



ACTS CHAPTER 15 (FACILITATOR)

Discussion Starter

- Do you consider yourself to be someone who embraces change or resists change? Why?

Opening Prayer

- Ask if someone wants to volunteer before leading the prayer.

Tell the Story

Read the Story (Acts 15:1-41)

Read out loud as a group, 5 verses per person. Let everyone know they can opt out if they would like.

Breaking it Down

- All questions should be utilized as appropriate based upon group dynamics to facilitate both understanding and discussion. Don't feel tied to the questions and don't feel like you have to get through every question. Follow the Spirit's lead! All questions are a matter of perspective in some way BUT there are specific questions that this is truer of and these questions have been indicated to be perspective/opinion questions.

Acts 15:1-5

- As the church grew, there were large numbers of Gentiles that were converted to Jesus and became members of the church. This did create some problems because the Jews came from a background with strict rules and regulations and the Gentiles did not. As a result, the church had to address some of the issues this created between individuals with such incredibly diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Did the men who came from Judea and were teaching about physical circumcision have bad motives?
 - It wasn't that they had bad motives, but they were speaking and teaching from what they knew and what they had experienced and what they knew and what they had experienced was incomplete when compared to who Jesus was and what He did.



- Has there ever been a time that what you thought you knew about God was actually wrong and/or actually wasn't the entire story about God? How did you respond?
 - These are opinion and perspective questions so please listen as the facilitator.

Acts 15:6-20

- How would you characterize how the apostles and elders handled this question about whether or not converts needed to be circumcised and what should this teach the church today?
 - The apostles and elders came together without any agendas (hidden or otherwise) with the exception of being led to the best solution from the direction of the Holy Spirit. Their gathering wasn't a debate of opinions and preferences but a discussion around God and His truth. The church should still learn a great deal from this today because we are called not to hold up our preferences and opinions but rather God's truth.
- In Acts 15:11, Peter sets forth to the apostles and elders what is most important? What was it and why is this important to understand?
 - Peter set forth the grace of Jesus as the only grounds that would save both Jews and Gentiles. This is important to understand because salvation doesn't rely on what you and I do but, on the work, and graciousness of God, which we are called to receive and accept.

Acts 15:21-35

- Notice in verses 28 & 29 the final solution that the apostles and elders agreed about that was sent out to the entire church. Why was and is this significant?
 - The apostles and elders didn't come up with a laundry list of rules and restrictions that classified people as "in" and "out." Rather, there were only two restrictions that were listed. This is incredibly significant because many times as disciples, our biases and preferences get in the way of the truth of God's word and it becomes easy for us to categorize people as being "in" or



“out” based upon what we think or feel. For the apostles and elders, they didn’t meet and agree upon these restrictions to classify people as “in” or “out” but to grow people up and mature them in Jesus.

- Do you classify and categorize people in your mind? How and why? Do you believe this is good or bad?
 - These are opinion and perspective questions so please listen as the facilitator.

Acts 15:36-41

- What are your initial thoughts about this disagreement between Paul and Barnabas regarding John Mark?
 - This is an opinion and perspective question so please listen as the facilitator.
- What are some things that we can learn about this situation, especially when we read of Paul calling for John Mark at the end of his (Paul’s) life in 2 Timothy 4:11 to be encouraged by him?
 - There are going to be times when disciples of Jesus disagree.
 - There are going to be times when these disagreements may lead to a separation. The separation between Paul and Barnabas occurred AFTER
 - they had taken the time to discuss/debate/argue about their disagreement
 - no viable solution could be reached between them
 - All three men continued to be on mission for Jesus and His kingdom rather than isolating themselves and/or living in bitterness and resentment.
 - All three men remained open to forgiving each other and open to the restoration of their relationships with each other.



- There are going to be times when I may not be the best person to mentor and equip another disciple.
- There are going to be times when I may see hope and potential in another person that others do not see and when I am called to “risk my neck” for that person.

Final Application

- What does this passage teach us about God?
- What does this passage teach us about mankind?
- What is a command to obey in this passage?
- What has God revealed in your life that needs changing?
- What truth can be applied to your life about the gospel?

Closing & Prayer Requests

- Have a designated person to capture and share (as appropriate) within the life group.
- What happens in life group, stays in life group.
- Don't forget get to confirm the next meeting date and time
- Also recruit someone to do the story for the following week (Acts 16)



ACTS CHAPTER 15 (STUDENT)

Discussion Starter

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Opening Prayer

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Acts 15:6-20

- How would you characterize how the apostles and elders handled this question about whether or not converts needed to be circumcised and what should this teach the church today?
- In Acts 15:11, Peter sets forth to the apostles and elders what is most important? What was it and why is this important to understand?

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- Notice in verses 28 & 29 the final solution that the apostles and elders agreed about that was sent out to the entire church. Why was and is this significant?
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Final Application

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