

Some men came down from Judea and began to teach the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom prescribed by Moses, you cannot be saved." After Paul and Barnabas had engaged them in serious argument and debate, Paul and Barnabas and some others were appointed to go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this issue. When they had been sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and they brought great joy to all the brothers and sisters. When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the apostles, and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. But some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses." The apostles and the elders gathered to consider this matter. After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you are aware that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the gospel message and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he also did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now then, why are you testing God by putting a yoke on the disciples' necks that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way they are." ... So they were sent off and went down to Antioch, and after gathering the assembly, they delivered the letter. When they read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. Both Judas and Silas, who were also prophets themselves, encouraged the brothers and sisters and strengthened them with a long message. After spending some time there, they were sent back in peace by the brothers and sisters to those who had sent them. But Paul and Barnabas, along with many others, remained in Antioch, teaching and proclaiming the word of the Lord. Acts 15:1-11 & 30-35 (CSB)

FOCUS: We are saved by faith alone.

OUTLINE:

1. The Dispute (1 – 5)
2. The Discussion (6 – 18)
3. The Decision (19 – 29)
4. The Development (30 – 35)