



unexpected

THE DIVINE ⇌ IN BETWEEN

ACTS 15:1-35

handling conflict among Christians

PROBLEM: Pharisees were promoting a works-based salvation.

*But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers,
"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." v. 1*

SOLUTION: Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

"But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." v. 11

CONCLUSION: Christians who are saved, and unified, by grace are at peace.

And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. v. 31

To handle conflict in a God-honoring way ...

1. Pursue a face-to-face _____ .

And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. v. 2

2. Listen to the other person's _____ .

When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses." vv. 4-5

3. Separate what is biblical from what is _____ .

"And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith." vv. 8-9

4. Search the Scriptures for _____ .

"And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written ..." v. 15

5. Consider what you can do for the sake of _____ .

"Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood." vv. 19-20

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Romans 12:18

SERMON DEVOTIONAL STUDY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His truth and wisdom as you go through this lesson.

1. Read Acts 15:1-35. What was the nature of this conflict in the early church? Why was agreement on this issue so critical?

“THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN, and always will be, only one way to be saved. No one expressed that truth any clearer than the apostle Paul when he penned the familiar words, ‘For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast’ (Eph 2:8-9). ... Taken together, these speeches constitute one of the strongest defenses of that truth in Scripture. It has well been said that Acts 15 is the Magna Carta of the Christian church. The speeches of Peter, Paul and Barnabas, and James present six proofs that salvation is solely by grace: past revelation, the gift of the Spirit, cleansing from sin, the inability of the law to save, the fact of miracles, and the prophetic promise. ... Therefore, based on all that had been said, James, as head of the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 12:17), gave his judgment that they not trouble those who were turning to God from among the Gentiles. Keeping the law and observing rituals were not requirements for salvation. The Judaizers were to be forbidden to trouble the Gentiles by teaching otherwise.”

JOHN MACARTHUR

2. What are some issues that cause conflict among believers today?

3. From this passage and the sermon notes, describe carefully the process of resolving this early conflict. What can we learn from the way the Jewish and Gentile leaders worked toward resolution?

4. Why were Gentile believers given a list of four behaviors from which to abstain, even though they did not have to be circumcised or obey the law of Moses to be saved? What did the Jewish believers also agree to do, and why?

5. If we are saved by God’s grace through faith in Christ, where do obedience or duty fit in? What about showing love for, and deference to, other believers? Note relevant Scripture passages.

6. Read 1 Corinthians 8. Note the serious language Paul uses in his admonition. How do Paul’s words instruct you on what you should do for the sake of unity in conflict?

A WONDERFUL OFFER

Being a Christian isn’t based on membership in a local church or keeping a set of rules. It involves a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and an understanding of who He is and what He has done to provide man with a way to experience God’s love for us. Here’s how to know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior:

1. Realize that you are sinful and separated from God. (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6)
2. Recognize that the penalty for your sin is death—eternal separation from God and all that is good. (Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:27)
3. Understand that Jesus Christ took the penalty for your sin by dying in your place and that He rose again. (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
4. Receive the free gift of salvation by trusting in Christ alone as your Savior. (Romans 4:4-5; Ephesians 2:8-9)
“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 NASB) You can use this prayer to express your decision to God:
“Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for me and rose from the dead. I trust in Him alone as the only way to get right with You. Thank You for the forgiveness of sins and the eternal life I now have. Amen.”

For more about having a personal relationship with Jesus visit www.ccbcfamily.org/nextsteps.

COMING UP AT CHRIST CHAPEL

Here’s a glimpse at what you need to know for this week at Christ Chapel. If you’d like to find out even more, visit www.ccbcfamily.org/events.

THE 5 P.M. IS COMING BACK Fort Worth Campus, as you look around the room, you’ve probably noticed there’s not a lot of wiggle room! It’s evident that God is moving in our communities as more people begin attending our church, and as God moves hearts to hear the gospel, we want to create more space for that opportunity to happen. So, we are opening a third service! This won’t begin without your help. Will you pray about moving your service time to 5 p.m.? Text PIONEER to 24253!

HOME GROUPS The Christian life is meant to be lived in community and Home Groups are a great way to do that! Each week you’ll pray, learn and do life with other believers, growing deeper in your faith and helping others do the same. This fall, we’ll have special content that you won’t want to miss out on – so check out a Home Group near you! Find your group at www.ccbcfamily.org/homegroups.

SIDE-BY-SIDE If you want to be used to bless young women as they grow in their faith, then join us Saturday, Sept. 30 for this Side-By-Side Workshop. Together, we’ll go over what it looks like to practically disciple others, hear testimonies of other women who are mentors and know how to deepen another woman’s walk with God. Learn more by visiting www.ccbcfamily.org/sbs.

BAND OF BROTHERS: THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED Starting this fall, Band of Brothers will continue their journey through Exodus and witness the steadfast faithfulness God has for his people. To learn more about Band of Brothers, and this study, visit www.ccbcfamily.org/bob.

WOMEN IN THE WORD: DAVID’S SONGS A place to connect, grow and learn, Women in the Word is a ministry designed for women of all ages to be in community around God’s Word! This fall, join the Women in the Word study on Psalms at www.ccbcfamily.org/wiw.

JOIN US FOR THIS YEAR’S BRAVE EVENT Partnering with HopeLocal, we’re hosting a time to share ways for us to support and care for families in the foster and adoption community. From opportunities to mentor to meeting the organizations making a difference – it will be a sweet time together! Learn more by visiting www.ccbcfamily.org/brave.

LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS Our neighbors around the church have asked us to consider driving a little more slowly on Sunday mornings. Thank you in advance for serving and loving them well in this way.



LOOKING FOR THE CONNECT CARD? Scan the QR code here to fill out a Connect Card. Our team will reach out this week to answer your questions and tell you more about Christ Chapel.

IF YOU’D LIKE TO GIVE AN OFFERING TODAY, YOU CAN DO SO STRAIGHT FROM YOUR PHONE. The process is quick and easy—text GIVE to 24253 to get started.