

## Acts Chapter 15

1. And certain *men* came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

A. And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren,

1. certain men

a. This term "certain men" shows that they were not born again. They claimed to be believers under the authority of the Jerusalem church, but they were not. When a believer is mentioned in the book of Acts the phrase "certain disciple" is used. Salvation is based on faith in Jesus alone, not Jesus and your own performance under the Law.

2. came down- Gr. *katerchomai*

a. Jerusalem was a higher elevation. So, they came down.

3. Judea

a. Jerusalem was the capital of Judea, so Jerusalem is implied here.

4. taught- Gr. *didasko*

a. Just because someone is teaching and is using the Bible does not make it right or accurate. The Word must be rightly divided. These men were trying to mix the law and belief in Jesus.

5. brethren- Gr. *adelphos*

B. Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses,

1. circumcised- Gr. *peritemno*

a. These legalists pulled out one command of the Law, circumcision, and ignored all the other ones. The Law is a composite of 613 commandments. You can't pick and choose. Legalists will always do this. They realize you can't keep all the of the Law, so they will pick their favorites and preach them hot and heavy and leave the rest out. The Law does not give you that option. If you are going to live by the Law, you have to do all of it. If you stumble in or break one of the commandments, you are guilty of breaking all of them. [James 2:10](#)

b. If they had become circumcised then they would have been a debtor to keep all of the rest of the Law. [Gal. 5:3](#)

2. **custom-** Gr. **ethos-** *usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite*

3. **Moses**

a. God gave the Law through Moses to Israel. So, his name is synonymous with the Law itself.

C. **you cannot be saved**

1. **saved-** Gr. **sozo**

a. It was actually the opposite. You cannot be saved by what these men were teaching, which was law keeping plus Jesus. Paul brought this out clearly in [Gal. 5:2](#).

2. **Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.**

A. **Therefore,**

B. **when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them,**

1. **small-** Gr. **oligos**

2. **dissension-** Gr. **stasis-** *strife, insurrection*

3. **dispute-** Gr. **suzetesis-** *mutual questioning, disputation, discussion*

a. Religious people love to dispute. Grace oriented people have a peace about them. They don't quarrel with people.

C. **they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem,**

1. **determined-** Gr. **tasso-** *to appoint mutually, i.e. agree upon*

a. These are of the church at Antioch. We see this by the next verse.

2. **go up-** Gr. **anabaino**

3. **Jerusalem**

a. *That Jerusalem would be regarded by them as the source of authority in the Christian church, as it had been among the Jews.* -Barnes Commentary

D. **to the apostles and elders,**

1. **apostles-** Gr. **apostolos**

a. To the twelve apostles of Jesus.

2. **elders-** Gr. **presbuteros**

a. These probably included those who were in the upper room

on the day of Pentecost.

**E. about this question**

**1. question-** Gr. **zetema**

a. The question was if the Gentiles needed to observe the Law to be saved. The answer would be no, but they still gave them some rules. Later James would say the Gentiles did not have to keep the Law, but the Jews who accepted Christ did. Paul would be swayed by James into hypocrisy in this later on.

**3. So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren.**

A. So,

**B. being sent on their way by the church,**

**1. sent on their way-** Gr. **propempo**

**2. church-** Gr. **ekklesia**

a. The church directed Paul and Barnabas to go down to Jerusalem to consult with the elders there. This was not directed by the religious zealots that caused the problems in Antioch. It is not wise to be intimidated by or yield to the demands of legalists.

**C. they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria,**

**1. passed-** Gr. **dierchomai**

**2. Phoenicia-** means *land of palm trees*

a. *The name of a haven in Crete on the south coast. The name was no doubt derived from the Greek word for the palm tree, which Theophrastus says was indigenous in the island. -Smith Bible Dictionary*

**3. Samaria-** means *guardianship*

a. *This city is situated 30 miles north of Jerusalem and about six miles to the northwest of Shechem, in a wide basin-shaped valley, six miles in diameter, encircled with high hills, almost on the edge of the great plain which borders upon the Mediterranean. In the centre of this basin, which is on a lower level than the valley of Shechem, rises a less elevated hill, with steep yet accessible sides and a long fiat top. This hill was chosen by Omri as the site of the capital of the kingdom of*

*Israel.* -Smith Bible Dictionary

**D. describing the conversion of the Gentiles,**

1. **describing-** Gr. **ekdeigeomai-** *to narrate in full or wholly*

2. **conversion-** Gr. **epistrophe-** *a turning towards, a turning about; in NT met. conversion*

a. The grace of God will turn your wagon around 180 degrees!

3. **Gentiles-** Gr. **ethnos**

**E. and they caused great joy to all the brethren**

1. **great-** Gr. **mezas**

2. **joy-** Gr. **chara**

a. The grace of God will bring you mega joy! Living under the Law will bring mega depression!

b. There will be great joy when you realize God has killed His fatted calf [Jesus] for you. [Luk 15:23](#)

3. **brethren-** Gr. **adelphos**

a. These were believers who were not caught up in the legalism of the Law. However, at Jerusalem not all the brethren were joyful over the Gentiles being saved and blessed outside of keeping the Law.

b. Sometimes what will kill the joy of a new believer who is walking in grace by faith is going to church and having the Law taught to them.

**4. And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.**

**A. And when they had come to Jerusalem,**

1. **come-** Gr. **paraginomai-** *to newly arrive*

2. **Jerusalem**

a. This is where the church was started and the leadership in the church of Jerusalem was respected as the spiritual authority for the church. However, the leadership under James was legalistic and did not have the New Covenant revelation to the degree Paul had. Once the leaders at the church of Jerusalem that were directly under Jesus' ministry [i.e. the twelve apostles and James] died, the Jerusalem church no longer held authority over the universal church. Under

Catholicism they claim the Pope and the church of Rome has authority now over the universal church. This is erroneous. Authority has been dispersed to each local church.

**B. they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders,**

1. **received-** Gr. **apodechomai-** *to accept or receive from*

a. They were received from the church at Antioch.

b. We need to receive other Christians even if there is a disagreement among us.

2. **church-** Gr. **ekklesia**

3. **apostles-** Gr. **apostolos**

a. Twelve apostles

4. **elders-** Gr. **presbuteros**

a. These were among the 120 that were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost which was the beginning of the church.

