to examine the first council of the early church, why they had convened this legislative body, and the subject matter they were concerned with. If you have not read our last report and, indeed, all nineteen previous reports from the book of Acts, I highly suggest you go back and do so now. The church leaders were one hundred percent Jewish. Some were Levite Priests and Pharisee's that had accepted Christ, and they gathered under the guidance of the apostles and elders to determine if they should continue observing the Mosaic System of Levitical Law. Paul and Barnabus had established churches on their first missionary journey that were one hundred percent Gentile; and the Jewish elders believed those Gentiles should be required to practice the Mosaic Law. Naturally, this brought up huge strife and contention.

Paul wasn't willing to compromise on any level with their proposed legalized methods. Simon Peter learned how he had been used by God to open the door to Gentiles in the home of Cornelius. Peter testified how the

Spirit of God had come upon a pagan family by the preaching of the Gospel. Peter said Cornelius and his family weren't circumcised, they had no knowledge whatsoever of the Mosaic Law. They didn't even know what it was. Yet, when they believed, God saved them. Well, that's when James stood up and asked the men who were present to listen to him present the summation of the council of churches. When James said to hearken unto him, that means you and I are to stop and listen, too. God is trying to speak to us in His Word today, friends – in this report. Most of us need to stop talking, study to be quiet and learn how to listen to God. That's where we begin in this section of Scripture....

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.

~ Today, God is neither saving the world nor establishing a Kingdom at this time. God is doing what James said He is doing here: ".... calling out a people to His Name from among the Gentiles." James is repeating what Simon Peter, Barnabus and Paul just finished saying. James is saying it in a more defined way, though. When we appear before the throne of God, there will be multitudes of every tribe, tongue and people from among every nation, culture and society. The Word of God is going out as it never has before, friends. Yes, there is almost total apostasy in the church, and there is extreme resistance from outside the church, and some very wonderful men of God would say I need not be so apologetic. Well, Dr. Torrey went to many continents preaching the Gospel to thousands of people; but, he didn't have the potential audience we have here on this forum on which I teach. The Gospel has never gone to as many different places and people at the same time as it does presently.

This report is being read by people of every color, in every condition and is written for every conceivable cline. Every age, race and country I can think of are reading this so-called Spiritual Safari. Overall, I still consider this a very small, even rinky-dink missionary effort. Even so, my reports are girdling the globe; and I thank God for that – very, very much. So, what God

is doing today is calling out a people from among the Gentiles to His Name, my beloved. This isn't "kingdom building" – because the Bible doesn't even talk about that. This is where we are in our current historical line in time. No kingdom is being established today. I understand that not everyone can accept what I teach. That's because God is calling out the people from among the Gentiles and only saving those upon whom He will have mercy! I think you should all just write that down – underline verse fourteen or circle it in your Bible so you can always remember what God is doing today in this world....

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

16 After the rapture 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:

~ Everything I write in this so-called safari is precisely what the prophets spoke of and are the facts of truth that solidify the sound doctrine of the apostles. To allege otherwise is false witness. James just told us that! I have changed verse sixteen because after "this" means after the church is called out of the world, God will rebuild the tabernacle of David. Well, that tabernacle has certainly fallen down because there's no one around from the lineage of David. The only One Who can make that claim is sitting at the right hand of God the Father as I type this report and you read it.

Presently, God is calling out individuals to further the Gospel in service to Him and witness the cause of Christ to the world. As children of God, we are looking for our Blessed Hope to call the church body out of this world in what Scripture labels the rapture. The rapture is the next event on the eschatological calendar in the plan and program of God, by the way. After God has accomplished His purpose in the world through the church, He will return to Israel and establish His Kingdom. In that day, Christ will rule and reign literally and physically in Jerusalem. The tabernacle of King David will be restored, physically and literally. All enemies of Christ will be brought before the Great White Throne and placed under His feet in subjection. Friends, this is very, very important to understand. A misunderstanding of these truths renders the Bible abjectly subjective in our conversation. You'll

find that position most unsatisfactory. The appropriate interjection here would be: "... kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way" ~

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 greatest time of revival and of men turning to God is yet in the future. It will happen AFTER the church has left this earth. First, the rapture will occur; then, the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David; THEN, these people will enter the kingdom. So, the "residue of men seeking after the Lord" is the third step in the progressive future plan of God. Candidly, I feel the church today is preventing revival and inflicting more harm than good on the way. As we read on, James presents his final summation to this council of churches. That summation deems Gentiles are NOT to be placed under the Mosaic System. Certainly, the Gentiles are to be courteous of saved Pharisees. If they desire to observe the law, it is good. The Gentile is to remember how many of the Israelites are offended by eating certain meat and meat offered to idols and all sorts of other things. When we get to Corinthians we will take all of that up at length....

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

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.

~ See, the Gentiles didn't mind living in adultery. They had no qualms lying to each other and defrauding their brother in business. Oppression of the poor was business as usual. It was the normal course of how they did things. In fact, it was a religious rite! The new morality of this generation is steeped in rank idolatry and paganism. Contemporary world culture is sex, sex, sex – which was a religion at the time in which we are studying. American ancestors who came out of the forest naked and eating raw meat had a "new morality," too. See, if you truly get close to God through obedience, He will get your thinking straight regarding both issues of

Christian sexual relationships and all sexual perversions. James is telling them to abstain from these things in this passage. What we need today are Christians who act as Christians are expected to act....

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

~ There is simply no authority in the Word of God for someone to put you back under the Mosaic Law, friends. Anyone trying to do so doesn't teach the Bible properly, correctly and completely. This is a truly lovely section of Scripture. However, I ask you: what have you suffered for Christ's Names sake, friends? What has your witness cost you in your life to follow Him? Anything? If following Jesus hasn't cost you something, and if you haven't been forced to make a stand for Him in order to continue the cause of Christ, then, may I say this kindly? – you'll do well to educate yourself in Holy Writ by studying to be quiet. It will be the safest place for you. Teachers shall receive the greater condemnation. Make a note. Selah....

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle:

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

~ There is serene comfort and consolation in the Gospel when it is taught in an educated manner by a competent, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led man who is personally ordained by Christ Jesus and is permitting the Spirit of God to speak through him. There is nothing but condemnation under the law. The Bible taught recklessly and handled improperly is black magic and death to the hearer. Make another note. The law is a mirror that reveals our ugliness – it can only show us bad things about ourselves. All come short of the glory of God; none are righteous, no, not one. The Gospel says we can only come to God through the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. God wants to receive us, and He can save us; but He only does so by grace! No other way. God comforts us with those words; at least, He comforts me with those words. How about you? ~

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

33 And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

34 Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

35 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

~ The disagreement between Paul and Barnabus didn't result in two different churches being established in Antioch. They just disagreed without being disagreeable. It's okay for the brethren to disagree on certain matters. I don't mind disagreeing – although I never agree to disagree. Anyways, I just pray those who are wrong will finally desire to be correct and see things my way. See, Barnabus exits Scripture here and we won't hear from him again. Paul will write most of the remainder of the Word of God. Barnabus smoothly sails off the pages of Scripture, and we know he had a great ministry after this. The church in North Africa was a direct result of Barnabus' work. The Gospel had to go in two different directions at this time, anyways. We're going to follow Paul from here in our expedition. That was God's decree; and this is still God's method today ~
