

2006-07 BSP#6 Group Time Discussion

(A) Questions on the Text (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

1. Read Acts 15:5. Paul encountered very strong opposition from people who were in favor of keeping the Law of Moses. Why was this mentality so common among the early Christians? (Hint: read CCC 595 below.) Is this mentality still hindering many Christians today? How?

595. Among the religious authorities of Jerusalem, not only were the Pharisee Nicodemus and the prominent Joseph of Arimathea both secret disciples of Jesus, but there was also long-standing dissension about him, so much so that St. John says of these authorities on the very eve of Christ's Passion, "many...believed in him," though very imperfectly. This is not surprising, if one recalls that on the day after Pentecost "a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith" and "some believers...belonged to the party of the Pharisees," to the point that St. James could tell St. Paul, "how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed; and they are all zealous for the Law."

(B) Session Review (Suggested time: 20 minutes)

Review today's session outline for the Navigator's Time, particularly the summary (item D). What is the most important point you learned from today's session? Why? Are there any issues discussed in today's Navigator's Time that you don't understand? Discuss them with your group members and see if they can help you. If satisfactory answers are not readily available, put the issues or questions on paper. Either bring them up during Q&A or submit them to the navigator for post-session response.

(C) Optional Application Questions (Suggestion: Do these questions only if your group chooses not to do (B) above.)

1. Read Acts 16:34. How long has it been since you rejoiced that you believe in God? If it has been a while, what prevents you from rejoicing?
2. Read 16:35-39. What do you think of Paul's tactic of forcing the magistrates to apologize for punishing him and Silas? When is it appropriate to accept an unjust punishment, and when is it appropriate to demand an apology for it?