

ACTS

LIVING ON MISSION

Acts 15:1-35

February 4, 2024

BELONG

Get to Know One Another

Have you ever found yourself in a situation or a relationship where you didn't know where you stood with another person or other people? What was the situation and how did it make you feel?

BELIEVE

Read this Week's Scripture

If you remember, between June and November of last year, we studied the first fourteen chapters of Acts. While studying these chapters, we saw the church grew significantly and geographically to the Gentiles. The growth and spread of the gospel to the Gentiles began to force Jewish believers to wrestle with the role of the Old Covenant promises in light of Jesus work on the cross. This week, we will be in **Acts 15** and we will begin to see how the early church began to address some of the effects of that growth. The leadership gathers in Jerusalem to address a very specific question - is salvation attained by grace through faith OR is salvation attained by something we can do?

Have someone in your group read **Acts 15:1-5**

BUILD

Engage the Scripture

Question 1: In **Acts 15:1**, what is the basic aspect of the disagreement the brothers from Judea had? [the act of circumcision OR grace + a traditional Jewish act]

- In your opinion, why do we [or people] have a difficult time accepting/ embracing the message of grace?
- Do you think the church still struggles with this idea of “**grace + something else**” equals salvation?

Question 2: How was Paul received by the churches in Phoenicia, Samaria & Jerusalem?

- With what group did he receive the resistance from?
- Do you think the church can get so caught up in tradition that we can become blind to ways in which God is working? What are some ways?

Have someone in your group read **Acts 15:6-11**

Question 3: In **verse 7**, Peter begins to speak boldly to the council. Is there a part of his speech that stands out to you?

- In **verse 8**, what did Peter say was the evidence of the Gentile's genuine conversion?
- What are some of the “yokes” the church places on the neck of believers? Does FBC have a “yoke”? [**verse 10**]

BECOME

Apply the Scripture

Have someone in your group read [Acts 15:12-21](#)

Question 5: In [verse 13](#), we are introduced to James? [[the brother of Jesus.](#)] What is his role with the council?

- In [verses 15-18](#), James quotes [Amos 9:11-12](#). Why is the use of Scripture important for mediating conflict?
- What did James make clear in [verse 19](#)? [[that they should not trouble those who turn to God](#)]

Question 6: What were the four things that James stated that the Gentile Christians should “abstain”? [[abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.](#)]

- Why do you think these four specific things are mentioned? What is their significance?
- How can we apply the lessons from the Jerusalem Council to current debates within our own churches or denominations?

Question 7: In your opinion, why do Christians struggle with “assurance of faith”?

- Do we still see “Judaizers” in the church trying to add to salvation?
- How can “Judaizers” negatively affect discipleship?

Quote to Discuss: [“To add anything to Christ as being necessary to salvation, say circumcision or any human work of any kind, is to deny that Christ is the complete Savior, is to put something human on a par with him, yea to make it the crowning point. That is fatal. A bridge to heaven that is built of 99/100 of Christ and even only 1/100 of anything human breaks down at the joint and ceases to be a bridge.”](#) – R.C.H. Lenski

- What stands out to you in this quote?

BEGIN

Response and Prayer

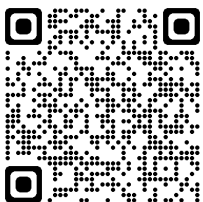
How should it change the way you pray, think, speak or act this week?

At the end of the conversation, spend some time praying as a group. Here are some prompts:

- Spend some group time-sharing requests and praying specifically for them.
- Spend some time praying for FBC and how God is working in and through FBC Portland.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Blue Letter Bible: [Acts 15](#): Check out the QR code to learn more.



Precept Austin: [Acts 15](#): Check out the QR code to learn more.

