

The Perfect Law of Liberty

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Acts 15:1-11 Peter refutes that circumcision and the law were required for salvation.

Peter and the Apostles agreed that salvation is by faith and not of works of the OT law.

Ac 15:19 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.

Acts 15:22-31 The Apostles send out letters to the Gentiles . . . they rejoice for the consolation.

Did they have the authority to do this?

Jesus said

Mt 5:17 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Jesus fulfilled every point of the law and gave the Apostles authority to make binding resolutions regarding His kingdom.

Mt 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Not long afterward, He commanded Peter to violate Jewish dietary laws to bring the gospel to the house of Cornelius.

Ac 11:8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. (9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, [that] call not thou common.

About this time, Peter realized that nobody was ever saved by

keeping the law.

Nobody could be saved by anything but faith since Adam and Eve's sin.

They had to put on the coats of skin by faith and be saved from death.

Doctrine of Substitutionary Atonement.

If they had not, you and I wouldn't be here.

Only Jesus Christ kept the law perfectly and gave saving grace to every generation.

The OT sacrifices were pictures of their faith in the coming Lamb of God.

The law was their teacher and ours, that, try as they would, they would fail to keep the law.

Ga 3:21 [Is] the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. (22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. (23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [to bring us] unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

But the Jews had taken the law to extremes seeking to establish their own righteousness through their scrupulous (but failed) keeping of the law.

Ro 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

And so, they sought to impose the law on the newly converted gentile believers.