

The Life of the Apostle Peter
Study # 40
Back in Jerusalem
Peter's Defense Before the Circumcision
(Acts 11:1-18)

INTRODUCTION (Cf., 10:3-6; 22; 30-32; 11:13)

I. The Report (11:1)

NOTES:

II. The Rebuke (11:2-3; 6:7; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; Mk. 16:15)

III. The Rehearsal (11:4-15)

A. Of the Vision (5-10)

1. The Observation (5-6)
2. The Order (7)
3. The Objection (8)
4. The Overcoming (9-10)

B. Of the Visitors (11)

C. Of the Visit (12-15)

1. The Command (12A)
2. The Companions (12B)
3. The Crossing (12C)
4. The Conversation
(13-14; 16:31; 10:2,44,48; Jer. 29:13)
5. The Consecration (15)
 - a. An Unexpected Event
 - b. A Unifying Event
 - c. An Unusual Event

IV. The Resolution (11:16-18)

A. The Appeal (by Peter) (16-17)

1. To the Word of God
(16; Mk. 1:8; Acts 1:5; 1 Cor. 12:13)
2. To the Work of God
(17; 9:5; 4:16; 5:39; John 11:47; Rom. 9:20)

**B. The Acceptance (by the People)
(18; Isa. 42:6)**

CONCLUSION (Jn. 3:16)

Those of the circumcision refers to Jewish Christians who believed that Gentiles had to become Jews when they became Christians. The Jewish Christians had been circumcised as a seal of the Mosaic covenant and had kept the Jewish laws. They were not pleased that the Gentiles were considered equal to them in the eyes of God, based on nothing more than their faith in Christ. They wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised and to keep the Law of Moses in order to become Christians. contended with him: This was not a polite discussion, but an intense quarrel. The Jewish Christians were upset because Peter

APPLICATION FOR POINT II

- 1) Some hang on to their religious form, ceremony, rituals, rules, and regulations. These are placed before the lives and salvation of men.
- 2) Note the true spirit of these legalists. Their spirits should have been rejoicing that some people were now saved and brought to the knowledge of Christ. Instead their spirits were full of contention and divisiveness because some religious practices were violated.
- 3) Prejudice, discrimination, rituals, and rules can blind us to God's purpose to reach out to all men in salvation. All men are to be reached no matter who they are. No church should exclude anyone. The church's mission is to reach both the dirty and the clean, both the lower and the upper class. *POSB*

CRITICISM

The disciple is called to do the Lord's will, to reach and evangelize the world. He often has to break tradition and buck the tide of doing things the way they have always been done. When he does, he can expect criticism and contention from the legalist and the traditionalist. Nevertheless, the true disciple of Christ remains faithful even as Peter did. He does what God says. He does all he can to reach out and share Christ with a world filled with desperate needs. *POSB*

A Ω

contended (v. 2) - To criticize; to take issue with; to contend; to debate; to dispute. The word "contend" (*diekrinonto*) means to stand against, to take an opposite position, to take sides against, to oppose, to create a cleavage, a division. It is creating strife, struggle, and discord. *Practical Word Studies in The New Testament*. NOTE: This is the same word the Lord gave to Peter in the last chapter (and in verse 12 of this chapter) when He ordered him to "Go ...