

Bold and Powerful
Week's reading: Acts 14:1-15:41
Discussion Guide: Nov 5, 2023

CHECK UP:

Memory work: So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. - Acts 13:3

In what ways did you strive to live according to the Holy Spirit's prompting this past week?

OPEN:

- Who did you B.L.E.S.S. this past week? What action steps did you take?
 - o How did you live bold and powerful this past week?
- What stood out to you from this past week's reading?
 - o What questions do you have?

READ and ASK: Acts 15:1-21

- What was the question that was being asked in the minds of the Jewish leaders? (vs 1-5) (What were the trouble makers teaching?)
 - o Why was this issue so important? How was this issue bigger than just the subject of circumcision?
 - o What might be some comparable issues in the church today? What beliefs or practices do Christians add to the gospel?
- What did Peter emphasize when he spoke to the counsel?
 - o What did Paul and Barnabas emphasize?
 - o What did James emphasize?
 - What was James's verdict?
- Carefully describe the process of resolving this conflict (vs 6-21).
 - o What do you think we can learn about resolution of a disagreement from the way the Jewish leaders worked toward resolution?

APPLY:

- When dealing with difficult issues, what do we need to include in the decision-making process?

- What areas of your faith create conflict within you?
 - o Where can you get help resolving an issue you are unsure about?
- The Church leaders seem very concerned about the integrity of the gospel and the unity of the church.
 - o What should that look like for us?
 - How do we protect the key truths of the gospel?
 - What does it look like to work for unity? (it won't happen by accident).
- A key motto of the Restoration Movement is "in essentials, unity, in non-essentials (or opinions), liberty, and in all things love." A great debate/discussion can arise around the question of essentials.
 - o Devin is growing to believe that essentials are two things: 1) The baptism confession (Jesus as savior and Lord), and 2) the fruit confirming the truth of that confession (the evidence that Jesus is Lord in someone's life).
 - o How would that definition of essentials keep us unified, but also give us the opportunity for correction? How would it also leave room for opinions/non-essentials?
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- NEXT STEP: In what way do you need to strive for unity while standing firm on the core truths of the gospel?

Memory Work:

It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. - Acts 15:19

Next Week's Reading:

Acts 16:1-17:34