

The Jerusalem Council

Acts Chapter 15

Act 15:1 1) The Dispute Concerning Circumcision vs 1-6

Some men came down from Judea and {began} teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

- Perspective
 - Of Jews (Jesus completes their history, their purpose, their system of belief and Christianity being a sect of Judaism. A Gentile must first perform the ordinances of Moses first. The Gentiles cannot step around all this heritage.)
 - Of God (Realizes the cost of His own designed plan of salvation. This being His own Son being brutalized, and hung on a cross carrying the sin of the whole world and hearing His own Son cry out "My God My God Why has thou forsaken me?" To then hear that salvation is this incredible sacrifice and some performance to add to the process of salvation in offensive to God)
 - Of Us (No one loves like that. We are used to earning favor)
- Men from Judea came teaching a "Jesus Plus" doctrine (plus the custom of circumcision) Word came to some men of what was happening in Antioch. They felt they need to straighten out this error they perceive.
- **Cannot Be Saved** - Imagine someone coming into church and announcing that you cannot be saved by the belief system you hold. Would that upset you? Cause you to refute their arguments?
- Saved vs disciple: As we who love Jesus we love His Word and study His word. With that we may judge someone who isn't a student of the Word. We may even question his salvation. We need to be careful. We do the same thing by saying they cannot be saved if they are not studying the Word.
- Believer who isn't disciple = bad example for world / bad example to a new convert / and causes those that are disciples to have to explain their behavior.

Act 15:2 **And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, {the brethren} determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.**

- Paul & Barnabas confronted this teaching holding to God's welcoming the Gentiles through faith and not by performing ritualistic duties.
- The brethren seeing the debate suggested they go to the Apostles and get a ruling. This came from the brethren. Possibly because they were caught between two great influences. Paul & Barnabas whom they loved and trusted and teachers from Jerusalem.
- They took some others with them. While we do not know all who went, Galatians 2:1 Paul informs us that Titus went with them as a representative of a Gentile Believer who had not been circumcised.

Act 15:3 **Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.**

Act 15:4 **When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.**

- Gal 2:1-10 gives some additional information about this meeting in Jerusalem.
 - Titus went with them
 - Paul met with James Peter and John privately before the council to make sure he was not way off base.
 - Paul considered it a form of bondage to compel Gentiles to be circumcised.
- After a favorable response from Peter James and John the more public Jerusalem Council was held.

Act 15:5 **But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."**

- There were in the church Pharisees who believed. Remember the Pharisees were the religious group that policed Jews to observe the Law. These were the ones who remembered the dispersion and captivity by Babylon and preached the Law so a similar event would not happen in Israel. This was in a sense what they lived for. So you could imagine how hard it is for these Pharisees to come to grips with Salvation by Grace Alone through Faith.
- The argument from these believing Pharisees wouldn't be without quoting scripture.

- They might have used:
 - Exodus 12:48-49 *"When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."*
 - Isaiah 56:6-7 *"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants; every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices [shall be] accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."*
- These Pharisees didn't deny the Gentiles access to Jesus. They were teaching that the access was through 2 things. CIRCUMCISION & OBSERVING LAW OF MOSES

Act 15:6 The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.

Act 15:7 **2) Peter Speaks - No Distinction** vs 7-12

After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them,

- After the debate Peter speaks
- Peter seems to recall a sheet being let down before him once (Acts 10) and God telling him to not call things unclean or common that He has called clean.
- Peter tells them that he himself has witnessed the same thing. The Gospel to the Gentiles.

"Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by **my** mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.

Act 15:8 "And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;

- God knows the heart. This could be good news or it could be bad news.
- But the point Peter makes is God gave them the Holy Spirit just like us, making no distinction in the heritage of the people.

Act 15:9 and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

- Peter reminds everyone that for both, Gentile and Jew their hearts were cleansed by faith not by keeping the Law.
- Not only are we saved and going to heaven, but our hearts are cleansed (KJV = Purified)

Act 15:10 "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?"

- By adding a physical ritual to God's work of the heart, Peter declares this is testing God not testing the work. It tests God because we do not believe that God can do the work without making it passing our tests.
- Interesting Peter says that even Israel couldn't keep the Laws.
- Speaking of Yokes, Jesus said, *"Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light."* Matt 11:28-30

Act 15:11 "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are."

