

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

III THE ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH Acts 13-28

LESSON 14 ~ The Church Council at Jerusalem ~ Acts 15:1-35

KEY VERSE

So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them [the Gentiles] by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them purifying their hearts by faith (Acts 15:8, 9).

PONDER¹

READ Acts 15:1-35.

WRITE the *word, phrase, or verse* that spoke to you the most. Explain. _____

DISPUTE OVER CIRCUMCISION

READ Acts 15:1-5.

1. What did the men from Judea² teach the brethren (v. 1)? _____

3

2. How did Paul and Barnabas react to their teaching (v. 2)? _____

3. How did they bring great joy to the brethren in Phoenicia⁴ and Samaria⁵ (v. 3)? _____

4. When Paul and Barnabas came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the Apostles, and elders, why did the believing sect of Pharisees⁶ dispute the conversion of the Gentiles (vv. 4, 5)?

¹ PONDER: think about and consider carefully God's spiritual truths as revealed in the Word of God.

² Judea: In the time of Jesus, Palestine was divided into three provinces: Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.

³ circumcised: some Jewish Christians believed that Gentiles had to become Jews first, before they became Christians, by being circumcised and keeping the Law of Moses.

⁴ Phoenicia: the land north of Palestine on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

⁵ Samaria: In the time of Jesus, Palestine was divided into three provinces: Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.

⁶ Pharisees: a legalistic party among the Jews that believed in immortality of the soul, resurrection of the body, and the existence of angels and spirits.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

READ Acts 15:6-21.

1. Who came together to consider the matter of the Gentiles needing to be circumcised for salvation (v. 6)?

2. After much disputing, what did Peter conclude about . . .

the Gentile believers (vv. 7-9)? _____

the disputing sect of the Pharisee who believed (v. 10)? _____

what the Apostles and the new church believed (v. 11)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

What do the following Scriptures say about God's grace for salvation.

Romans 3:23, 24 _____

Ephesians 2:4-8 _____

Titus 2:11 _____

Titus 3:4-7 _____

PERSONAL

How have you experienced the Lord's grace in your life? _____

⁷ yoke: heavy wooden instrument put on two farm animals in order to bind them together; symbolic of an instrument of bondage and hardship that improperly linked Jews and Gentiles together.

3. What did Barnabas and Paul declare to a multitude who listened in silence (Acts 15:12)? _____

4. Speaking of Gentile Christians, what did James teach about . . .

what Simon Peter declared (vv. 13, 14)? _____

what the prophets agree on and God has known from eternity (vv. 15-18)? _____

what James judges (vv. 19, 20)? _____

Moses⁸ (v. 21)? _____

THE JERUSALEM DECREE⁹

READ Acts 15:22-29.

1. Who did the Holy Spirit lead the Apostles, elders, and the whole church to send with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch (vs. 22)?

2. What did the letter that was sent with them to the Gentile churches declare about circumcision (vs. 23-29)?

⁸ Moses: the Law of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy).

⁹ DECREE: ordinance, dogma, law; the first letter written to the church by the Apostles and elders.

CONTINUING MINISTRY IN SYRIA

READ Acts 15:30-35.

- 1. After they gathered the multitude together to read the letter, how did the multitude respond (vv. 30, 31)?

- 2. Being prophets¹⁰, how did Judas and Silas exhort the multitude (v. 32)?

- 3. What did these church delegates go on to do (vv. 33-35)?

WRITE out the KEY VERSE.

*And they continued steadfastly
in the Apostles Doctrine and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.
Acts 2:42*

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Due to the holy nature of God, the first letter of all references to Him,
His holy name, and His Word have been capitalized.

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¹⁰ prophets: ministers of the Word of God; Christian teachers.