

# GPS : An Intro To Acts 15

*June 23, 2018*

**Acts 15:1-2** Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.

## I. Two Important Questions to Consider from Acts 15

1. *How is a person saved?*

2. *How does a saved person live?*

**Acts 15:19** It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.

**Acts 15:11** No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

**Ephesians 2:8-9** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

### A. Salvation comes through faith alone in Jesus Christ and not by Jesus-plus.

**Acts 15:20** Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.

### B. We are saved by faith and not works. But our faith affects our works once we are saved.

**Acts 15:23-27** With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing.

**Acts 15:28** It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:

**Acts 15:29** You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

**Acts 15:30-31** So the men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.

### **C. There is encouragement in the clarity that comes from God's Word.**

**Acts 15:29** You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

## **II. Three Concerns in The Context**

*A. Context Concern #1: Idolatry*

*B. Context Concern #2: Communion*

*C. Context Concern #3: Spiritual Maturity*

## **III. A G.P.S. For How To Live**

*G — God | P — People | S — Self*

- **Rules without reasons become irrelevant.**

**A. G — God**

### **1. Does this decision or action glorify God?**

**Colossians 3:17** And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**1 Corinthians 10:31** So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

### **2. You must care about what God thinks to receive what God has to say.**

## B. P — People

### 1. Does this decision or action encourage or discourage other people?

**1 Corinthians 9:19-23** Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

### 2. The actions of your life act upon the lives of others.

**1 Corinthians 10:32-33** Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

## C. S — Self

### 1. Would this decision or action cause me to be closer to or further away God?

**Hebrews 3:12** See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

**1 Corinthians 10:12** So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

*"I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church." ~ Charles Spurgeon*

### 2. Distance often happens by steps and not leaps.