**C. and they reported all things that God had done with them**

1. **reported-** Gr. **anaggello**

a. You can argue doctrine, but you can't argue with a testimony.

2. **done-** Gr. **poieo**

**5. But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses."**

**A. But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up,**

1. **sect-** Gr. **hairesis-** *strictly, a choice or option; hence, a religious sect, faction; by implication, discord, contention*

a. This word is translated as heresies in [Galatians 5:20](#) and is listed as a work of the flesh. Breaking up into your own sect and separating yourself from other Christians is a work of the flesh! There are a staggering 45,000 Christian denominations globally. This is a product of the flesh and not the Spirit of God.

2. **Pharisees-** Gr. **pharisaios-** *means set apart or separated ones*

a. Paul was once a member of the Pharisees.

b. *The Pharisees were a religious party or school among the Jews at the time of **Christ**, so called from **perishin**, the Aramaic form of the Hebrew word, **perushim**, "separated". The chief sects among the Jews were the Pharisees, the Sadducees and*

the Essenes, who may be described respectively as the Formalists, the Freethinkers and the Puritans. A knowledge of the opinion, and practices of the Pharisees, at the time of **Christ**, is of great importance, for entering deeply into the genius of the Christian religion. A cursory perusal of the Gospels is sufficient to show that **Christ's** teaching was, in some respects, thoroughly antagonistic to theirs. He denounced them, in the bitterest language; See [Mat 15:7-8](#); [Mat 23:5](#); [Mat 23:13-15](#); [Mat 23:23](#); [Mar 7:6](#); [Luk 11:42-44](#) and compare [Mar 7:1-5](#); [Mar 11:29](#); [Mar 12:19-20](#); [Luk 6:28](#); [Luk 6:37-42](#). To understand the Pharisees is, by contrast, an aid toward understanding the spirit of uncorrupted Christianity. The fundamental principle of all of the Pharisees, common to them with all orthodox modern Jews, is that, by the side of the written law, regarded as a summary of the principles and general laws of the Hebrew people, there was an oral law to complete, and to explain the written law, given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and transmitted by him by word of mouth. The first portion of the Talmud, called the **Mishna** or "second law", contains this oral law. It is a digest of the Jewish traditions and a compendium of the whole ritual law, and it came at length to be esteemed far above the sacred text. While it was the aim of **Jesus** to call men to the law of God itself as the supreme guide of life, the Pharisees, upon the pretence of maintaining it intact, multiplied minute precepts and distinctions, to such an extent that the whole life of the Israelite was hemmed in, and burdened on every side, by instructions so numerous and trifling, that the law was almost if not wholly lost sight of. These "traditions" as they were called, had long been gradually accumulating. Of the trifling character of these regulations, innumerable instances are to be found in the Mishna. Such were their washings before they could eat bread, and the special minuteness with which the forms of this washing were prescribed; their bathing when they returned from the market; their washing of cups, pots, brazen vessels, etc.; their fastings twice in the week, [Luk 18:12](#), as were their tithing; [Mat 23:23](#), and such, finally, were those minute and vexatious extensions

*of the law of the **Sabbath**, which must have converted God's gracious ordinance of the Sabbath's rest, into a burden and a pain. [Mat 12:1-13](#); [Mar 3:1-6](#); [Luk 18:10-17](#). -Smith Bible Dictionary*

3. The name Pharisee means "separated one". However, they were not separated unto God, but they separated themselves from others and held themselves better and more holy than others. This stinks in the nostrils of God!

3. **believed**- Gr. **pisteuo**

a. They believed Jesus was the Messiah.

4. **rose up**- Gr. **exanistemi**

a. They rose up in pride and self-righteousness.

**B. saying,**

**C. It is necessary to circumcise them,**

1. **circumcise**- Gr. **peritemno**

a. Obviously in these religious men's minds, women were excluded or were on a lower standard till that day as they were under the OT times because they could not be circumcised.

The new birth deals with the circumcision of the heart, so men and women can receive salvation equally and be on the same footing. [Rom. 2:29](#)

**D. and to command them to keep the law of Moses**

1. **command**- Gr. **paraggello**

a. Legalistic people are all into commands and commanding people. New Testament grace gives loving exhortations.

2. **keep**- Gr. **tereo**

a. No one has or can keep the law of Moses except for Jesus. You can't keep the law partially. You either keep all of it all the time or you have broken all of it.

3. **law**- Gr. **nomos**

a. It was called the law of Moses because he was the mediator by which Israel received it.

**6. Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.**

A. **apostles**- Gr. **apostolos**

B. **elders**- Gr. **presbuteros**

C. **came together**- Gr. **sunago**

1. This is the first recorded church council and Paul's third recorded visit to Jerusalem.

2. *Throughout its history, the church's leaders have met to settle doctrinal issues. Historians point to seven ecumenical councils in the church's early history, especially the councils of Nicea (A.D. 325) and Chalcedon (A.D. 451). Yet, the most important council was the first one—the Jerusalem Council—because it established the answer to the most vital doctrinal question of all: "What must a person do to be saved?" The apostles and elders defied efforts to impose legalism and ritualism as necessary prerequisites for salvation. They forever affirmed that salvation is totally by grace through faith in Christ alone.* -MacArthur commentary

D. **consider**- Gr. **eido**- *to see or know*

E. **matter**- Gr. **logos**- *word or matter*

1. They came together to consider the question at hand with what the Word of God has to say. It does not matter what man thinks. What matters is what does God say. The leaders will use the Word of God to decide this issue correctly. see [vs. 16-17](#)

2. Any dispute or question we have should be settled by the Word of God.

**7. And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.**

**A. and when there had been much dispute,**

1. **dispute**- Gr. **suzetesis**- *mutual questioning, disputation, discussion*  
a. Legalism always will produce disputes and strife. A church filled with legalism is a perfect environment for a church split.

**B. Peter rose up and said to them:**

1. **rose up**- Gr. **anistemi**

2. **said**- Gr. **epo**

a. Of course Peter broke in and "said". This was the normal course for Peter. His motto was, "in doubt speak up!"

**C. Men and brethren,**

1. **men**- Gr. **aner**

2. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**

a. "Men" and "brethren" are words to bring the listeners on his



side to consider what he was going to say. This is a good communication principle for us today.

