

The Debate

The end of the first missionary
journey

Acts 15:1--12

The Debate

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The truth challenge--

Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

Is it important?

...instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. 1 Timothy 1:4

But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. 2 Timothy 2:23

Is it understandable?

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed...Acts 12:5

...circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee.

Philippians 3:5

But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. 2 Timothy 2:23

It is important— “we are saved by grace”

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, by a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

Galatians 1:6--8

2. Statements of Concern

Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren. When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, “it is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.” The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. After there had been much debate, ...

vs. 3—7:a

3. Decision Made/Communicated

...Peter stood up and said to them,
“Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that you by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit just as He also did to us;...

And He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciple a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

vs. 7b--12

History of God to Gentiles—Peter

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

Acts 10:44-48

Why add to the Gentiles?

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. Hebrews 10:1

Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions..

But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe...Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. Galatians 3:19—24

What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law...Romans 7:7

Barnabas and Paul affirm the work of God—

All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

Acts 15:12

Communicated to all the churches by
credible men---

...it seemed good to us, having
become of one mind, to select men to
send to you with our beloved Barnabas
and Paul, men who have risked their
lives for the name of the Lord Jesus
Christ. Acts 15:25