



FALL 2021 // WEEK 3

Life Group Questions

Acts: Daring To Be The Church // September 25-26, 2021

The Great Debate // Acts 15:1-35

## Introduction

---

In our passage this week Paul and Barnabas face division in the early church. As they rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them, they wrestle with how to promote oneness, live in freedom, and exercise love for one another.

To get the most out of your group time, we invite you to look over the questions below and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

---

Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. If all your fears were removed, what is something you'd like to go out and do?
2. Name a difficult lesson you've learned or an unintended skill you've acquired in life that you wouldn't trade for anything now.

## Getting Started

---

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
    - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
  - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
-

## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) Pastor Josh highlighted that the gospel is central to our faith. **If someone you know were to ask you the question, "What is the Gospel?", how would you answer them?**

**Has your understanding of the Gospel grown in any way as you've walked with Jesus? If so, please share with the group.**

- 2) Acts 15 begins with an account of dissension in the church (vs 1-5). **How would you describe the issue in your own words?**

**What made this issue so critical to the early church?**

- 3) The conflict we read about in this passage resulted from differing views about what it takes to be acceptable to God. **How about you? In what ways are you trying to achieve acceptance from God?**

Pastor Josh reminded us that the message of the Gospel is *that salvation is by faith alone, through grace alone, in Christ alone*. **How does that line up with your desire to be acceptable to God?**

**In what ways can our Life Group encourage you to live free of trying to measure up to a false view of God's acceptance?**

- 4) Not only do we enjoy personal freedom in a grace-filled life, but we can also pursue unity because of the grace we have received. **Based on what we learned in this passage, at what point do we determine that the unity and mission of the Church is more important than our personal freedoms as believers?**

**Can you think of areas of personal freedom that might cause conflict in a church setting?**

**Is there an area of your life God is asking you to be willing to curtail your freedom in Christ for the sake of loving a Christian brother or sister? Share with the group, if you feel comfortable.**

## Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

---

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?

Keeping the above instructions in mind (as necessary for your group), as you move around the circle, encourage each person to start their prayer with gratitude by expressing what they are thankful for. Then each person can pray for the person on their right.

## Personal Spiritual Exercises

---

Each week we’re suggesting a couple of spiritual exercises. These are not required, but they may help us to actually live our faith and grow as followers of Jesus. Feel free to practice one or both of them. If a certain exercise is very helpful for you, maybe you can figure out a way to incorporate it into your daily life. **Next week in your Life Group, take a few moments to share how either of these exercises may have changed your outlook on your daily life.**

**Try to do 2 of the following this week to promote unity and hospitality:**

1. Connect in small ways with someone at church or in your Life Group that you don’t know very well. (Send an encouraging text or even a card in the mail to lift their spirits)
2. If you struggle with commenting on divisive subjects you see online, resist! Instead of replying, pray to love that person as Jesus does.
3. Listen to people around you and ask questions about what they are sharing. This is especially good for those you are closest to already because you signal a desire to know them even better.
4. Welcome others into an activity with your “group of friends.” Look for others who would like to spend time with your group of friends but feel uninvited and plan to include them.
5. Reach out to someone outside of your comfort zone. Ask if they want to go to coffee simply to learn more of their story.