

Saint Michael and All Angels Parish Church, Bramcote



Thursday, September 17th, 2020

Bible Readings: Psalm 15; 1 Kings 4:29-5:12; Acts 15:1-21
(Each reading may be viewed at www.biblegateway.com)

Reflection: ①

Right from the earliest days the Church faced opposition from without and disagreements from within. In this story Paul and Barnabas went off to Jerusalem to consult the apostles about something which was causing a bit of trouble within the church at Antioch. Peter explained clearly the Christian theology of salvation which God had instructed him to preach to the Gentiles, and which was resulting in many coming to faith. Not only that, but God was also pouring out the Holy Spirit on them, just as he did on the apostles, making no distinction between Jew and Gentile. In the light of that, it was clear to Peter that salvation for all came as a result of God's grace, not through anything a person could do to earn it.

Our Psalm today asks the question, "Who, Lord, can live in your presence?". The answer, if the Psalm is taken at face value, is "No one." No one can possibly live up to the ideals set out in the Psalm: a person who is blameless, who always speaks the truth, who never breaks a promise - none of us can honestly say we're capable of these things all the time. So Peter's words are an encouragement to us - we are saved by grace, not because of anything we do.

Let's thank God for this from the bottom of our hearts today.

Prayer:

God of grace, we have no righteousness of our own, but you give us the righteousness which comes by faith in Christ: give us also the mind which counts everything loss compared to his surpassing greatness; may we gain him, and be found in him: may we know him and the power of his resurrection; may we share the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming like him in his death to attain the resurrection from the dead in Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

"Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you." *1 Peter 5.7*