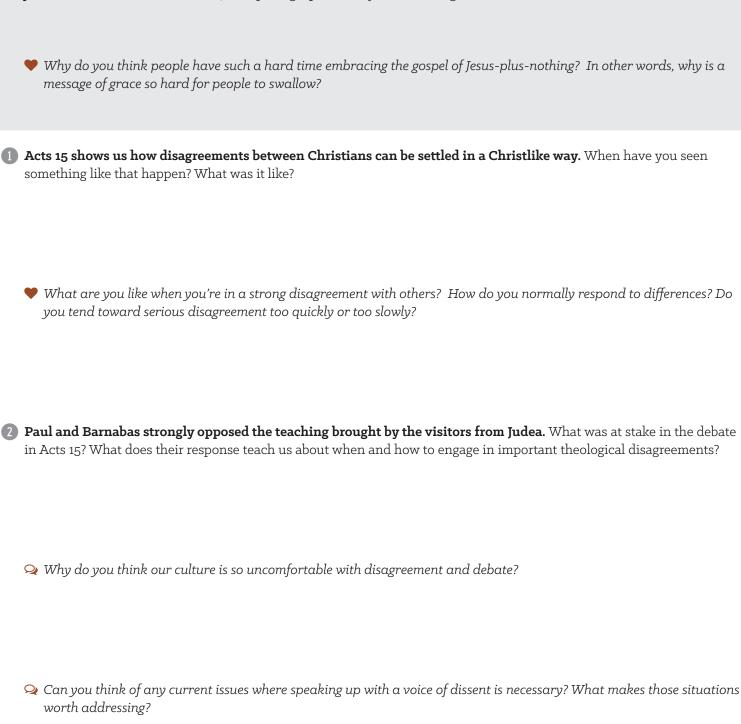
OPENING UP: In Acts 15, the Apostles confronted a false gospel that required Gentiles to add a religious ritual to be fully included in the church. What "Jesus-plus" gospels have you heard taught?



How can you proactively seek to discuss doctrine with other Christians in a way that strengthens and encourages both them and yourself? Think especially of the the different approaches in Acts 15. Peter, Paul, and Barnabas refer to various experiences that they had, whereas James appeals to Scripture.

3	The Jerusalem Council affirmed that salvation comes by grace through faith alone, apart from the works of the Law. Take some time to discuss that incredible assertion as a group. See also Galatians 2:16, Romans 3:21-28, Romans 4:1-5, Titus 3:4-7, 2 Tim. 1:8-12.
	Even with their teaching on being free from the works of the law, the apostles still gave the Gentile believers four specific instructions. This raises an important question: If they were free from the Law, why were these admonitions necessary? If we are saved by God's grace through faith in Christ, where do obedience, action, and duty fit in?
	♥ How are you most challenged in your own life thinking about what salvation requires and what salvation results in?
4	The Jerusalem council encouraged new Gentile believers to refrain from eating meat sacrificed to idols. The point wasn't that the meat itself was inherently wrong—idols are nothing, after all. The Apostles were calling them to voluntarily surrender a freedom to demonstrate their commitment to the gospel and remove stumbling blocks for others. In other words, they chose to set aside a "right" in order to promote unity and further the advance of the gospel.
	Have you ever had to willingly give up a personal liberty for the sake of unity or mission? Perhaps it was declining to voice an opinion or choosing to forego a preferred practice so that someone with a different background wouldn't be offended.
	What are some examples of how believers might set aside certain "liberties" to build unity in the church or advance the gospel among the lost?