**D. you know that a good while ago God chose among us,**

1. **know**- Gr. *epistamai*
2. **a good while ago**- Gr. *archaios hemera apo-* *from the days of old*
  - a. Peter is referring to his visit to Cornelius which occurred somewhere between 10-13 years prior to this.
3. **chose**- Gr. *eklegomai-* *to select out*
  - a. It is interesting that God chose Peter to open the door to the Gentiles when his call was to the Jews. [Gal. 2:8-9](#) This brings out that you may be called to a certain area but be sensitive to the leading of the Lord because He might want to use you out of the normal order of things from time to time. However, you need to know it is God leading you to leave your normal lane He has for you. Peter knew for certain God called him to minister to Cornelius by a definite vision and direct command from the Lord.

**E. that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.**

1. **mouth**- Gr. *stoma*
  - a. God can use people with big mouths! Say, Praise God!
2. **Gentiles**- Gr. *ethnos*
  - a. This refers to Cornelius, his family, and friends.
3. **hear**- Gr. *akouo*
4. **word**- Gr. *logos*
5. **gospel**- Gr. *euaggelion*
6. **believe**- Gr. *pisteuo*
  - a. Believing comes from hearing the gospel. [Rom. 10:17](#)

**8. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He did* to us,**

A. So God,

B. who knows the heart,

1. **knows the heart**- Gr. *kardiognostes-* *heart knower*
  - a. God is THE heart knower. [Act 1:24](#), [1Sa 16:7](#), [1Ki 8:39](#), [1Ch 28:9](#); [1Ch 29:17](#), [Psa 44:21](#); [Psa 139:1-2](#), [Jer 11:20](#); [Jer 17:10](#); [Jer 20:12](#), [Luk 16:15](#), [Joh 2:24](#); [Joh 2:25](#);

[Joh 21:17](#), [Rom 8:27](#), [2Co 11:11](#), [2Ti 2:19](#), [Heb 4:13](#),  
[Rev 2:23](#) No one else knows other people's heart.

b. God saw in the hearts of Cornelius and those with him and saw faith in their heart and a willingness to accept Jesus.

c. Just because someone professes faith does not mean they actually possess it or have a willingness to accept Jesus.

**C. acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit,**

1. **acknowledged**- Gr. *martureo*- *to give witness to*

2. **giving**- Gr. *didomi*

3. **Holy Spirit**

a. The Holy Spirit being given is a result of God bearing witness to people's hearts. The Holy Spirit Himself also has a witnessing ministry. [Joh 15:26](#)

**D. just as He did to us**

1. On the day of Pentecost when they had been filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues. "just as they did" can be taken to mean that cloven tongues of fire rested on their heads as they did in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, even though that detail was not mention in [Acts 10](#).

**9. and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.**

**A. and made no distinction between us and them,**

1. **made no distinction**- Gr. *diakrino oudeis*- *not one distinction or variance*

a. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile. They both are equally sinners that need salvation. [Rom. 3:9](#), [Rom. 3:23](#)

**B. purifying their hearts by faith**

1. **purifying**- Gr. *katharizo*- *to cleanse*

2. **hearts**- Gr. *kardia*

a. The heart is the inward man. The heart is comprised of the spirit and soul. At salvation our spiritual side of our heart was born again and cleansed once and for all. Our soulish part of our heart is being purified now by believing the truth of the Word of God. [1 Pet. 1:22](#)

3. **faith**- Gr. *pistis*

a. Purification comes by having faith in Jesus, not our own efforts to cleanse ourselves. Trying to purify yourself is as

effective as a rotten apple attempting to heal itself.

**10. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?**

**A. Now therefore,**

**B. why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.**

**1. test-** Gr. **peirazo-** *to attempt, test one maliciously*

a. It is displeasing to the Lord that the yoke of the Law is put on those who were born into His family by grace. This happens all the time in churches around the world. People are saved by grace through faith and then many who go to church are put under the burden of the Law. This is highly displeasing to the Father.

**2. putting-** Gr. **epitithemi**

**3. yoke-** Gr. **zugos**

a. A yoke is for work. Under the Law you must labor constantly to fulfill all the commandments. There is no rest under the Law.

b. We are to take up the yoke of Jesus in which He is yoked together with us and provides all the power, so we just have to follow along by faith. [Matt. 11:29-30](#) This is the yoke of grace.

c. The Law is not for a righteous person, but for an unrighteous person. [1 Tim. 1:9](#)

d. For a Christian the law is called a yoke of bondage. [Gal. 5:1](#)

**4. neck-** Gr. **trachelos**

**5. disciples-** Gr. **mathetes**

**6. fathers-** Gr. **pater**

a. Those ancestors going back to the beginning when the twelve tribes received the Law of Moses.

**7. bear-** Gr. **bastazo-** *to take up in order to carry*

a. No one can keep the Law.

b. James would make a ruling that the Gentiles would not have to bear the yoke of the Law here in this chapter, but he did say that the Jews were still under the Law later in [chapter 21](#). He said this to Paul. [Acts 21:24-25](#) James did not have the revelation of grace that Paul did.

11. **But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."**

A. **believe-** Gr. **pisteuo**

1. The "we" in this verse speak of Jews.

B. **grace-** Gr. **charis-** *unmerited favor*

1. Grace is received by believing.

C. **saved-** Gr. **sozo**

1. God has the same salvation plan for both Jews and Gentiles. The Jews don't have a special arrangement for salvation since they are Jews.

12. **Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles.**

A. **multitude-** Gr. **plethos**

B. **kept silent-** Gr. **sigao**

1. This in itself was a miracle and a wonder.

C. **listened-** Gr. **akouo**

D. **declaring-** Gr. **exegeomai-** *to draw out in narrative*

1. You can argue doctrine, but you can't argue a testimony. That is why your testimony is so powerful in witnessing to others. Paul repeatedly used his testimony in sharing the gospel.

E. **miracles-** Gr. **semeion**

F. **wonders-** Gr. **teras**

G. **worked-** Gr. **poieo**

1. God worked them, but He performs them through people and their faith.

2. Notice, that they focused on and talked about all the great things God did, not the persecution they received from people. We are called to give a **testimony** of God's goodness not a **moany** about how bad things have been! Keep your eyes on God and not people.

