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## The Greatest Gift

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**Introduction:** The church continues to grow and reach out to the gentile nations. There are some Jewish believers who still hold to the law of Moses and the need for the gentiles to be circumcised, They are confusing the gentile believers and telling them that they must follow the law to be saved. This results in what is called the “Jerusalem Conference” where they conclude that salvation is by grace alone.

### Text: Acts 15

### Discussion:

1. Icebreaker: What was your greatest gift? Who gave it to you? What was it? Why was it so special?
2. Who were the men from the circumcised party and by what authority did they have to teach a distorted gospel? Why do we know that James, Peter, and the Jerusalem church was not behind sending these men to preach?
3. Why was the party of the Pharisees such a dangerous group of people?
4. The Old Testament points to Jesus. He fulfills the law and is the one who is greater than Moses. The New Testament makes it clear that God made a new covenant and that the Old system was a shadow of the things to come. Read the following: Jeremiah 31:31/Hebrews 8; Luke 22:20, 2 Cor. 3:4-6, Hebrews 9:15, 12:22-24, Heb. 10:1, Col. 2:16-17  
What do you notice about these verses? Why would you want to send people back to the shadow when they can walk in the reality of Christ?
5. Read Ephesians 2:8-10 & Gal. 2:16. How are we saved?
6. What does it mean that we are saved: By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone?
7. Circumcision was the sign of the Old covenant. What is the sign of the New covenant? Read Rom. 2:29, Eph. 1:13-14
8. How did Peter say the gentiles were saved?
9. What did James use for the proof of salvation to the gentiles?
10. The compromise was to keep fellowship among the Jewish and Gentile Christians and to aid in evangelism. Why must we not use our freedom in Christ to cause a stumbling block to others? Read 1 Cor. 8
11. Salvation is a gift of God; we add nothing to what he as done. However, salvation does bring a change in our behavior because we have been circumcised in the heart/by the sealing of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our desire is to live a life pleasing to the Lord and walk in his ways. How have you experienced the life change of being a Christian?

### Think About it:

Jesus saves! We are saved by the finished work of Christ on the cross. He bore our sin and took our shame. He alone is the means to forgiveness of sins. There is no other way to be saved apart from Christ. If we needed to add anything to what Jesus did on the cross to be saved, then why would God the Father send his son to die for our sin?

### Moving Forward:

Thank God every day for his great salvation and spend time in prayer giving praise and thanks to him. Look for opportunities to share the gospel with someone and take actually talk to them about Jesus.