

Saved by Grace

Small group questions

Grappling with the freedom grace brings # 2– Acts 15

Leaders – if the questions make no sense or you don't know the answer – please contact bishop@bathurstanglican.org.au

1. How difficult is it for people to accept something that challenges or overturns a firm belief they've held for their entire life? How hard is it to shift entrenched views? (E.g., that Gentiles are unclean!?)
2. You may enjoy reading Acts 15:1-35 again. Did anything stand out for you from the passage? Or is there anything about which you need clarification?

THE ISSUE

3. Read vv1 and 5 again. What was the issue that gave rise to this first church council?
4. Why did Paul and Barnabas react so **strongly** to the request that the Gentiles be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses?

THE ARGUMENTS

5. List the arguments put forward:
 - a. v7
 - b. v8
 - c. v9
 - d. v10
 - e. v11
 - f. v12
 - g. vv13-18
6. Are you convinced? What was under threat if the arguments weren't accepted?

THE OUTCOME

7. James puts a motion to the meeting (vv19-21). What were the four things James suggested they ask the Gentiles to abstain from and why were they important?

THE IMPLICATIONS

Mark identified four implications. Reflect on them and what living in the light of these might mean for us:

8. We must recall again that we are saved only the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! To **add** anything to that is to **subtract** from the finished work of Christ.
9. Are there ways by which *we* make it difficult for new Christians or enquirers to come to Jesus today?
10. The burden of keeping the Old Testament law, was never ours to bear!
11. Are there ways in which we fail to distinctively set ourselves apart from the idol worship of those around us, thereby compromising the gospel? (This may be something for you also to reflect on privately.)

Praise God for his grace to Gentiles like us and pray that we will revel in and wrestle with the implications