H. **Gentiles-** Gr. **ethnos**

13. **And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men *and* brethren, listen to me:**

A. **And after they had become silent,**

1. **silent**- Gr. **sigao**

- a. This refers to Paul and Barnabas, not the crowd which already was silent.
- b. They gave their testimonies and then shut up. They did not try to convince the crowd that God was moving among the Gentiles. They let the testimonies speak for themselves.

**B. James answered,**

1. **James**- means *supplanter*

- a. He was the head bishop [overseer] of the church at Jerusalem. Today we would call him the senior pastor.

2. **answered**- Gr. **apokrinomai**

**C. saying**- Gr. **lego**

**D. Men and brethren,**

1. **men**- Gr. **aner**

2. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**

- a. Peter gave the same opening when he spoke. James does the same here.

**E. listen to me**

1. **listen**- Gr. **akouo**

**14. Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.**

A. **declared**- Gr. **exegeomai**- *to draw out in narrative*

B. **visited**- Gr. **episkeptomai**- *to look at observantly, to inspect; to look out, select, to go see, to visit for the purpose of comfort and relief*

1. This shows that God had been separated from them and now visited them. You don't visit someone you are with already.

C. **take out of**- Gr. **lambano ek**

1. Notice this says "take out of them" a people. It does not say all the Gentiles are now a people for His name. Universalists say that every person is reconciled to God and is His people. No! Those that are saved among the Gentiles are "taken out of them" are a people for His name. These are the Gentiles who accept Jesus by faith. They are taken out as a people for His name. The Gentiles who do not accept Jesus are and will be lost and separated from God.

D. **people**- Gr. **laos**- *covenant people*

1. All believing Jews and Gentiles have become a new people for His

name. They are the church- the new creation.

E. name- Gr. **onoma**

**15. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:**

**A. And with this the words of the prophets agree,**

1. **words-** Gr. **logos**

2. **prophets-** Gr. **prophetes**

a. The prophets prophesied that Gentiles would turn to the Lord and be accepted. [Rom 15:9-12](#)

3. **agree-** Gr. **sumphoneo**

a. We get the English word symphony from this Greek word.

b. If the Word of God does not harmonize and agree with your belief or experience, then your belief or experience is wrong.

c. The Word of God is our standard and plumbline to place our belief or experience next to in order to see if they agree. If they don't, then disregard the belief or experience, not the Word of God! Some refuse to let the Word of God stand in the way of what they believe. In doing this they disregard the Word of God.

**B. just as it is written**

1. **written-** Gr. **grapho**

a. Truth is always in accordance with "just as it is written". If your "truth" is not in accordance with "just as it is written" it is not God's truth.

**16. 'AFTER THIS I WILL RETURN AND WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID, WHICH HAS FALLEN DOWN; I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL SET IT UP;**

**A. After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David,**

1. **return-** Gr. **anastrepho**

a. Jesus is going to return to set up His millennial kingdom and then there will be nothing that will separate God from man.

2. **rebuild-** Gr. **anoikodomeo**

a. Jesus first coming was rebuild the edifice of grace that legalism ruined.

3. **tabernacle-** Gr. **skene**

a. This was a tabernacle of grace. When David brought the ark up to Jerusalem, he pitched a tent for it. It did not have

sections like the tabernacle of Moses or the later temple which had partitions that kept the ark of the covenant from public access. In the tabernacle of David, the ark of God's presence was open to the sight of all. There were no daily animal sacrifices offered as under the Law, but instead continual praises and thanksgiving was offered up. Both Jew and Gentile could view the ark and praise God. There was no division and separation as under the Law.

b. In this church age this tabernacle of David is operating allowing both Jew and Gentile to equally have access to God and to praise Him. Today we are to continually offer up the offerings of praise and thanksgiving to God through Jesus Christ. [Heb. 13:15](#)

4. **David**- means *beloved*

a. The tabernacle of Moses [Law] was replaced by the tabernacle of David [grace].

**B. which has fallen down,**

1. **fallen down**- Gr. *pipto*- *fallen*

a. This tabernacle of grace had fallen down and was ruined through religion and those seeking to be under the Law. It was raised up at the beginning of the church and will have its glory restored when Jesus comes back during the Millennium in which all nations will come and worship God in Jerusalem.

**C. I will rebuild its ruins,**

1. **rebuild**- Gr. *anoikodomeo*

a. Jesus will come a second time to rebuild the edifice of grace that legalism ruined. What happened between Jesus' first and second coming? Legalism crept in again and undermined the edifice of grace. Today, we see the beginning of that rebuilding of the edifice of grace that will be culminated when Jesus returns.

2. **ruins**- Gr. *kataskapto*- *to dig down under, undermine; by impl. to overthrow; demolish, raze*

a. Grace is undermined by legalism in people's life. Jesus is rebuilding the edifice of grace in many people's lives! They are being built up by grace! We are in a grace move of God today. The tabernacle of David is being erected again!

**D. and I will set it up.**

**1. set up-** Gr. **anorthoo-** *straighten and make erect again*

a. Jesus is the ark of God's presence, and He will sit in the tabernacle of David upon His return. [Isa 16:5](#) He will be available for both Jew and Gentile. They all will come and worship Him!

b. Once Jesus sets this tabernacle up again when He returns it will never be taken down again! [Isa 33:20](#)

**17. SO THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD, EVEN ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME, SAYS THE LORD WHO DOES ALL THESE THINGS.'**

**A. So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord,**

**1. rest-** Gr. **kataloipos-** *left remaining*

**2. mankind-** Gr. **anthropos**

a. This is referring to the Gentiles as we see in the next phrase. The Jews were allowed to seek the Lord under the Law, but not the Gentiles. When David pitched his open tent both Jews and Gentiles had access together to the ark and to worship. In this church age, this is once again the case.

b. God sees three divisions of man on the earth- Jew, Gentile, and the church of God. [1 Cor. 10:32](#)

**3. seek-** Gr. **ekzeteo**

a. We find the Lord by faith.

**B. even all the gentiles who are called by my name,**

**1. gentiles-** Gr. **ethnos**

a. All Gentiles are invited to seek the Lord, but only those who find him by faith are called by His name.

**2. called-** Gr. **epikaleomai**

**3. name-** Gr. **onoma**

a. We are called by His name. We are called Christians.

**C. say the Lord who does all these things**

**1. does-** Gr. **poieo**

a. God made the plan of salvation and made the way to Him open for all. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes!



