

Message from God's Life-Giving Word

November 11, 2018

big CHURCH – big DRIFT

Acts 15: Significant Controversies in the Church between the Law and the Gospel

NOTES:

*Now then, why do you try to **test God** by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that **neither** we nor our ancestors have been **able to bear**?* Acts 15:10

*It is my judgment, therefore, that we should **not make it difficult** for the Gentiles who are turning to God.* Acts 15:19

Avoid the Drift

1. Avoid focusing on the _____.

*And He (Jesus) said to them, “**Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation.**”* Mark 16:15

2. Avoid the drift toward the _____.

*...yet we know that a person is **not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ**, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because **by works of the law no one will be justified.*** Galatians 2:16

3. Preserve rather than _____.

*Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so **I am sending you.*** John 20:21

Next Steps

1. Journal the following: From your perspective, who is the church for? Have you had any bad experiences with a church that made you want to say, “I don’t want anything to do with them anymore”? In your opinion, is it too easy or too hard to become a Christian?
 2. Read Acts 15. The controversy for the Church at that time was over circumcision and dietary laws. What are contemporary sources of controversy for “entry” in the Church? How can you guard against the propensity to drift toward law and away from grace?
 3. It can be hard to be a church where grace and truth conflict but coexist. Jesus was full of both. So, in response, let’s make three, prayerful commitments with Acts 15:19 in mind:
 - Let’s be more concerned with who we are reaching, rather than who we are keeping.
 - Let’s always err on the side of grace.
 - Let’s remain open-handed in attempts to advance the message of Jesus Christ.
- REMEMBER:** *Your time in daily devotion and prayer is not just for your benefit. It’s also for the benefit of others. Share what God is teaching you.*