**Bible Study Questions: READ Acts 15 (NASB)**

***Memory Verses:*** *"But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”* — Acts 15:11 (NASB)

This chapter covers the **Jerusalem Council**, a vital moment in the early Church, where the apostles and elders addressed whether Gentile believers needed to follow the Law of Moses.

**1. The Debate Over Salvation and the Law *(Acts 15:1–5)***

*The early Church is confronted with a crucial question: must Gentiles follow Jewish law to be saved?*

1. **What teaching caused the dispute in the church at Antioch?** *(v.1)*
2. **How did Paul and Barnabas respond to this teaching?***.(v.2)*
3. **Why was this issue so significant to the early Church?***.(v.5)*

**2. The Jerusalem Council and Peter’s Testimony *(Acts 15:6–11)***

*The apostles and elders gather in Jerusalem to discern the truth through testimony, experience, and the Holy Spirit.*

1. **How did Peter support the inclusion of Gentiles apart from the Law?** *(v.7–9)*
2. **What powerful truth does Peter state in verse 11?**
3. **How did Peter describe the Law’s demands on believers?** *(v.10)*

**3. Testimonies and the Council’s Decision *(Acts 15:12–29)***

*Paul, Barnabas, and James contribute, and a letter is drafted to guide the Gentile believers.*

1. **What did Paul and Barnabas share with the council***.* *(v.12)*
2. **How did James support the inclusion of Gentiles?** *(v.15–18)*
3. **What requirements did James propose for Gentile believers?** *(v.20)*
4. **Why were these instructions chosen?** *(v.21)*
5. **How did the church respond to the council’s decision?** *(v.22–23)*
6. **What did the council’s letter emphasize about salvation?** *(v.24–29)*

**4. Encouragement, Division, and Continued Ministry *(Acts 15:30–41)***

*The Church is strengthened by the council’s decision, but a sharp disagreement separates Paul and Barnabas.*

1. **How did the Gentile believers respond to the letter?** *(v.31)*
2. **What caused the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas?** *(v.36–38)*
3. **How did God use their disagreement for His purposes?** *(v.39–41)*

**Reflect**

1. **Balancing Tradition and Inclusivity:** *In Acts 15:1–5, early Christians debated whether Gentile converts should adhere to Jewish customs like circumcision. How do you navigate the tension between upholding cherished traditions and embracing inclusivity in your faith community? Are there practices that might unintentionally create barriers for newcomers?*
2. **Resolving Doctrinal Disputes:** *The Jerusalem Council exemplifies a collective approach to resolving theological disagreements (Acts 15:6–21). Reflect on a time when you faced a doctrinal or ethical disagreement within your community. What steps did you take to address it, and how can the council's method inform your approach to conflict resolution?*
3. **The Role of Grace in Salvation:** *Peter emphasizes that salvation comes through the grace of the Lord Jesus, not through the law (Acts 15:10–11). How does this understanding of grace influence your daily life and interactions with others? Are there moments when you find yourself relying more on personal efforts than on grace?*
4. **Cultural Sensitivity in Ministry:** *The council advises Gentile believers to abstain from certain practices to foster unity with Jewish Christians (Acts 15:19–21). How can you demonstrate cultural sensitivity and respect in your ministry or personal interactions without compromising core beliefs? Are there specific actions you can take to bridge cultural divides?*
5. **Learning from Disagreements:** *Acts 15 concludes with a sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark's involvement (Acts 15:36–41). Reflect on a personal experience where you had a significant disagreement with a fellow believer. What did you learn from that situation, and how did it impact your relationship and collective mission?*