**18. "Known to God from eternity are all His works.**

A. **Known-** Gr. **gnostos**

B. **eternity-** Gr. **aion-** *from the age*

1. This word means from the beginning of time.

C. **works-** Gr. **ergon**

1. God has known from the beginning of time both what He has planned to do throughout eternity and also what will happen.

[Isa 46:10](#)

**19. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God,**

A. **judge-** Gr. **krino-** *to decide*

B. **trouble-** Gr. **parenochleo-** *to harass further, that is, annoy*

1. Having to be circumcised as an adult would be troubling!

2. The Gentiles had been harassed by legalistic people. James said that this should stop now! However, James had no qualms about continuing to harass the Jews with the Law! In James' mind there was still a difference between Jew and Gentiles. In his mind the Gentiles could be admitted as "junior associates" but the Jews still had to keep the Law and so had special status before God. [Acts 21:24-25](#)

C. **Gentiles-** Gr. **ethnos**

D. **turning-** Gr. **epistrepho**

1. By faith in Jesus.

**20. but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, *from* sexual immorality, *from* things strangled, and *from* blood.**

A. **but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols,**

1. **write-** Gr. **grapho**

a. Remember, the book of Acts is a narrative of history, not a book to derive doctrine from. There is no mention here that God commanded these four things be kept. This is from James.

b. James could not leave well enough alone. He said "no law" for the Gentiles but then could not help himself and gave four commandments for them to keep. This is the hallmark of a legalist. They will pick and choose out of the law which commands are binding and leave off the rest. The Law cannot be thus treated. It is either an all or nothing proposition with

keeping the Mosaic Law.

c. It is interesting that these laws were given to the Gentiles, and these were the ones they struggled with afterwards. We see this in the Corinthian church. The Law will always stir up desires for what is forbidden.

d. No mention of circumcision is mentioned. This was the topic that kicked off this whole meeting in the first place. By its omission, the answer was no, Gentiles don't have to be circumcised to be saved or follow the Lord. I am sure this would give infinite relief to the Gentile men who heard this.

2. **abstain**- Gr. **apechomai**

3. **polluted**- Gr. **aligema**- (*to soil*); (*ceremonial*) *defilement*

a. This refers to meat sacrificed to idols. Paul addressed this issue in his letter to the Corinthians. [1Co 10:19-22](#)

4. **idols**- Gr. **eidolon**

a. *The best meat in those days was offered as a sacrifice in pagan temples before it was sold in the market at cheap prices.*

-Courson

**B. from sexual immorality,**

1. **sexual immorality**- Gr. **porneia**

**C. from things strangled,**

1. **strangled**- Gr. **pniktos**

a. *Strangling an animal would keep the blood in the circulatory system and not drained away, thus causing blood to be eaten with the meat (see [Gen 9:4](#); [Lev 17:10-14](#)). -Life Application Commentary*

b. Paul would bring out under grace no animal is to be rejected as unclean or defiled and all can be received with thanksgiving.

[1 Tim. 4:4-5](#)

**D. and from blood**

1. **blood**- Gr. **aima**

a. *The eating of blood was strictly forbidden to the Jews. The reason of this was that it contained the life, [Lev 17:11](#), [Lev 17:14](#). See notes on [Rom 3:25](#). The use of blood was common among the Gentiles. They drank it often at their sacrifices, and in making covenants or compacts. - Barnes Commentary*

**21. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."**

**A. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city,**

**1. Moses**

a. The name Moses was synonymous with the law itself.

**2. generations-** Gr. **archaios genea-** *generations of old*

**3. preach-** Gr. **kerusso-** *to herald a message*

a. The other word for "preach" used in the NT is the word **euaggelizo** which means *to proclaim the good news*. This word is reserved for preaching the good news of the gospel. The preaching of the Law was not and is not good news.

**B. being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.**

**1. read-** Gr. **anaginosko**

a. The Law was read in every synagogue every Saturday.

[Luk 4:16](#)

**2. synagogues**

a. Gentile proselytes were allowed to attend the synagogue.

**3. Sabbath**

a. Basically, what I believe James is saying here is that if the Gentiles want to do any "further study" or to go on to further please God with keeping any of the other commandments of the Law, they have a chance to hear them preached on every Saturday at the synagogues, which had been done for many generations in the past.

**22. Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely*, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.**

**A. Then it pleased the apostles and elders,**

**1. pleased-** Gr. **dokeo**

a. This is the same Greek word translated "seemed good" three other times in this chapter. This is a phrase that speaks of the inward witness of the Spirit that all Christians are to be led by.

b. The Spirit gives us a witness in our spirit man to what His will is. [Rom. 8:16](#), [Rom. 9:1](#), [1 John 5:10](#) When you are on track with God's will you will have a witness of pleasure and it will seem good to you in your spirit. It is a green light. If we are out of the will of God, we will have a "check" or red light in the Spirit. I believe this inner witness acts much like the two stones, the Urim and Thummin, did in the High Priests ephod. These stones would give an answer of "yes" or "no".

2. **apostles**- Gr. **apostolos**

3. **elders**- Gr. **presbuteros**

**B. with the whole church,**

1. **whole church**- Gr. **holos ekklesia**

a. The church at Jerusalem.

b. It is a miracle when a whole church is pleased with something!

**C. to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas,**

1. **send**- Gr. **pempo**

2. **own company**- Gr. **autos**- *of their own*

3. **Antioch**

a. This is where the controversy first appeared and was a hub for Gentile believers.

**D. namely**- not in Greek- omit

**E. Judas who was also named Barsabas,**

1. **Judas**- means *he shall be praised*

a. All that is known for sure about this man was that he was a prophet. [vs. 32](#)

2. **named**- Gr. **epikaleomai**

3. **Barsabas**- *son of the sabbath rest*

a. *Son of the Sabbath was sent to tell the Gentile believers they were free to rest in the finished work of Christ.* -Courson

**F. and Silas,**

1. **Silas**- means *of the woods*

a. The presence of Silas will become very important later in this chapter and we will learn a great lesson from his stay in Antioch. He would take Barnabas' place as Paul's traveling partner.

## G. leading men among the brethren

### 1. leading- Gr. hegeomai

- a. These two men were in leadership at the church in Jerusalem. They probably were among the elders there.
- b. Silas is soon to be promoted to travel with Paul. He was faithful in his home church and is now ready for promotion. He did not just come on the scene out of nowhere. He had a proven track record in the ministry.
- c. Both of these men were prophets. [vs. 32](#)

### 2. men- Gr. aner

### 3. brethren- Gr. adelphos

- a. The Jews at the church of Jerusalem.

