

CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST DALTON, GA



# Mindful LIVING

INTENTIONALITY & THE EARLY CHURCH

**RESOLVING CONFLICT**

JANUARY 26, 2025

LOVE GOD ■ LOVE OTHERS ■ MAKE DISCIPLES

## INTENTIONALITY & THE EARLY CHURCH

# RESOLVING CONFLICT

## CAUSES OF CONFLICT

**COLLIDING CULTURES:** many problems stem from cultural and generational differences (Ac. 15:1; 6:1; 10:14, 28; 21:19-21).

**EXTREME OPINIONS:** major problems occur when someone insists their way is the right way and the **ONLY** way (Ac. 15:1b, 5, 36-41; see also Rom. 4:15; 5:13).

**ADDING TO GOD'S WORD:** some of the most troubling problems occur when we apply scripture based upon implication instead of explicit command (Ac. 15:24, 28).

**WE MUST PREFER THE BIBLICAL WAY OVER THE SAFE WAY. NOTHING IS WRONG WITH BEING CAREFUL; EVERYTHING IS WRONG WITH CALLING SOMETHING SIN THAT GOD HASN'T.**

## CURES FOR CONFLICT

**NO CURE:** sometimes the best option is for conflicting parties to part ways so they can be of service elsewhere (Ac. 15:36-41; Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14).

**LISTEN TO ONE ANOTHER:** get out of the echo chamber, get out of your feelings, and listen to people who are not like you (Ac. 14:27; 15:3-4, 12, 18-20; see also 18:24-28).

**PRIORITIZE THE GOSPEL:** the cross of Christ breaks down cultural barriers and unites us in the same purpose (Ac. 15:19; 16:3; Rom. 1:15-17; Gal. 3:26-29).

**WHEN A CHURCH FAILS TO MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS, AVOID FOOLISH DISPUTES, AND NEGLECTS THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF SCRIPTURE, IT HAS LOST ITS PURPOSE TO EXIST.**

# REFLECTION & ACTION Q<sup>s</sup>

## SERIES STATEMENT

"WHAT WAS FUNDAMENTAL FOR THE EARLY CHURCH HAS BECOME SUPPLEMENTAL FOR THE MODERN CHURCH"

Reflection: We do not read of a Jewish church and a Gentile church, an educated church and an uneducated church, an older congregation and a younger congregation, or a racially segregated church. Why do you think the early church was able to overcome such significant cultural, social, and generational differences? Explain.

## MESSAGE STATEMENT

"IF THE GOSPEL IS AT STAKE, DEFEND IT;  
IF TRADITION OR OPINION IS AT STAKE, ADMIT IT."

Reflection: How can we discern when a conflict involves a core gospel truth versus a matter of tradition or opinion? What are some examples of traditions that are needed and helpful for a local congregation? What are some areas a church must be willing to defend and uphold?

Action: What steps can we take to build meaningful relationships with people in our congregation who are different from us? How would you define someone who is 'different' from you, and how can you take the first step toward connecting with them?



# Scripture READING

## ACTS 15:1-5

“AND CERTAIN MEN CAME DOWN FROM JUDEA AND TAUGHT THE BRETHREN, “UNLESS YOU ARE CIRCUMCISED ACCORDING TO THE CUSTOM OF MOSES, YOU CANNOT BE SAVED.” THEREFORE, WHEN PAUL AND BARNABAS HAD NO SMALL DISSENSION AND DISPUTE WITH THEM, THEY DETERMINED THAT PAUL AND BARNABAS AND CERTAIN OTHERS OF THEM SHOULD GO UP TO JERUSALEM, TO THE APOSTLES AND ELDERS, ABOUT THIS QUESTION. SO, BEING SENT ON THEIR WAY BY THE CHURCH, THEY PASSED THROUGH PHOENICIA AND SAMARIA, DESCRIBING THE CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES; AND THEY CAUSED GREAT JOY TO ALL THE BRETHREN. AND WHEN THEY HAD COME TO JERUSALEM, THEY WERE RECEIVED BY THE CHURCH AND THE APOSTLES AND THE ELDERS; AND THEY REPORTED ALL THINGS THAT GOD HAD DONE WITH THEM. BUT SOME OF THE SECT OF THE PHARISEES WHO BELIEVED ROSE UP, SAYING, “IT IS NECESSARY TO CIRCUMCISE THEM, AND TO COMMAND THEM TO KEEP THE LAW OF MOSES.”” (ACTS 15:1-5, NKJV)



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