



Acts 15

How to Handle Doctrinal Controversy

The Issue

Acts 15:1-5



- Conflicts arise as a result of growth and diversity
 - *Gentiles* – Acts 11:1-3, 19-22
- Every Christian brings baggage
 - *Pharisees' traditions* – v. 5
 - *Gentiles' idolatry* – v. 20
- Requiring what God does not require is sinful
 - *A different gospel* – Galatians 1:6-9

The Discussion

Acts 15:6-21



- Peter: “God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile with Cornelius” (v. 6-11, Acts 10-11)
- Barnabas and Saul: “God approved our teaching to the Gentiles on 1st journey” (v. 12, Acts 13-14)
- James: “God promised to welcome Gentiles into His house” (v. 13-21, Amos 9:11-12)

The Discussion

Acts 15:6-21



- Peter: “**God** made no distinction between Jew and Gentile with Cornelius” (v. 6-11, Acts 10-11)

Conclusion

- *God has shown that He accepts Gentiles without circumcision and on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ.*
- James: “**God** promised to welcome Gentiles into His house” (v. 13-21, Amos 9:11-12)

The Discussion

Acts 15:6-21



- God always communicates His will so we can understand
 - *Commanding or instructing directly (v. 15-18, 10:19-20)*
 - *Providing an example or precedent (v. 7-9, 10:44-48)*
 - *Implying a necessary conclusion (v. 11, 12, 11:17)*
- > *For instance, God's 1st century pattern for the church applies to 21st century (1 Timothy 3:14-15)*

The Discussion

Acts 15:6-21



- God always communicates His will so we can understand
- God's communication is always sufficient for us
 - *Apostles (v. 6), Holy Spirit (v. 28), and prophets (v. 32)*
 - *But, they relied on information already revealed*
- > *For instance, Jesus' teaching on marriage and sexuality applies to all modern-day issues (Matthew 19:4-6)*

The Resolution

Acts 15:22-35



- Anything not from God should be rejected
 - *Silence does not authorize (v. 24)*
 - *Trace the source – God or people? (Luke 20:3-4)*

The Resolution

Acts 15:22-35



- Anything not from God should be rejected
- Unity in truth is the goal
 - *Become of one mind in God's will (v. 25, 1 Cor. 1:10)*
 - *Can't build God's house on two or more foundations (Ephesians 4:1-6)*

The Resolution

Acts 15:22-35



- Anything not from God should be rejected
- Unity in truth is the goal
- Truth rejoices, encourages, and strengthens the heart
 - *The brethren's response (v. 31-32)*
 - *Psalms 19:7-10*



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