- Peter is saying, "The truth is we are saved the same way, because we realized that as we call our self Jews and think we are keepers of the Law we fall short and it is only by GRACE that we Jews are saved."
- (Joe Focht) Speaking on enacting Law to change behavior - Legislating Morality - he said "If you put a muzzle on a mean dog, he doesn't bite you because he is now a good dog. He is still a mean dog with a muzzle. You can test this by taking off the muzzle."
- What we need is a NEW HEART not new laws.

Act 15:12 All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

- The emphasis is signs and wonders that God had done. Not signs and wonders that Paul and Barnabas had done.
- The purpose is that if God accepts they why can't we.

Act 15:13 **3) James Speaks** vs 13-21

After they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying,

- This is James is not James the Apostle who was murdered by Herod but this James is Jesus' half brother, Jude's brother, author of the Book of James and who is a pillar in the church in Jerusalem.

"Brethren, listen to me.

Act 15:14 "Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.

- James is saying that we Jews are just Gentiles that were taken out of them by God's will not by our own doing.

Act 15:15 "With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

Act 15:16 'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT,

Act 15:17 SO THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'

Act 15:18 SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM LONG AGO.

- Quoting Amos 9:11-12
- The Tabernacle of David has fallen and is being rebuilt as Jesus has established His kingdom.
- James says that the Prophets of old agree that there will be a people that will be called of the Lord and they are Gentiles. NOT JEWS. And that they will remain Gentiles.

Act 15:19 "Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,

Act 15:20 but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.

Act 15:21 "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

- James makes a ruling and says it should be written so there is no confusion.
- The ruling has five clauses:
 - PART 1 - Gentiles Benefit -- That the Gentiles should not be troubled with circumcision.
 - PART 2 - Jews Benefit -- That they abstain from things contaminated by idols
 - These things would be offensive to the Jew and/or would create division and not allow a common meal. -- That they abstain from fornication
 - Jew + Gentile -- That they abstain from what is strangled
 - That they abstain from blood

The Ceremonial Law is Abolished but the Moral Law is still in Effect.

**Moses Law
Ceremonial Law**

Called "the law of Moses"

LUKE 2:22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.

Called "Law contained in ordinances"

EPH. 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.

Written by Moses in a book

2 CHRON. 35:12 And they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. And so did they with the oxen.

**10 Commandments
Moral Law**

Called "the Law of the Lord"

ISA. 5:24 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Called "the Royal law"

JAMES 2:8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

Written by God on stone

EXO. 31:18 And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

EXO. 32:16 And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

Placed in the side of the ark
DEUT. 31:26 Take this book of the law, and put it in the <u>side of the ark</u> of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.
Ended at the cross
EPH. 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the <u>law of commandments contained in ordinances</u> ; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.
Added because of sin
GAL. 3:19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was <u>added because of transgressions</u> , till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.
Contrary to us, against us
COL. 2:14 <u>Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us</u> , and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.
Judges no man
COL. 2:14-16 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. <u>Let no man therefore judge you</u> in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:
Carnal
HEB. 7:16 Who is made, not after the <u>law of a carnal commandment</u> , but after the power of an endless life.
Made nothing perfect
HEB. 7:19 For the law <u>made nothing perfect</u> , but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Placed inside the ark
EXO. 40:20 And he took and <u>put the testimony into the ark</u> , and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark:
Will stand forever
LUKE 16:17 <u>And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.</u>
Points out sin
ROM. 7:7 What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, <u>I had not known sin, but by the law</u> : for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. ROM. 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by <u>the law is the knowledge of sin.</u>
Not grievous
1 JOHN 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his <u>commandments are not grievous.</u>
Judges all men
JAM. 2:10-12 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that <u>shall be judged by the law of liberty.</u>
Spiritual
ROM. 7:14 For we know that the <u>law is spiritual</u> : but I am carnal, sold under sin.
Perfect
PSALMS 19:7 <u>The law of the LORD is perfect</u> , converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

Act 15:22 **4) Put It In Writing** vs 22-31

Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

Act 15:23 and they sent this letter by them,

- The official decision is sent back with Paul and Barnabas but not only that but with two witnesses Judas and Silas.
- Deut 19:15 and Jesus in Matt 18:16 "at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."

"The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.

Act 15:24 we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with {their} words, unsettling your souls,

- The letter announced these "Judiazers" (whom they dealt with in Galatians) were not sent by the Apostles.
- Galatians 2:4 Paul referred to these men "But {it was} because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage."
- The Purpose was to settle the unsettled soul. Is your soul unsettled?

Act 15:25 seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Act 15:26 who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Act 15:27 we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word {of mouth.}

Act 15:28 it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials:

Act 15:29 you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell."

