I WILL GIVE THANKS TO YOU, O LORD, AMONG THE PEOPLES; I WILL SING PRAISES TO YOU AMONG THE NATIONS.



Dave Garlock, putting the equipment off to the side following his and other team members' work on the soffit of the building Christ's Church Bozeman, MT

[The Pharisees] said therefore to [the blind man], 'What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?' " John 9:26



<u>Great Falls -</u> Prayer and fasting - Lord's Day July 18

Men's PEAKS - July 22-24, 2021, Theme: "The kingdom's sure increase"

2021 Family Camp - Sept. 3-6, Theme: "Powerful Pictures from the Prophets"



Question of the week:

When the apostle Paul was making his defense before King Agrippa, he quoted Jesus as saying that the eyes of both the Jewish people and the Gentiles were to be opened, and that they were to ______ from darkness to light, and from the dominion of Satan to God.

Last week's question: When King Hezekiah of Judah was told by Isaiah the prophet to set his affairs in order because the king was about to die, after praying what did King Hezekiah do next? *Answer: He wept bitterly (2 Kings 20:3).*

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School – 93 Morning Assembly – 124 Evening Assembly – 73 Wednesday Night (7/7) – 90 Butte Lord's Day – 18 GF Lord's Day – 34,61, *Wed. - 54*



Acts Alive ...

Trouble over the Law of Moses

"It is necessary to

circumcise them [the

Gentiles] and direct

them to observe the

Law of Moses."

Those who think that the first century church was a picture of peace and tranquility have never read their Bibles carefully. Those who believe that the teachings of the apostles were received without question or controversy in those congregations have not seriously examined the inspired record. Very frankly, dogfights broke out, and it took a lot of effort for the apostles to solve the problems. Thus it was in Antioch, that great missionary-minded congregation which sent Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles.

"And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that

Paul and Barnabas and certain others [whom Luke declines to mention by name, possibly because they were those who took the other side] of them should go to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue" (Acts 15:1,2). The presence of Paul and Barnabas was not sufficient to solve the problem in Antioch, and it is doubtful if their physical presence and teaching would be respected by everyone today.

So they went to Jerusalem. "And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and elders, and they reported all that God had done with them [among the Gentiles]. But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, 'It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses' " (Acts 15:4,5). Now there was trouble in the church in Jerusalem. Sure enough, some of those Pharisees had not experienced a complete conversion to Christianity, and were insisting that the Law of Moses was the thing to be observed. The result: much debate.

As the apostles and elders looked into the matter, three major messages clarified the issue: Peter spoke, making the following points: 1) God chose Peter to be the first to deliver the message of salvation to the Gentiles, 2) God gave the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles in

the same way as He did to the apostles on Pentecost, and cleansed their hearts by faith; 3) The Law was a yoke which neither the Jews not their ancestors could bear

Paul and Barnabas spoke, testifying how God had backed their teaching about Gentiles not having to keep the Law of Moses by doing great signs and wonders through them among the Gentiles.

James, elder of the church in Jerusalem, spoke, saying that the Old Testament prophets con-

curred that the Gentiles were to turn to the Lord upon the restoration of the tabernacle of David [prophetically from Amos, referring to the establishment of the church]. "Therefore," he said, "it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:19.20).

A letter was sent to the church in Antioch containing those four points, and the contents of the letter were confirmed by the congregation in Jerusalem sending two of their men, prophets by the name of Judas and Silas. This letter was further to be circulated among all the Gentile congregations, so that others from Jewish background might not disturb the progress of these Gentile believers. Thus the doorway to future salvation of all Gentiles under the terms of "faith of Christ" was opened, never to be shut!

"So when they [Paul and Barnabas, with Judas and Silas] were sent away, they went down to Antioch; and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. And Judas and Silas, also being prophets themselves, encouraged and strengthened the brethren with a lengthy message" (Acts 15:30-32). May it continue to be so today!

JAY WILSON