



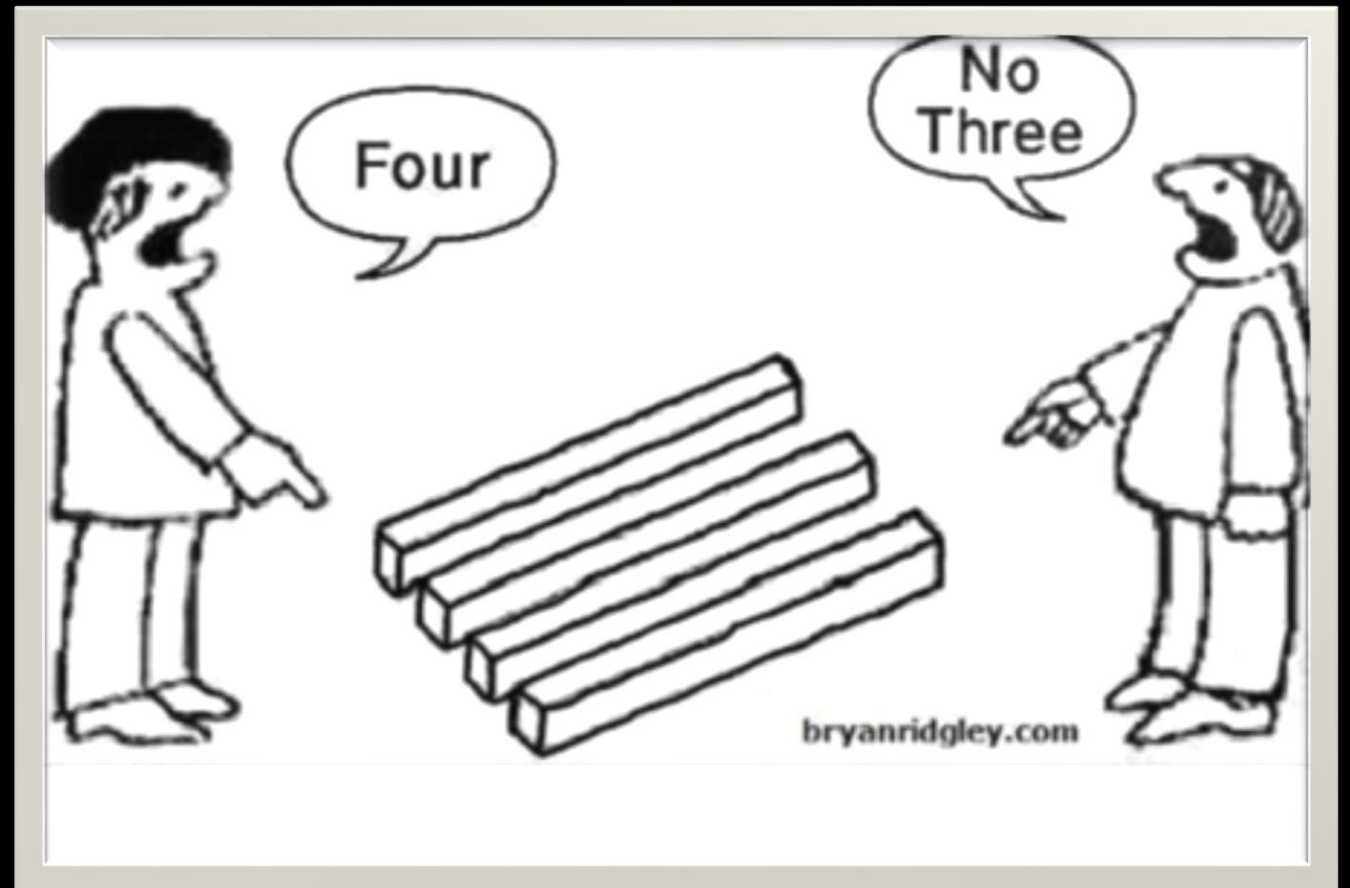
THE BOOK OF ACTS

The Time of the Holy Spirit and the Birth of the Church

WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE DISAGREE?

As the church grew and became more mixed in cultures and backgrounds, they had to learn how to resolve differences.

This important lesson is still useful today!



