

# DISRUPTION

May 2, 2021

Resolving Conflict in a way that is pleasing to God

The Continued Story....

## Acts 15

*While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch of Syria, some men from Judea arrived and began to teach the believers<sup>[a]</sup>: “Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved.”<sup>2</sup> Paul and Barnabas disagreed with them, arguing vehemently. Finally, the church decided to send Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, accompanied by some local believers, to talk to the apostles and elders about this question.<sup>3</sup> The church sent the delegates to Jerusalem, and they stopped along the way in Phoenicia and Samaria to visit the believers. They told them—much to everyone’s joy—that the Gentiles, too, were being converted.<sup>4</sup> When they arrived in Jerusalem, Barnabas and Paul were welcomed by the whole church, including the apostles and elders. They reported everything God had done through them.<sup>5</sup> But then some of the believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and insisted, “The Gentile converts must be circumcised and required to follow the law of Moses.”*

**There is a little bit of pharisee in all of us. We may unwittingly mistake our experiences, upholding tradition, structure, and legal requirements for obeying God.**

*So the apostles and elders met together to resolve this issue.<sup>7</sup> At the meeting, after a long discussion, Peter stood and addressed them as follows: “Brothers, you all know that God chose me from among you some time ago to preach to the Gentiles so that they could hear the Good News and believe.<sup>8</sup> God knows people’s hearts, and he confirmed that he accepts Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us.<sup>9</sup> He made no distinction between us and them, for he cleansed their hearts through faith.<sup>10</sup> So why are you now challenging God by burdening the Gentile believers<sup>[b]</sup> with a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors were able to bear?<sup>11</sup> We believe that we are all saved the same way, by the undeserved grace of the Lord Jesus.”*

**Salvation, for the Jew and the Gentile is through the undeserved grace of God found in Jesus Christ alone.**

*<sup>12</sup> Everyone listened quietly as Barnabas and Paul told about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.<sup>13</sup> When they had finished, James stood and said, “Brothers, listen to me. <sup>14</sup> Peter<sup>[c]</sup> has told you about the time God first visited the Gentiles to take from them a people for himself. <sup>15</sup> And this conversion of Gentiles is exactly what the prophets predicted. As it is written:<sup>16</sup> ‘Afterward I will return and restore the fallen house<sup>[d]</sup> of David. I will rebuild its ruins and restore it, <sup>17</sup> so that the rest of humanity might seek the LORD, including the Gentiles—all those I have called to be mine. The LORD has spoken—<sup>18</sup> he who made these things known so long ago.’ <sup>19</sup> “And so my judgment is that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. <sup>20</sup> Instead, we should write and tell them to abstain from eating food offered to idols, from sexual immorality, from eating the meat of strangled animals, and from consuming blood. <sup>21</sup> For these laws of Moses have been preached in Jewish synagogues in every city on every Sabbath for many generations.”*

**They turn to the Word of God as their ultimate test of truth.**

**In verses 23-31 they came up with four things: 1. There should be no roadblocks to faith in Christ. 2. There should be no roadblocks to fellowship. 3. We need to take the moral highroad. 4. We need to know and obey the scriptures.**

**Conflict is inevitable. Good hearted Christians who love Jesus have different opinions. Unfortunately, people can get passionate, and unpleasant, but we need to utilize Christ’s love and His Spirit along with the Word to either come to a consensus or agreeably disagree. The ultimate goal for us is reconciliation and doing it in a way that brings glory to God and his church.**

### **Small Group Discussion**

**Opening:** Do you have any prayer requests, praises, or words from God or sins to confess?

#### **1.. Read the text: Acts 15**

What insight, principle, or observation for this weekend’s message did you find to be helpful, eye opening, or troubling? Explain.

- 1. Why do you think people have a difficult time embracing Grace?**
- 2. What does this passage teach us about essentials and non-essentials?**
- 3. Looking at their method of resolution: When involved in a dispute, pray for the abilities to see both sides rather than just your own. Philippians 2:3-4**
- 4. Matthew 18: 15-20 When both sides of an issues have reasonable support, seek wise counsel and a wise compromise.**
- 5. If a conflict persists, don't give up, stay at it until you resolve it. Go to one another. Stay at it, don't give up on resolution. Don't sacrifice the relationship until you have ran out of options.**
- 6. Ephesians 2:14-16 Jesus brought Jews and Gentiles together because of His grace. If he did that.....well, you can trust Him to solve the problem on your behalf, He is faithful. Are you willing? Or have you bailed too early.**