



A CONFLICT IN THE EARLY CHURCH

ACTS 15

ACTS 15:5

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.”

PETER'S SPEECH – 15:9-11

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.”

JAMES'S PROPOSAL (15:19-21)

Therefore, in my judgment, we should not cause difficulties for those among the Gentiles who turn to God, but instead we should write to them to **abstain** from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from eating anything that has been strangled, and from blood.

For since ancient times, Moses has had those who proclaim him in every city, and every Sabbath day he is read aloud in the synagogues.”

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE TEXT

- Minimal guidelines, not overwhelming demands.
- The Spirit and united church leadership are guiding this counsel.
- Sensitivity to both sides is shown – but the Gospel is not compromised.
- This resolution was a two-way street.
- The restrictions are not necessarily permanent.
- Brotherhood across all factions is assumed.
- The result was encouragement, joy.

- Principles are nothing without application.
- Brotherhood is nothing without application.
- Transformation is nothing without application.
- In other words....

Faith without works is dead.

**FIVE REASONS
TO FORGO
FREEDOMS**



1. AVOID STUMBLING BLOCKS

If food causes my brother or sister to fall, I will never again eat meat, so that I won't cause my brother or sister to fall.

“Everything is permissible,”
but not everything builds up.

No one is to seek his own good, but the good of the other person.

2. REMOVE BARRIERS TO GOSPEL

We have not made use of this right; instead, we endure everything so that we will not hinder the gospel of Christ.

3. TO AVOID THE UNHELPFUL

Whoever thinks he stands
must be careful not to fall.

“Everything is permissible,” but
not everything is beneficial.

4. TO AVOID BONDAGE

“Everything is permissible for me,” but I will not be mastered by anything.

5. TO PROMOTE PEACE

Let us pursue what promotes peace and what builds up one another.

Whatever you believe about these things, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves.

**WHETHER YOU EAT
OR DRINK, OR
WHATEVER YOU DO,
DO EVERYTHING FOR
THE GLORY OF GOD.**



1 Corinthians 3

According to God's grace that was given to me, I have laid a foundation as a skilled master builder, and another builds on it. But each one is to be careful how he builds on it. For no one can lay any other foundation than what has been laid down. That foundation is Jesus Christ.

Only one foundation

1 Corinthians 3

If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or straw, each one's work will become obvious. For the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire; the fire will test the quality of each one's work. If anyone's work that he has built survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will experience loss, but he himself will be saved—but only as through fire.

Many building choices

1 Corinthians 3

Don't you yourselves know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, and that is what you (you guys, y'all, youse, you'uns) are.

No solo builders

-
- Who are you building with?
 - What are you building with?
 - What are you building on?