- The letter outlined the decision from the the Holy Spirit given at the Jerusalem Council.
 - "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit" Isn't encouraging that these leaders speak in these terms that are not so definitive. They didn't say "Thus says the Lord"
- It is interesting to note what is **NOT** in this letter. To be saved you must Believe...
 - ...and be baptized
 - ...and become a member
 - ...and go to church
 - ...and read the scriptures
 - ...and tithe
 - ...and whatever else is added to Believe
- Are these things important? Absolutely!! But these do not determine one's salvation.

Act 15:30 So when they were sent away, they went down to Antioch; and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter.

Act 15:31 When they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.

- Freedom and Grace is always good news that causes rejoicing.

Act 15:32 **5) Encouraging and Strengthening the Churches** vs 32-41

Judas and Silas, also being prophets themselves, **encouraged and strengthened the brethren with a lengthy message.**

- Judas and Silas were prophets. They spoke to the church encouraging and strengthening them.
- Several times prophets are used or mentioned in Acts.
 - Acts 2:17 Holy Spirit poured out and promise of prophecy
 - Acts 11:27-28 Agabus foretells of a famine
 - Acts 13:1 Prophets in Antioch
 - Acts 21:9 Philips four daughters are prophetesses.
 - Acts 21:10-11 Agabus again predicts Paul's coming suffering
 - Additional inferences
 - Peter after sheet lowered is shown what will happen and have a message for Corneilus
 - Ananias is told to meet Saul in Damascus
 - Paul told Ananias will come to him
 - Paul told that a ship will wreck but all will be spared
- Prophets strengthen and encourage the church.
- Silas eventually travels with Paul. Unfortunately we sometimes view him as Paul's water boy. Yet he was highly regarded by the Apostles and entrusted with a duty to verify the decision at Jerusalem. He was also a prophet.
- This also tells us the servant role of a prophet in the New Testament. It seems as Silas' example a prophet takes a second chair or a support role in ministry.

Act 15:33 After they had spent time {there,} they were sent away from the brethren in peace to those who had sent them out.

Act 15:34 [But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.]

- Judas & Silas were sent home after a good time of ministry but Silas had another thought
- Here is the second time we see that soft word "It SEEMED good". And this was a prophet.
- Secondly, it was GOOD. Silas felt this was a positive direction for him. It wasn't that it would be

awful medicine that in the long run would turn out good. No this ministry with Paul in Antioch was something that fit him and it was desirable. It pleased him.

Act 15:35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching with many others also, the word of the Lord.

- They stayed in Antioch ministering what was best for those disciples. The Word of the Lord. We too need to see that this is the best we can give those in our churches. The Word of the Lord.
- Some time has passed and an event occurs here that we do not have in the record in Acts
- Gal 2:11-16 "*But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before [them] all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We [who are] Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."*

Act 15:36 After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, {and see} how they are."

- Paul desired to visit the churches throughout Galatia and see what is happening.

Act 15:37 Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also.

Act 15:38 But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

- Barnabas, being the encourager, sees usefulness in Mark and wants him along. Not only that, but Mark was Barnabas' cousin. Barnabas has always sought the men that others have held at arms length. Paul himself one of these who benefited from Barnabas' grace.
- Paul "kept insisting" they should not take him. Paul remembered the unfaithfulness; the plans made because of the support then to have it in a moment disappear. He remembers the disappointment, the added stress, and the disloyal or disunity when he needed the strength of support. Paul wasn't going to put himself in that place again.

Act 15:39 And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

- Sharp disagreement is a softer way of putting it. Luke tells it like it was. This was not a pretty scene. A sharp disagreement leaves us with the thought that someone is wrong and someone was right. Sharp disagreement or contention isn't from the Spirit.
- We do not have an answer as to who was right or wrong concerning Mark.
- We do know that both Paul and Barnabas were wrong to have the issue bring them to the point of contention and separation.
- It very well may have been the Holy Spirit's plan to divide the ministry effort into two to be twice as effective but the Holy Spirit would done so with a sense of unity. I believe here the true direction was accomplished but the man's reaction was not in the Spirit and risked hurting people and relationships.
- **Matthew 5:22-24** tells us to have peaceable and reconciled relationships before we do ministry, "*I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*"
- We do not see Paul and Barnabas together again. This might be because of this disagreement or it may be because of lack of opportunity.
- The narrative of Acts will follow Paul, not Barnabas. This does not mean that Barnabas was out of the will of God. It means that Luke chose to write about the work Paul did.
- As for Mark:
 - We do see later that Paul calls for Mark because "He was useful to him in ministry."
(2 Timothy 4:11)
 - We do see Paul encourages the Colossians to receive him (Colossians 4:10)
 - We do see that Mark was a fellow prisoner with Paul (Philemon 1:24)

