

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FROM MARCH 12/13 SERMON

If you missed the sermon, check out biblechapel.org/sermons.

ICEBREAKER: Since winter is slowly ending and spring is right around the corner, the question is...what is your favorite season of the year and why?

1. Paul's letter to the Galatians provides some details of what was taking place in Acts 15. [Read Galatians 2:11-14](#). The "certain men who came from James" are the same men in Acts 15:1 who came from Judea.

Why did Paul confront Peter and Barnabas? Was he justified in doing so? Why or Why not?

2. Acts 15 describes what is called "The Jerusalem Council." This group of leaders took decisive action to protect the doctrine and unity of the church. [Read Acts 15:1-11](#). What are some leadership lessons you see in this account?
3. The party of the Pharisees (sometimes called the "circumcised party" or "Judaizers") wanted Christianity to be trust in Jesus plus adherence to the Old Testament law. What are some things people try to add to the Gospel today? Jesus plus what?
4. [Read Acts 15:19-21](#). James gave some things for the Gentile Christians to abstain from. Why are these things important for unity and community in the early church?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Galatians 2:11-14 ESV

Paul Opposes Peter

¹¹ But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹² For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.^[a] ¹³ And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

Acts 15:1-11 1:12 ESV

The Jerusalem Council

15 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." ² 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. ³ So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.^[a] ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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."

⁶ The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. ⁷ And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should

hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸ And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, ⁹ and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

¹² Then the LORD said to me, “You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it.”

Acts 15:19-21 ESV

¹⁹ Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, ²⁰ 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. ²¹ For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”

Source: biblegateway.com