

# Acts 29

*The Reformation (AD 1517-1648)*

## Introduction

When pride and self-reliance are seen as virtues instead of vices, the gospel has been compromised. The Reformation sought to bring us back to a right relationship with ourselves and with God.

## Discussion Questions

- The gospel is needed by everyone and available to anyone. Righteousness is not based on keeping the law but received through faith in Jesus. It is free to us but costly to him (Rom. 3:21-24). Why is the idea of grace by faith difficult to accept? When does grace comfort you? When does grace frustrate you?
- The Reformation sought to return to a God-centered understanding of the gospel. God sets the standard and he meets the standard. He is righteous and he makes us righteous (Rom. 3:25-26). Why is this bad news and good news? How does God's justice and mercy shape your own life? Where do your good works fit in?
- In the gospel, pride is humbled. Our boasting and self-exaltation are intentionally silenced (Rom. 3:27-28). How can pride rise up even in the heart of Christians? What are modern ways that Christians make themselves to be better than others? What are things you are tempted to boast about?
- The standard and requirement of the law remains as one of love. We are still called to fulfill this law (Rom. 3:31). Doing so by faith means we love because we are already accepted, not in order to be accepted. How has this distinction impacted you? What resurfaces a general sense of rejection in your life? Is God's acceptance ever eclipsed by the opinions of others in your life? How are you motivated to continue in the risk of loving others?

## Think About It

Religion produces pride, but the gospel produces humility. Faith in yourself is simply a form of self-glorification and idolatry. Faith in Jesus glorifies him and liberates us to worship freely.

## What Will You Do?

Believe the gospel. You are so bad that God had to die for you. You are so loved that God was glad to die for you. Repent of your self-justification and put your faith in the one who is just and justifies you by his grace.

## Renewing Your Mind

*I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes... For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:16-17)*

*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. (Rom. 3:23-25)*

*We hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. (Rom. 3:28)*

*God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)*

*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? (Rom. 6:1-2)*

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:1)*

*We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. (Rom. 8:28-29)*

*Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. (Rom. 10:17)*

*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom. 12:1-2)*

*Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. (Rom. 13:8)*

## Prayer Requests

