



## All Citizens Christian Church

**Bible Study:** Thursday, July 14, 2016.

**Topic:** Acts 15

### INTRODUCTION:

As the church began to grow so did challenges line their path. From the lying and subsequent deaths of Annanias and Sapphira to the murmuring of Grecian widows, there were issues that would have torn the church into shreds. These two could be said to be due to character failure. This time around, they were confronted with an issue which could completely annihilate the church if not properly handled. – That is a doctrinal issue.

After a successful first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas settled for a regular church administrative work when the strong controversy over circumcision arose. The controversy was so strong that the intervention of the elders at Jerusalem was needed.

After the Jerusalem council met, it was finally decided that circumcision was not a yardstick for salvation. As if the tension caused the circumcision argument was not sufficient, Paul and Barnabas got entangled over relationship brouhaha. This time it was of a social leaning. The issue was that upon Paul's decision to embark on a second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted John Mark to accompany them, a suggestion that was strongly opposed by Paul. This disagreement eventually led to a split of dynamic duo and great friends and missionaries. Paul went with Silas who was one of the people sent from Jerusalem along with them to explain the decision of the elders to the disciples at Antioch. Barnabas went with John Mark.

In this Chapter we will study

How the enemy creeps into the church to change its focus

How the early church dealt with the big challenging of circumcision which would have messed it up.

The rift between Paul and Barnabas, and how they sorted it out without allowing it to stop the work of the gospel and they continued serving the Lord

### DISCUSSION

1. The brethren who insisted on circumcision as a path to salvation, do you think they had a point?

Gen 17:14, Exodus 12:48-49.

2. Why were witnesses needed at both ends? Discuss the importance of witnesses in life issues.

Acts 15:2, 22, II Cor 13:1, Duet 19:15.

3. What kinds of witnesses should the church seek after when we decided to have witnesses?  
Matthew 26:59.
4. Why did Paul and Barnabas head back to Jerusalem Rom 13:1-2.
5. What is the function of elders and leaders in any congregation? Titus 1:5, I Pet 5:1-5.
6. Explain Acts 15:5. Is it not interesting that we still had people who stuck to Pharisaic views even after the death and resurrection of Jesus?
7. Are such people in Church today? The church has always been a place of mixed multitude. We must however always allow the voice of truth and reason to prevail. Acts 5, John 6:70.
8. The Bible says after much dispute, Peter spoke. What kind of dispute is the Bible referring to? I Tim 6:4-5, II Tim: 23, Titus 3:3.
9. Why do you think the disciples allowed this dispute to continue? Should Church leaders allow disputations in Church?
10. At the council after the disputes, who were the people that spoke and in what order? How important is this way of speaking in church decision making. Peter, Paul and Barnabas, and James
11. Consider the statement of Peter Vs 7-9.
12. What justified the work of grace according the words of Paul and Barnabas. Vs 12, Eph 2:8
13. James proves that experience is not enough as he quotes a scripture to justify his comment. Amos 9:11-12. Why do you think this was a great idea? Heb 4:12. Matthew 4:4
14. What was the conclusion of the matter?
15. Why did it seem like they had selective obedience to the law? It could be probably to strengthen the bond of unity amongst the Gentiles and Jews. I Cor 9:22.
16. Why was a letter necessary? What were the key points of the letter
  - Those who had troubled them regarding circumcision and the Law did so without any authority
  - The apostles and elders agreed to send Judas and Silas along with beloved Barnabas and Paul to confirm the report of what happened in Jerusalem
  - The Holy Spirit, along with the apostles and elders, saw fit to lay no burdens upon them, save to abstain from things sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled and sexual immorality

17. There was a great dispute between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark. Why do you think Paul did not want John Mark to go along with them?
18. Silas was referred to by his Greek name in many epistles of Paul: II Cor 1:19, I Thess 1:1, II Thess 1:1,

**CONCLUSION:** The scripture is such a beautiful and complete book. It shows to us clearly that the people spoken about in the Bible were ordinary people like you and me and not angels. Among all the disputes, the church thrived. No disagreement was allowed to dissolve the work they have already set out to achieve. What can we learn from the attitude of the apostles?