

# ACTS 15: THE SAME KIND OF DIFFERENT AS ME

## SUMMARY

Some men were teaching the Gentiles needed to be circumcised in order to be saved. Paul and Barnabas have a great debate against those teaching false qualifications and went ahead giving details of the conversions of the Gentiles. There is much rejoicing until they reach Jerusalem and the Pharisees argue for circumcision. Peter speaks up and says, “We believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, the same way as they also are (15:11).” James agreed with Peter that they should not trouble the Gentiles with ritual laws, but he knew they had contact with Jewish Christians so he gave proposal in which they could fellowship together without giving unnecessary offense. The assembly agreed with James’s proposal and drafted a letter to the church in Antioch. Paul has a disagreement with Barnabas concerning whether to take Mark. Barnabas and Mark separate and Paul chooses Silas to take with him on his second missionary journey.

## QUESTIONS

- What was the main disagreement between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christian converts (15:1)? What did Peter argue (15:7-11)?
- James suggests to warn Gentile believers against what (15:20)?
- Why did Paul and Barnabas separate (15:37-40)? Paul doesn’t want to travel with Mark at first, but read what he says later about him (2 Tim. 4:11). We might have disagreement, but we seek reconciliation.

## ILLUSTRATION

- **Phobia:** Look up Lepidopterophobia, Chromophobia, Coulrophobia. You wouldn’t dress up as a clown to a party of your friend who is terrified of clowns. In a similar way, Gentiles were asked not to give offense to Jewish Christians who grew up and held to certain Mosaic laws. You wouldn’t want to prepare pork (unclean, hooved animal) for a meal at your home if you invite a Jewish Christian to your home.

## LIVING IT OUT

- Confess to God ways you have judged people and counted them unworthy to come to our church or for us to fellowship with him or her. Pray that God will break down your prejudice and break open your heart to reach anyone for Jesus.

## PRAYER

- Pray for an openness to reach **anyone** for Jesus.

## READ FOR THIS WEEK ACTS 15

### MAIN TOPICS

- First doctrinal controversy in the church—how does a person become a Christian?
- Is justification by faith and works or faith alone?
- Old and New Covenants: A conflict or Cohesiveness
- Role of qualified leadership discerning doctrinal trust: Scripture plus tradition or Scripture alone?

### CROSS REFERENCES

- Galatians 1-3

### CHILDREN BIBLES/APP

- **Big Picture Story Bible:** “God’s New Kingdom Spreads, Part 24, 418-426.

### MEMORY VERSE

**GALATIANS 3:10, 13**

## READ FOR NEXT WEEK ACTS 16

