





**Conflict
in the
Church**

Acts 15

Clash of Cultures

1. Ethnic cultures
2. Religious cultures
3. Class cultures
4. Demographic cultures (family, location, generation etc)

Rarely a theological issue

Here is both ethnic and theological!

Acts 15: Sitrep (*Situation Report*)

1. Two Antioch's (one in Pisidia; one in Syria)
2. This is the one in Syria
3. Antioch to Jerusalem = 460 km (*Caboolture to Gladstone*)
4. Paul went on three missionary journeys + trip to Rome
5. This is after the 1st Journey (Acts 13-14)
6. *And* before the 2nd Journey (Acts 15:36-18:23)

Acts 15: Sitrep *(Continued)*

6. Jewish Christians state their case (15:1, 5)
7. Paul & Barnabas disagree with them & debate (2)
8. Issue not resolved.
9. Escalated to Jerusalem to apostles & elders (2)
10. Testified along the way (3)
11. Meeting takes place (5-21)
12. Outcomes (22-35)
13. Oh no... another disagreement (36-41)

The issue

1. What is necessary to be a disciple of Jesus?
 - ❑ *God's forgiveness through the death of Jesus, OR,*
 - ❑ *God's forgiveness + obedience to the Law of Moses*
2. Answer: "We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved" (Acts 15:11)
3. John 6:29 *Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." (NIV)*

Jesus answered, "This is the work of God: that you believe [adhere to, trust in, rely on, and have faith] in the One whom He has sent." (AMP)

Meeting Process

1. Acknowledge there is a problem
2. Clearly define the issue
3. Deal with it openly
4. Hear both sides
5. Examine Scripture
6. Seek wise counsel
7. Make a decision
8. Announce the outcome

What did we learn? (Acts 15:36-41)

1. Barnabas & Paul have a “**sharp disagreement**”
2. Conflict *will* occur (“when” *not* “if”)
3. Disciples should seek to deal with conflict properly
4. Not always easy to put into practice
5. Emotions & biases will get in the way
6. Discipleship (*ministry + mission*) won out in the end

Change causes problems

1. Seven last words of the church:

“We’ve never done it this way before.”

2. Seven first words of the disciple:

“I can do all things through Christ.”