

ACTS OF THE SPIRIT

Disruption of
the New Age

Acts 15:1-31
What Is Essential?

Practicing the Way Individual Practice

The Jerusalem Council wrestled with a difficult question: What is truly necessary for following Jesus?

The early church decided not to place unnecessary burdens on new believers. They focused on what mattered most and trusted the Holy Spirit to guide the church forward.

This week consider what is truly essential for your life with God.

Read: Acts 15:1-31

Reflect:

- What parts of my faith help me draw closer to Jesus?
- What traditions or expectations have I confused with the gospel itself?
- If I lost access to church buildings, programs, and resources, how would I continue to follow Jesus?
- What simple practices help me remain connected to God?

Practice

Choose one essential practice and commit to it daily:

- Prayer
- Reading Scripture
- Worship
- Servig someone in love
- Generous giving
- Encouraging another person in faith

At the end of this week ask: Did this practice help me experience God's grace and become more attentive to the Holy Spirit?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, help me distinguish between what is essential and what is merely familiar. Teach me to follow Jesus with simplicity, faithfulness, and love. Amen.

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Practicing the Way Families and Households

The first Christians did not have church buildings, youth groups, sound systems, or church websites. Yet they changed the world because they stayed connected to Jesus and one another.

Read Together: Acts 15:6-11 or Acts 15:28,29

Talk Together:

- What are some things people think are necessary to the church?
- What do you think is truly essential for following Jesus?
- How can we follow Jesus at home and at work?

Family Challenge

Choose one simple practice to do together every day this week:

- Pray together before a meal
- Read one Bible verse together
- Share one thing you're thankful for each day.
- Perform one act of kindness for someone outside your household
- Spend five minutes praying for a neighbor, friend, or family member

Bonus Conversation

John Wesley encouraged Methodists to: "Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God." How might our family practice these three things this week?

Closing Prayer

Jesus, thank you that following you does not depend on having everything perfect. Help us love God, love our neighbors, and walk with you each day. Amen.

The early Methodists changed lives through simple practices: prayer, Scripture, worship, communion, small groups, generosity, and acts of mercy. None required a building. All required a willingness to follow Jesus.