

## ***Grace Wins the Day*** **Acts 15:1-35**



### ***Debate: Do Gentiles need to become Jews? 15:1-7a***

- Integrating Gentiles was a problem even for Peter, see Acts 11, Gal. 2:11ff.
- The dissension/debate is pretty heated, note this word in 23:7,10, 24:5 .
- This issue is especially prominent in Galatians; Paul's view = Gal. 2:21.

### ***Conclusion of Peter: Not based on what I saw at Caesarea, 7b-12***

- Recounting his experience with Cornelius shows up here, 10:44-48, 11:15ff.
- Rhetorical question: salvation by anything besides faith = *testing* God (5:9); plus why demand Gentiles keep the Law when it was so hard for us Jews?!

*Grace wins, legalism loses! Problem solved . . . or is it?*

### ***Conclusion of James: Not based on what I see in Scripture, 13-21***

- Jesus' brother once didn't believe (Mk. 3:21, 6:4) but later become a leader (21:18, Gal. 1:19, 2:9) probably after Jesus arose, Acts 1:14, I Cor. 15:7.
- James appeals to Amos 9:11,12 for why not to impose the Law upon Gentile converts, but he does offer four prohibitions: Don't eat food offered to idols, strangled animals, or blood (Gen. 9:4, Ezek. 33:25, I Cor. 8,10:20, Rev. 2:14, 20) and don't commit fornication (sex outside of marriage). Why these?

### ***Decision of everyone: Send out men to clarify this issue, 22-35***

- Men from Jerusalem are sent along with a message: Judas Barsabbas (bro. of Joseph in 1:21-26) and Silas (Silvanus, who will later travel with Paul).
- The council's decision predictably brings rejoicing, as in 15:3.