WE DON'T AGREE

Acts 15:1-3 (CEV)

¹ Some people came from Judea and started **teaching the Lord's followers that they could not be saved, unless they were circumcised as Moses had taught.** ² **This caused trouble,** and Paul and Barnabas argued with them about this teaching. So it was decided to send Paul and Barnabas and a few others to Jerusalem to **discuss this problem with the apostles and the church leaders.**



THE CONFLICT

Acts 15:4-5 (CEV)

⁴ When the men arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, including the apostles and the leaders. They told them everything God had helped them do. ⁵ But some Pharisees had become followers of the Lord. They stood up and said, “**Gentiles who have faith in the Lord must be circumcised and told to obey the Law of Moses.**”



THE COUNCIL

Acts 15:6-11

⁶ The apostles and elders met to consider this question. ⁷ After much discussion...





**When we disagree,
we should come together
and talk.**

THE LEADING VOICES

Acts 15:6-11

⁷ After much discussion **Peter** got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸ **God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. ⁹ He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! **We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.**”**


THE LEADING VOICES

Acts 15:12

¹²The whole assembly became silent as **they listened** to **Barnabas and Paul** telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.



In **James 1:19**, God reminds us: ¹⁹ My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry.



**When we disagree,
we should listen to
understand,
and only then talk.**

THE LEADING VOICES

Acts 15:13-11

13 After they had finished speaking, **James** said: My friends, listen to me! **14** Simon Peter has told how God first came to the Gentiles and made some of them his own people. **15** **This agrees with what the prophets wrote,** **16** “I, the Lord, will return and rebuild David’s fallen house. I will build it from its ruins and set it up again. **17** Then other nations will turn to me and be my chosen ones. I, the Lord, say this. **18** I promised it long ago.” **19** And so, my friends, I don’t think we should place burdens on the Gentiles who are turning to God.



**When we disagree,
consult the Bible.**

THE SOLUTION

Acts 15:20-21

²⁰ We should simply write and tell them **not to eat anything that has been offered to idols**. They should be told **not to eat the meat of any animal that has been strangled or that still has blood in it**. They must also **not commit any terrible sexual sins**. ²¹ We must remember that the Law of Moses has been preached in city after city for many years, and every Sabbath it is read when we Jews meet.





**When we disagree,
look for solutions.**

THE LETTER

Acts 15:22-26 (CEV)

22 The apostles, the leaders, and all the church members decided to send some men to Antioch along with Paul and Barnabas... **23** They wrote a letter that said: We apostles and leaders send friendly greetings to all of you Gentiles who are followers of the Lord in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. **24** We have heard that some people from here have terribly upset you by what they said. But we did not send them! **25** So we met together and decided to choose some men and to send them to you along with our good friends Barnabas and Paul. **26** These men have risked their lives for our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE LETTER

Acts 15:27-31

²⁷ We are also sending Judas and Silas, who will tell you in person the same things that we are writing. ²⁸ **The Holy Spirit has shown us** that we should not place any extra burden on you. ²⁹ But you should not eat anything offered to idols. You should not eat any meat that still has the blood in it or any meat of any animal that has been strangled. You must also not commit any terrible sexual sins. If you follow these instructions, you will do well.

We send our best wishes...



**When we disagree,
acknowledge the leading
of the Holy Spirit.**


THE RESPONSE

Acts 15:30-31 (CEV)

³⁰ The four men left Jerusalem and went to Antioch. Then they called the church members together and gave them the letter. ³¹ **When the letter was read, everyone was pleased and greatly encouraged.**

³² Judas and Silas were prophets, and they spoke a long time, encouraging and helping the Lord's followers.






**When we disagree,
after we find a solution,
move on!**

DISAGREEMENT, PART II

Acts 15:36-41

36 Sometime later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let’s go back and visit the Lord’s followers in the cities where we preached his message. Then we will know how they are doing.” **37** Barnabas wanted to take along John, whose other name was Mark. **38** But Paul did not want to, because Mark had left them in Pamphylia and had stopped working with them. **39 Paul and Barnabas argued, then each of them went his own way.** Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus, **40** but Paul took Silas and left after the followers had placed them in God’s care. **41** They traveled through Syria and Cilicia, encouraging the churches.



**When we disagree,
if we cannot find a
solution, let's agree to
disagree.**



REMEMBER...

**“In essentials, unity;
in non-essentials, liberty;
in all things, charity.”**