



Topeka Bible Church
The Life of Paul, Episode 15:
“When to Fight, When to Yield”
Community Group Study Questions
Acts 15:12-35, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; 10:23

1. Considering James’ status (as the half-brother of Jesus [see *Matthew 13:55* and *Galatians 1:19*] and leader of the Jerusalem church [see *Acts 12:17* and *Galatians 2:9*]), why might his opinion have had significant impact on this issue?

2. Do you really believe that “all things are lawful/permissible” (*1 Corinthians 10:23a*)? What does this phrase say about God’s grace? Where might this principle become dangerous?

3. Now read the corollary phrase “but not all things are profitable/beneficial” (*1 Corinthians 10:23b*). What does this phrase say about God? How might this principle become abused?

4. Where do you put your stress, on grace or rules? How, if at all, has your background/upbringing contributed to this emphasis? How have you seen God bring about growth in your life in this area?

5. If we're exhorted to fight over *principles* and not *practices*, how can you distinguish between the two? What defines a "principle" and what defines a "practice?" How do the examples of Acts 13:8-10 and Galatians 2:4-5 help give us clarity on this issue?

6. What are the four "rules" that James gives for the Gentile Christians to follow (Acts 15:20 and 29)? Why does he choose these four and how are they more clearly tied to "principles" rather than "practices?"

7. If you are a person who stresses grace (i.e. liberty), where do you need to limit your liberty in order to love others more fully? If you stress rules (i.e. legalism), where do you need to grow in grace in order to love others (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)?

Memory Verses:

"For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more."

(1 Corinthians 9:19, NASB)

"Everything is permissible" – but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible" – but not everything is constructive."

(1 Corinthians 10:23, NIV)