

Small Group Study Guide: *To the End of the Earth.*
Acts 15:1-21

Opening Question: Discuss the importance of the debate on salvation by grace vs. works? Discuss the difference between works to earn salvation vs. works because of salvation!

1. The great debate (15:1-7)

- Ephesians 2:8-10. How does this passage define salvation?
- In the church there are needed good debates and bad debates, give examples of both. Have you participated in either type of debate, if willing, share your experience.
- Can you think of “screen doors” that others have attached to salvation? Discuss.
- 2 Cor. 5:17-21. Discuss the theology “In Christ.” What does it look like? How have you experienced this?

2. Three witnesses to salvation by grace. (Acts 15:7-18)

- What is Peter’s rebuttal for salvation by grace?
- What does Peter give as proof for salvation by grace?
- How does Peter exhort the church in Jerusalem?
- What is Peter’s conclusion to the Pharisee Christians?
- What is Paul’s experience with salvation by grace vs. the law? How does he explain this in Galatians 5:18-25?
- How does James finish the argument of salvation by grace? How does he affirm Peter, Paul and Barnabas?

3. The judgment. (Acts 15:19-21)

- Israel was to NOT trouble Gentiles coming to Christ. List ways we as the modern church have troubled people coming to Christ? How can we fix this and/or avoid this?
- Discuss how James teaches that this debate on salvation must include maintaining Christian fellowship? How might we view this in our understanding of fellowship with God and each other?
- Discuss the three things James stresses to the Gentile church. What did they mean to them and then how do we apply them to our lives today?