

Acts 21:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

Analysis

As touching the Gentiles which believe—The elders clarify that their proposed Jewish vow (v. 23-24) doesn't contradict the Jerusalem Council's decree (Acts 15:20, 29). The four prohibitions—**things offered to idols... blood... strangled... fornication**—addressed practices particularly offensive to Jewish sensibility, facilitating Jewish-Gentile fellowship without requiring circumcision or full law-observance. The phrase 'we have written and concluded' (ἐπεστείλαμεν κρίναντες, epestéilamen krínantes) emphasizes the settled, authoritative nature of this decision. This verse demonstrates how biblical Christianity maintains core gospel truth while allowing cultural flexibility in non-essential matters.

Historical Context

The Jerusalem Council (c. AD 49) had settled the circumcision controversy eight years earlier. These four prohibitions balanced Gentile freedom with Jewish sensitivities, enabling table fellowship that would otherwise be impossible. The elders' reminder showed these principles remained in force.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between essential gospel requirements and culturally-sensitive practices that facilitate fellowship?
2. What does this passage teach about maintaining doctrinal decisions across time while applying them to new situations?

Interlinear Text

περὶ	δὲ	τῶν	ΠΕΠΙΣΤΕΥΚΟΤΩΝ	ἔθνῳν	ἡμεῖς	
touching	As	G3588	which believe	the Gentiles	we	
G4012	G1161		G4100	G1484	G2249	
ἐπεστείλαμεν	κρίναντες	μηδὲν	τοιούτου	τηρεῖν	αὐτοὺς,	
have written	and concluded	no	such thing	observe	that they	
G1989	G2919	G3367	G5108	G5083	G846	
εἰ	μὴ	φυλάσσεσθαι	αὐτοὺς,	τό	τε	εἰδωλόθυτον
G1487	G3361	that they keep	that they	G3588	from	things offered to idols
		G5442	G846		G5037	G1494
καὶ	τό,	αἷμα	καὶ	πνικτὸν	καὶ	πορνείαν
and	G3588	from blood	and	from strangled	and	from fornication
G2532		G129	G2532	G4156	G2532	G4202

Additional Cross-References

Acts 15:29 (Blood): That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.