## 23. They wrote this *letter* by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings.

### A. They wrote this letter by them,

1. **wrote this letter-** Gr. **graphe-** to write; the word letter is not found in the Greek-omit

### B. The apostles,

1. **apostles-** Gr. **apostolos**

### C. the elders,

1. **elders-** Gr. **presbuteros**

### D. and the brethren,

1. **brethren-** Gr. **adelphos**

### E. to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch,

1. **Gentiles-** Gr. **ethnos**

### F. Syria- means *exalted*

1. *Antioch was the capital of Syria, and it is probable that the dispute was not confined to the capital. -Barnes Commentary*

### G. and Cilicia

1. **Cilicia-** means *land of Celix*

- a. *Cilicia was adjacent to Syria. Paul and Barnabas had traveled through it, and it is probable that the same difficulty would exist there which had disturbed the churches in Syria. -Barnes Commentary*

### H. Greetings- Gr. **chairo-** a term of salutation, Hail!

24. Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "*You must* be circumcised and keep the law"—to whom we gave no *such* commandment—

A. Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words,

1. **heard-** Gr. **akouo**

2. **went out-** Gr. **exerchomai**

a. Notice it says they "went out", not that they were sent out. That is a big difference! There are many "went ones", instead of "sent ones"!

3. **troubled-** Gr. **tarasso-** *to agitate, trouble the mind; with fear, to terrify, put in consternation, with grief, anxiety, with doubt, to unsettle, perplex*

a. I would have experienced all of the above if I was told I needed to be circumcised as an adult!

4. **words-** Gr. **logos**

a. This speaks to the power of words. The person who said, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me", lied! Words can settle someone or trouble them. It is important what words we speak and also what words we are hearing. If you listen to the news you will become troubled by the words you hear. If you read the Bible you will be become solid and established by its words.

B. **unsettling your souls,**

1. **unsettling-** Gr. **anaskeuazo-** *to collect one's effects or baggage in order to remove; to lay waste by carrying off or destroying every thing; met. to unsettle, pervert, subvert*

2. **souls-** Gr. **psuche**

a. We need to settle our souls with the Word of God. They cannot be with man's ideas or the traditions of men.

C. **saying-** Gr. **lego**

D. **You must be circumcised and keep the law**

1. **circumcised-** Gr. **peritemno**

2. **keep-** Gr. **tereo**

3. **law-** Gr. **nomos**

a. James is writing the Gentiles that they do not need to keep the law, but had no such thoughts about the Jews themselves.

**E. to whom we gave no such commandment**

1. **gave commandment-** Gr. **diastellomai-** *to determine, issue a decision; to state or explain distinctly and accurately; hence, to admonish, direct, charge, command*

a. There are many who commission themselves and make themselves an authority. They walk around with an air of self-importance.

b. This decision and letter by the church of Jerusalem must have been a major rebuke to those men who had stirred up the Gentiles in Antioch.

**25. it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,**

**A. it seemed good to us,**

1. **seemed good-** Gr. **dokeo**

a. This phrase speaks of the inward witness of the Holy Spirit.

**B. being assembled with one accord,**

1. **assembled-** Gr. **ginomai-** *to arrive*

2. **one accord-** Gr. **homothumadon-** *one passion*

**C. to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul**

1. **send-** Gr. **pempo**

2. **chosen-** Gr. **eklegomai**

a. The men who went out before who caused all the commotion were not chosen or sent. They were self-appointed and went. Here we see men selected and sent. They carried authority.

3. **men-** Gr. **aner**

4. **beloved-** Gr. **agapetos**

5. **Paul and Barnabas**

a. Both Paul and Barnabas were well known the leadership at Jerusalem. They were trusted and loved.

**26. men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**A. men-** Gr. **aner**

**B. risked-** Gr. **paradidomi-** *to hand over*

**C. lives-** Gr. **psuche-** *soul*

a. The Greek word psuche can mean the person themselves.

**D. name- Gr. onoma**

- a. Paul and Barnabas sure did this! Paul may have been actually killed and then raised from the dead after his stoning in Lystra.

**27. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth.**

**A. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas,**

**1. sent- Gr. apostello**

- a. The ruling and message to the Gentiles was so important that they sent multiple witnesses to Antioch.

**B. who will report the same things by word of mouth**

**1. report- Gr. apaggello**

**2. word of mouth- Gr. logos- *word; mouth is not in Greek- omit***

- a. This was to validate the letter being sent was not a fake.
- b. In the mouth of two or three witnesses let every word be established. In this case more than 3 witnesses were being sent.

**28. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:**

**A. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit,**

**1. seemed good- Gr. dokeo**

**2. Holy Spirit**

- a. It is important to state this again. The book of Acts is not a doctrinal book but a historical account. James here says it "seemed good" to the Holy Spirit to give the four commands that the Gentiles needed to keep. My personal opinion is that this was James' contrivance, but he gives credit to the Holy Spirit for its origination. How often do we do that today? We say something and to back it up and give it weight by saying we got it from the Holy Spirit.

**B. and to us,**

1. This should probably say and "to me", because James is the one who gave this ruling, not anyone else. James was a very strong personality, and I am sure not too many people were willing to disagree with him. He was the Lord's brother mind you!

**C. to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things**



1. **lay upon-** Gr. **epitithemi-** *to place or put upon*
2. **greater burden-** Gr. **pleion baros**
  - a. James ruled not to put the heavy burden of the Law on the Gentiles, but still believed the Jews were obligated to carry it.
3. **necessary things-** Gr. **epanagkes**
  - a. Who said? I believe it was James and not the Lord.
  - b. It is strange that James would pick out abstaining from strangled animals and from blood as necessary but not mention any of the ten commandments except sexual immorality! It seems quite arbitrary. If these are commands for saved Gentiles, then they still apply today. This means we can only eat well-done steaks because those that are not have some blood in it. Also, there is no mention of a consequence for breaking any of these four commandments.

