GROUP DISCUSSION

August 13, 2023

ACTS SEASON 3 The Great Debate Acts 15:1-35 **Pastor Matt Manning** Matt.Manning@crossroadsabc.com



NOTES	Pastor Matt talked about all the things that people want to add to the Gospel in order to be saved—even things we may subconsciously believe and act out on.
	MY STORY Talk about a time when you went head-to-head with someone during a conflict, but were able to eventually resolve your differences.
	What did it take to get to that point?
	WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO HEAR? Some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. (Acts 15:1-2)
	We've seen that God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. This news brought great joy to most of the believers. Yet, one group had some strong objections in the way these new believers were being integrated into the church.
	What might we understand about the feelings of the men who came from Judea when they insisted that the ancient custom of circumcisio must be honored, even with new non-Jewish believers? What were they afraid of losing?
	In view of the Jews' belief that circumcision was a sign of obedience to God, flowing from Abraham, why would they hold this as a non-negotiable for followers of Jesus and threaten to split the church'

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard for the first time, stuck with you, challenged or confused you?

What is the one important thing you will take away from this weekend's message or our community group discussion? Is there any challenge, difficulty or praise that you would like to share with the group for prayer?

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Different groups add things to the simplicity of faith that complicate the invitation to know and follow Jesus. What are some examples of "Gospel Plus" you've heard (namely, things a person needs to do in addition to believing in Jesus in order to be saved)?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO DO?

What words, spoken by Peter, quieted the chaos, and allowed Barnabas and Paul, and then James, to testify?

What was James' recommendation to manage the conflict?

How could we use what happened here as a model for resolving conflict in the church?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

What are you tempted to add to your spiritual "to-do" list in order to have a greater assurance of God's acceptance? Why is it spiritually dangerous to stay in this place? How can you effectively let go of any dependence on this belief?

Pick an unresolved tension in one of your relationships, and work with the other person to find a resolution you can both feed good about.

