

BOOK OF ACTS // WEEK 22

GRACE ALONE

Jason Brinker - 02/25/24

GROWING TOGETHER

If you've ever belonged to an organization, talk about some of the rituals or rites of passage you had to endure or take part in to be fully accepted. Maybe this was your introduction to military service, perhaps it was when you were pledging in college, maybe it was when you were trying to join a club in high school.

Did you agree with it then and do you agree with it now?

Some of these experiences and acts may have been really fun and light-hearted. Have fun with this one.

GROWING WITH GOD

Read [Acts 14:27-28](#), [Acts 15: 1-19](#), & [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) aloud and go over your sermon notes with one another. (Answer all or some of the questions)

Acts 15:1 tells us that certain people believed that Gentiles couldn't receive salvation as new believers unless they underwent circumcision. This obviously goes against what Jesus taught.

- **What was your idea of salvation when you were growing up?**
- **How has that changed?**
- **What precipitated that change? Was it informational or experiential?**

Acts 15:8-10 tells the story of how Paul was addressing the Pharisees and told them this: "God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear?"

- **Have you ever felt like you are not where you need to be in order for God to use you? If so, how has this message impacted you?**
- **How can we be better at sharing the gospel to those who may have doubts or hesitations?**

Peter says in Acts 15:11, “But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will”. This is also emphasized in Ephesians 2:8-9, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast”.

- **Have you ever been held to a different standard of salvation than someone else?**
- **Have you ever held someone to a different standard than what Jesus expects?**

When we hear James speak in Acts 15:19, he says “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God”.

- **How have you changed since coming to Christ?**
- **Do you know someone who thinks they need to change before God can accept them?**
- **What would you tell them or show them to help them understand the error of their belief?**

We heard Pastor Jason say very emphatically, and rightly so, “Jesus + nothing = Everything”. So many times, we make the passing comment or hear someone say something like, “I just hope I do more good than bad so the gates of Heaven will open for me”. We and many others tie our acceptance into God’s Kingdom to good works.

- **Take a moment to discuss if you are trying to add something to your relationship with Jesus to earn salvation or God’s favor.**

GROWING IN OBEDIENCE & SCRIPTURE

Pastor Jason ended his sermon with this reference to James' statement in Acts 5:19:

“Any gospel except this gospel isn't the gospel. Have you surrendered yourself to this Good News? I think this verse is also a Line in the Sand for the Church. Not just in Gospel Clarity but in Gospel Purpose. We must exist so those who are far from Christ would be loved into a growing relationship with Jesus. I pray the way we love is contagious!”

- **What was your biggest takeaway from this week's message?**
- **How are you (Individually or as a group) showing your community the Gospel of Jesus Christ that says they don't have to be the “perfect” Christian to be accepted by Jesus?**

There are plenty of ways to show the people of Onslow County and the surrounding areas that the love and acceptance of Jesus is for EVERYONE. Check [here for organizations](#) the church partners with to get the conversation and action plan started.

GROWING WITH CATALYST PEOPLE

Be sure to follow Catalyst Church on all the major social media platforms for the latest information and words of encouragement.