**29. that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.**

- A. **that you abstain from things offered to idols,**
  1. **abstain-** Gr. **apechomai**
    - a. This is a repeat from earlier.
  2. **offered to idols-** Gr. **eidolothuton**
- B. **from blood,**
  1. **blood-** Gr. **aima**
- C. **from things strangled,**
  1. **strangled-** Gr. **pniktos**
- D. **and from sexual immorality**
  1. **sexual immorality-** Gr. **porneia**
- E. **If you keep yourselves from these,**
  1. **keep-** Gr. **diatereo-** *to abstain wholly from*
- F. **you will do well**
  1. **do well-** Gr. **prasso eu-** *practice good*
- G. **Farewell-** Gr. **rhonnumi-** *be strong, thrive and prosper*
  1. Leonard Nimoy, who played Spock on Star Trek, would use this phrase. He was a Jewish actor and got it from his heritage.

**30. So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had**

**gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter.**

**A. So when they were sent off,**

1. **sent off-** Gr. *apoluo*- *released*

**B. they came to Antioch**

1. **came-** Gr. *erchomai*

**C. and when they had gathered the multitude together,**

1. **gathered-** Gr. *sunago*

2. **multitude-** Gr. *plethos*

a. Many were very interested in the question if the Gentiles had to be circumcised and had to keep the Law. There were many anxious men in that crowd!

**D. they delivered the letter**

1. **delivered-** Gr. *epididomi*- *to give in addition*

a. The letter was given in addition to their verbal witness to the meeting in Jerusalem.

2. **letter-** Gr. *epistole*

**31. When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement.**

**A. When they had read it,**

1. **read-** Gr. *anaginosko*

**B. they rejoiced over its encouragement**

1. **rejoiced-** Gr. *chairō*

a. You think? Here was a whole crowd of guys who did not have to get circumcised. There was great joy that day!

b. Grace always brings joy. Legalism always brings depression. If you are experiencing joy today, you are not experiencing grace!

2. **encouragement-** Gr. *paraklesis*

a. Grace also brings encouragement.

**32. Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.**

**A. Now Judas and Silas,**

**B. themselves being prophets also,**

1. **prophets-** Gr. *prophetes*

a. All five of the equipping offices [apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher] should exhort and strengthen the brethren

with the Word of God.

**C. exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words**

1. **exhorted**- Gr. **parakaleo**

2. **strengthened**- Gr. **episterizo**- *to establish besides, strengthen more, to render more firm*

a. No matter how firm and stable we are, we can and should be even more so. This comes by continuing the word of grace. We need to continue to listen and receive from anointed five-fold ministers and be in the Word for ourselves. If not, our foundation will start to crack, and we will start to weaken. It will happen so gradually you don't realize it is happening.

3. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**

4. **many words**

a. One of the signs you are called to be a five-fold minister is that you find yourself exhorting others with "many words".

b. Notice that words have the power to exhort and to strengthen. They also have the power to discourage and weaken. We are called to do the former instead of the latter.

c. These words contained and were based upon the Word of God and were given by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

**33. And after they had stayed *there* for a time, they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles.**

**A. And after they had stayed there for a time,**

1. **stayed**- Gr. **poieo**- *to do, or make*

2. **time**- Gr. **chronos**

a. The delegates from the Jerusalem church "made time" to stay for a while in Antioch. I believe it was because the atmosphere of grace was so refreshing in the Antioch church there that they wanted to stay for a while!

b. Silas even decided to stay even longer than the rest.

**B. they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles**

1. **sent back**- Gr. **apoluo**- *released*

2. **greetings**- Gr. **eirene**- *in peace*

a. The brethren left Antioch in peace. Grace always produces peace. They would however go back into a legalistic environment at Jerusalem. It is very hard to keep peace in the

atmosphere of legalism.

3. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**

4. **apostles**- Gr. **apostolos**

34. **However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there.**

A. **However,**

B. **it seemed good to Silas to remain there**

1. **seemed good**- Gr. **dokeo**

a. Notice, it did not say that Silas had a vision to stay. He did not have an angelic visitation telling him to stay. He did not hear an audible voice to stay. No, it just "seemed good" for him to stick around. This phrase "seemed good" is used four times in this chapter and it speaks of the inward witness of the Spirit. It just felt good, right, and peaceful to stay in Antioch and he followed that. We will find out why the Spirit was giving him a witness to stick around in a few verses from now.

b. The inward witness of the Spirit will register in us through an inward desire or inner knowing. It can also manifest by a deep peace about something or unrest if you are not supposed to do something. This inward witness is not spectacular, but it is supernatural. It is so unspectacular many people disregard this witness to their detriment.

c. One thing with the inward witness is that you will get a leading on the inside, but most of the time you don't know why. Silas did not know why he was being led to stay. He would find out soon! Don't lean to your own understanding but in all your ways acknowledge God by listening for the inward witness of the Holy Spirit.

d. A great book on being led by the Holy Spirit and how the inward witness of the Spirit works is "How to be led by the Spirit of God" by Kenneth E. Hagin.

2. **Silas**

3. **remain**- Gr. **epimeno**- *to stay on*

a. Silas will be so glad he stayed on! It pays to listen to the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit!

35. **Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the**

**word of the Lord, with many others also.**

**A. Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch,**

**1. Paul and Barnabas**

a. Antioch was the home church and base of operations for these two.

**2. remained-** Gr. **diatribo-** *to consume time*

**B. teaching and preaching the word of the Lord,**

**1. teaching-** Gr. **didasko**

a. This was teaching believers. Believers need teaching.

**2. preaching-** Gr. **euaggelizo-** *to preach the good news, evangelize*

a. This was preaching to unbelievers. Unbelievers need preaching.

**3. word-** Gr. **logos**

a. The Word of God is to be used and is effective to unbelievers and believers.

**C. with many others also**

**1. many others**

a. Paul knew the importance of a team. Paul and Barnabas were not the main show at the Antioch church. They had many ministers come in and minister.

b. Many pastors today rarely allow anyone but themselves to speak at their church. This is sad. The people need more than just one man's gift. The body needs to be equipped by all five equipping offices- apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. No one stands in all five offices and rarely in more than one.