Act 15:40 But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

Act 15:41 And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

- Some people would tell you that Paul's example teaches us the importance of Evangelism. While this is true, we also see Paul concerned himself with "Strengthening the Churches"
 - It was his idea to go check on the churches
 - He writes epistles correcting the churches
 - He visits the churches
 - He stays with them for long periods

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How to turn a disagreement into a feud:

1. Be sure to develop and maintain a healthy fear of conflict, letting your own feelings build up so you are in an explosive frame of mind.
2. If you must state your concerns, be as vague and general as possible. Then the other person cannot do anything practical to change the situation.
3. Assume you know all the facts and you are totally right. The use of a clinching Bible verse is helpful. Speak prophetically for truth and justice; do most of the talking.
4. With a touch of defiance, announce your willingness to talk with anyone who wishes to discuss the problem with you. But do not take steps to initiate such conversation.
5. Latch tenaciously onto whatever evidence you can find that shows the other person is merely jealous of you.
6. Judge the motivation of the other party on any previous experience that showed failure or unkindness. Keep track of any angry words.
7. If the discussion should, alas, become serious, view the issue as a win/lose struggle. Avoid possible solutions and go for total victory and unconditional surrender. Don't get too many options on the table.
8. Pass the buck! If you are about to get cornered into a solution, indicate you are without power to settle; you need your partner, spouse, bank, whatever.

CONFLICT

Years ago, a large statue of Christ was erected high in the Andes on the border between Argentina and Chile. Called "**Christ of the Andes**," the statue symbolizes a pledge between the two countries that as long as the statue stands, there will be peace between Chile and Argentina. Shortly after the statue was erected, the Chileans began to protest that they had been slighted -- the statue had its back turned to Chile. Just when tempers were at their highest in Chile, a Chilean newspaperman saved the day. In an editorial that not only satisfied the people but made them laugh, he simply said, "The people of Argentina need more watching over than the Chileans."

Things You Need to Know About Conflict

a. Conflicts are a fact of life

nobody is immune, we can learn to fight dirty or clean

b. Conflicts are a great agent for change

sermons are many but nothing is like someone coming up to you and confronting an issue, Now you have to deal with it.

c. Conflicts are Gods tools used on us

1. He Humbles us
2. He Tests us
3. He causes us to grow

d. Conflicts can be used to honor God

Most people do not consider honoring God when in a conflict. Possibly because they haven't ever tried or think it possible. If you seek God's honor, you will be in control and won't go beyond proper bounds

e. Conflicts: There is a proper way to fight

1. **With Humility** – Galatians 6:1 *"Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted."*

We should not exalt ourselves and argue from a vantage point of superiority.

2. **With Love** – Romans 15:1-2 *"We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him."*

If you don't love the person you don't have a right to confront them. If you don't have love for the person you confront you won't have the attitude of desiring God's best for him or her.

3. **With Patience** – 2 Corinthians 6:4 *"But in all [things] approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience"*

We need patience in order to have proper self-restraint and we need patience to hear the other person out. Impatience is a source of anger and intolerance.

4. **Without Hypocrisy** -- Matthew 7:5 *"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."*

If we are living a deluded lifestyle, contrary to God's purposes for our lives, we can't see clearly enough to qualify for correcting other people.

Conflict Wisdom

- A. Choose your battles -- You don't have to correct everyone (that is being quarrelsome)
- B. Methods of confrontation are different for different people -- Be sensitive to nature of other people
- C. Focus on issues and SOLUTIONS -- If you are not looking for a solution but rather blame keep quiet
- D. Don't let emotions run out of control
- E. Pre-determine rules of engagement -- In the discussion is not the time for this. What are boundaries.
- F. Reduce conflicts to smallest dimensions
 1. Don't bring up past conflicts Prov 26:21
 2. Don't escalate matters, keep calm
 3. Choose word carefully. Prov 15:1
- G. Soften conflict and stimulate response by asking questions
- H. No one leaves until there is resolution

Hebrews 12:14 *"Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."*
Romans 12:18 *"If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all."*
Romans 14:19 *"Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding."*
Prov. 3:27 *"Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it."*
Prov. 3:28 *"Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it" --when you have it with you"*