

the book of  
**ACTS**

The account of the growth of the Church

## A Unified Church

### Acts 15:12-29

Corbett Robertson - Sierra Community Church  
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**15.** <sup>12</sup> The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. <sup>13</sup> When they finished, James spoke up: "Brothers, listen to me. <sup>14</sup> Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. <sup>15</sup> The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

- <sup>16</sup> " 'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it,  
<sup>17</sup> that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things'  
<sup>18</sup> that have been known for ages.

<sup>19</sup> "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. <sup>20</sup> Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. <sup>21</sup> For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

<sup>22</sup> Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers. <sup>23</sup> With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. <sup>24</sup> We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. <sup>25</sup> So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul — <sup>26</sup> men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. <sup>28</sup> It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: <sup>29</sup> You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell. (Acts 15:12-29) NIV

#### 1. The Vision - *AGREEMENT WITH GOD AND EACH OTHER*

<sup>8</sup> God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. <sup>9</sup> He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith... <sup>15</sup> The words of the prophets are in agreement with this. (Acts 15:8-9,15)

#### 2. The Mission - *DISCERNMENT*

*THE HOLY SPIRIT* - It seemed good to the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:28)  
*THE WORD OF GOD* - The words of the prophets are in agreement with this. (Ac 15:15)  
*THE TESTIMONY OF BELIEVERS* - They listened to Barnabas and Paul. (Acts 15:12)  
Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. (Acts 15:14)

#### 3. The Outcome - *UNITY, HOLINESS, WITNESS*

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. (Acts 15:28-29)

They gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. (Acts 15:30-31)

#### Community Group Questions:

1. Which of these points (1,2 or 3) is most difficult for you in your life?
2. How does this text help you understand unity, holiness and witness for Christ & Church?