**36. Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are doing."**

**A. Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas,**

**1. days-** Gr. **hemera**

**2. said-** Gr. **epo**

a. On the first missionary the journey the Spirit told them to go in dramatic fashion. [Acts 13:1-2](#) On this second journey Paul merely felt a desire to go back and visit those they had led to the Lord on the previous journey and Barnabas agreed to go.

b. Leadings can be more pronounced and supernatural like, "the Spirit said..." or they can be just a desire in the heart like Paul had here. There is no mention of the Lord speaking to Paul to go on this second journey.

c. Just because you don't have a dramatic leading such as a voice, vision, dream, visitation does not mean it is any less significant if you just feel a desire to do something or go somewhere. Paul's first and second missionary journey were equally of God.

**B. Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of God,**

**1. go back-** Gr. **epistrepho**

a. I think follow up is a missing factor in evangelism today. Someone will lead a person to Christ but leave them to fend for themselves afterwards. They just go on to the next sinner to get them saved. That is like giving birth to a baby and saying "Well now that you are in the world, good luck, you are on your own." We have a responsibility to disciple those we lead to the Lord the best we can. Sometimes those we lead to the Lord are not interested in us forming a discipleship relationship with them, but we at least need to try!

**2. visit-** Gr. **episkeptomai-** *to look upon or after, to inspect, examine with the eyes, to look upon in order to help or to benefit*

a. This would not be just a social visit, but a visit to bring help and benefit. It was to bring discipleship.

**3. brethren-** Gr. **adelphos**

**4. city-** Gr. **polis**

**5. preached-** Gr. **euaggelizo**

a. Teaching is not mentioned here because on the initial journey they were mainly preaching the gospel and leading people to Christ. They now would go back and do in depth teaching to the believers.

**6. word-** Gr. **logos**

**C. and see how they are doing**

**1. see how-** Gr. **pos**

**2. doing-** Gr. **echo-** *to hold*

a. They wanted to see how they were holding on as believers.

Some believers do not hold on in faith and they stop attending church and become carnal.

b. They had set leaders over the churches in each city, but those leaders were very young in the Lord. They wanted to make sure they were still in place and holding on.

**37. Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark.**

A. **determined-** Gr. *bouleuo-* *to resolve*

1. It was all high-fives until Barnabas brought up bringing Mark along again. Paul was like, no way, Jose! He abandoned us the last time, not again!

B. **take-** Gr. *sumparalambano-* *to take together alongside*

1. This was either a desire of the flesh because Mark was a family member or it was of the Spirit because God gives us a second and third and fourth, ect. chances to grow and get it right.

2. Later in life Paul would send for Mark saying he was useful for the ministry. [2 Tim. 4:11](#) However, right now, not so much!

C. **John-** means *beloved*

D. **called-** Gr. *kaleo*

E. **Mark-** means *a defense*

1. Mark would indeed team up with his uncle Barnabas, but not with Paul on the team. Later Mark would mentor under Peter and be used to write the gospel of Mark. Many give up on people for their mistakes, but God does not!

**38. But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work.**

A. **But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia,**

1. **insisted-** Gr. *axioo-* *to judge as worthy*

a. Paul did not consider Mark "worthy" to be used or trusted again with ministry. Paul is in religious pride here. Later, he will change his tune about Mark and request his help in ministry.

b. God has no one worthy working for him yet! We all are who we are by the grace of God, even when we blow it! God does not toss us aside. Praise God!

2. **take-** Gr. *sumparalambano*

**3. the one**

a. Notice, Paul called Mark- "the one". He is so put off by Mark that he did not even use his name. Right here the way Paul is acting, he reminds me of the elder brother in the prodigal son story. In that story the elder brother refused to say he was his brother. He said, "that son of yours".

**4. departed-** Gr. **aphistemi**

**5. Pamphylia-** means *of every tribe*

**B. and had not gone with them to the work**

**1. gone-** Gr. **sunerchomai**

**2. work-** Gr. **ergon**

a. Taking the gospel of grace to the world takes work! Let's not judge others on how well they do their work. Leave that up to God.

**39. Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another.**

**And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus;**

**A. Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another**

**1. contention so sharp-** Gr. *an inciting, incitement, a sharp fit of anger, sharp contention, angry dispute*

a. Paul and Barnabas get into the flesh and had an angry verbal fight over taking Mark on the trip.

b. It is not good to have our arguments make scripture! A similar fight caught on scripture was between Syntyche and Euodia. [Phil. 4:2](#)

**2. parted-** Gr. **apochorizo-** *to separate as to create space between*

a. This argument was so intense that there was a ministry split over it. Division is a by-product of the flesh.

b. This would leave a vacancy for a new missionary partner for Paul. I wonder who it would be...?

**B. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus**

**1. sailed-** Gr. **ekpleo**

**2. Cyprus-** means *lovely, blossom*

**40. but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God.**



**1. but Paul chose Silas and departed,**

1. **chose-** Gr. *epilegomai*

2. **Silas**

a. Well, look at who got selected to be Paul's new ministry partner! It was Silas! We saw earlier that instead of going back to Jerusalem, it "seemed good" to Silas to stick around in Antioch. He did not know why. He just had the inner witness to stick around. Again, when we get an inward witness from the Spirit we usually don't know why. We just need to obey. What would have happened if Silas didn't listen to that inward witness and went back to Jerusalem? He would have missed out on a huge ministry that would be recorded for all time in the Word of God. Silas did not have an audible voice from God to stick around. An angel did not tell him. He did not get a visitation of Jesus telling him to stick around. No, it just "seemed good" to stay.

b. Sometimes we think that the larger the door of opportunity and ministry, the bigger and more spectacular the divine guidance we will need to be. This is often not the case. Following the inward witness will lead you through huge doors!

3. **departed-** Gr. *exerchomai*

**2. being commended by the brethren to the grace of God**

1. **commended-** Gr. *paradidomi*- *handed over*

a. Ministry leaders need to release people to the grace of God. They are not the possessions of any ministry leader. They are the Lord's sheep.

2. **brethren-** Gr. *adelphos*

3. **grace-** Gr. *charis*

a. I am glad that when God sends us on a mission we don't go alone. We are accompanied by the wonderful grace of God!

**41. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.**

**A. And he went through Syria and Cilicia,**

1. **went-** Gr. *dierchomai*

2. **Syria-** means *exalted*

3. **Cilicia-** means *land of Celix*

**B. strengthening the churches**

1. **strengthening**- Gr. **episterizo**- *to stabilize*

2. **churches**- Gr. **ekklesia**

a. Paul and Barnabas had visited these regions on their previous journey. They came the first time evangelizing but now they were discipling.