

AFFIRMING EACH OTHER IN LOVE

In Acts 15 we read how the pious Christian Jews struggled to accept the Gentile believers. In verses 8-9 Peter addresses the issue and says, “God knows people’s hearts, and he confirmed that he accepts Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he cleansed their hearts through faith.”

God showed that He accepted Gentiles as well as Jews when He purified the house of Cornelius by faith and gave them the Holy Spirit. God therefore made no distinction between the Jews and Gentiles and it was clear that all are saved through grace alone and not by keeping certain laws.

Let’s keep the focus on grace today too. Salvation is by grace through faith with no other condition. God loved us first and wishes that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of His great love for them. Some of us resist fellowship with others who have slight doctrinal differences or who raise their hands through worship while others can’t relate to those whose worship is more liturgical.

As long as we believe basic dogma, that God is One God in three persons, that Jesus is the only way to God and that He died for our sins and was resurrected on the third day and has given us His Holy Spirit, other differences are irrelevant. Let us affirm each other’s freedom to differ, without a hint of criticism, knowing that the God who has accepted us in Christ also loves and accepts them.