

Conflicts Among Christians

What's an example of one of your church's traditions?

Read Acts 15:1-17.

1. Why was circumcision so important to the Jews?
 - A. God gave this rite to set His people apart from others (Genesis 17:9-14).
 - B. The miraculous birth of Isaac occurred after Abraham's circumcision.
 - C. Tradition—the Jews had been doing this for centuries.
 - D. Jesus was circumcised (Luke 2:21).
 - E. It's helpful to have a physical sign to know who's good and who isn't.
 - F. Practiced by males, it maintained patriarchy—males rule.
 - G. Sexual things are very important to most people.
 - H. It wasn't that important to most Jews.
 - I. Other.

2. Why did Antioch Church leaders react so strongly against circumcision?
 - A. This would reduce the number of people who would join Christianity.
 - B. It would lead to a lifestyle focused on rules rather than on Christ.
 - C. When something matters, you're willing to fight for it (or against it).
 - D. Circumcision was Old Testament; this was New Testament times.
 - E. Jesus did away with circumcision for His people.
 - F. A lot of Gentile Christians hadn't been circumcised.
 - G. It's a very painful process.
 - H. This would promote legalism rather than faith.
 - I. Other.

3. Why did the Antioch Church send a group to Jerusalem?
 - A. They needed a ruling about a practical and theological question.
 - B. The church in Antioch was submitting to the Jerusalem leaders.
 - C. The church in Antioch was instructing the Jerusalem leaders.
 - D. The church in Antioch had a church split and needed outside help.
 - E. God was doing more in Antioch than in Jerusalem at that time.
 - F. The Antioch Church tried to change, but the Judaizers held firm.
 - G. The Antioch Church wanted a break from Paul and Barnabas.
 - H. The group won an all-expense vacation to tour the Bible lands.
 - I. Other.

4. How did the church leaders in Jerusalem decide this matter?
 - A. They prayed about it (like Acts 1:24; 4:31; 13:3).
 - B. They cast lots (like Acts 1:26).
 - C. The Holy Spirit descended like on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:2-4).
 - D. Both sides of the issue had equal time to make their case.
 - E. Lots of talking.
 - F. The Gentiles had more miracles than did the circumcised Jews.
 - G. James, the brother of Jesus, unilaterally decided for the whole group.
 - H. Other.

5. What was the “yoke” Gentiles and Jews couldn’t bear (vs. 10)?
 - A. Circumcision.
 - B. The many ceremonial rules God had given His people.
 - C. The many rules God’s people had added on their own.
 - D. Traditions.
 - E. The 10 commandments.
 - F. Obedience.
 - G. Trusting God for everything.
 - H. Other.

6. What happened after the Jerusalem Council (see vs. 22-41)?
 - A. Circumcision remained a dividing issue.
 - B. Both churches enhanced their communication efforts.
 - C. The Antioch Church separated from the Jerusalem Church.
 - D. Antioch experienced no more church conflicts.
 - E. Many people dropped out, especially those who didn’t get their way.
 - F. Idol meat and sexual immorality were problems (Revelation 2:14, 20).
 - G. Lots of rejoicing.
 - H. Other.

7. On the continuum below, place an “X” where you see yourself; put a “Δ” where you see your parents; and put a “v” where you see your church.

Conservative
 Keep things
 the same

Progressive
 Change things

8. How does your church deal with conflicts in beliefs or practices? How do you deal with them?