



Worth A Fight

Discussion Guide
October 01, 2017
Acts 15:1-35

Questions for Study

** Before you begin discussing these questions, read through Acts 15:1-35 as a group.

- 1) In your own words, briefly summarize the issue that created controversy in Acts 15 (see especially vv. 1-5). Why is this a big deal?
- 2) Look closely at the end of Acts 15:1, where we read that some were teaching "Unless you are circumcised...you cannot be saved." Why did Paul and Barnabas react so strongly to this? (Hint: See Galatians 1:6-9, Galatians 2:15-16, Galatians 2:21.)
- 3) How did the leaders of the early church address this issue (Acts 15:6-21)? What stands out to you about how they handled things and the conclusion they made?
- 4) Paul and Barnabas clearly saw that adding ANYTHING to the grace of God and the finished work of Christ distorted the gospel (i.e., the "good news") of Jesus Christ. Explain why this is the case – *how does adding additional requirements for salvation distort and corrupt the gospel?*
- 5) For Paul and Barnabas to protect the true nature of the gospel, they had to understand the true nature of the gospel – the good news of what Jesus came to accomplish and offer. As a group, discuss what essential elements should be included in a Biblical understanding of the gospel. (A few passages that can provide some help include 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Galatians 2:15-21; Ephesians 2:1-10.)
- 6) As Christians in the 21st century, we may not be tempted to require circumcision as a condition for salvation, but there can be other things we unconsciously or consciously elevate to "requirement" status – additional things that can take away from the grace of God and the finished work of Christ. What are some of these "additional requirements" we might look to for right standing before God that take away from the finished work of Christ for us?
- 7) In light of your response to the previous question, how does the truth you've learned in Acts 15:1-35 affect the way you think about these "additional requirements" you look to for establishing or maintaining your right standing before God?
- 8) Give some attention as a group to the grace of God and the finished work of Christ. What feelings / responses should these biblical truths draw out in us?
- 9) What is one practical step of application you need to take because of what you've learned from Acts 15:1-35? Share this with your group, and pray together for these things before finishing.
- 10) Challenge: Memorize Galatians 2:21: "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"