



Oakwood

CHURCH

March 21 Discussion Questions

“Law and Grace”

Acts 15:1-35

Preview

Legalistic Obligations:

1. **Distort** the Gospel (v.1, 5)
2. **Burden** the believer (v.5, 10, 24, 28)
3. Promote mutual suspicion and **judgment** (v.9)

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest...For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28, 30

Personal Disciplines:

1. **Celebrate** the Gospel (v. 7-9, 11, 31)
 - a. Working **from** salvation, not **for** salvation.
2. **Empower** the believer (v.2, 7, 22, 25, 28-29)
 - a. Not **abusing** freedom to sin, but **using** freedom to serve.
3. Promote mutual understanding and **encouragement** (v.19, 32)

“You were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge your sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.” Galatians 5:13

Connect

1. During your upbringing, did your parents establish any unique legalistic rules? How did they make you feel? Looking back, are you thankful for them or frustrated by them?
2. Did you grow up tending to see Christianity more as a set of rules to keep or a relationship based in grace? What influenced your viewpoint?

Pray & Read Acts 15:1-35

Discuss

3. What issue were the disciples debating at the Jerusalem Council?
4. In what way would requiring circumcision or any other Judaistic law be a distortion of the Gospel?
5. What are some common legal requirements our Christian culture tends to impose on “serious” believers? Why are these burdensome to the believer? How does this contrast with 1 John 5:3?
6. To what degree do you or have you struggled with legalism as a Christian? Have you ever believed God would love you more or less based on your performance? How have you evolved in this regard over time?
7. How are legal obligations different from personal disciplines?
8. How is working *from* salvation different from working *for* salvation? Which is more freeing? What outcomes result from working *from* salvation?
9. Based on how God has wired you, what personal disciplines most connect you to God?
10. To what degree do you believe your heart has been performing your personal disciplines in order to gain God’s favor? How can you change your heart motivation?
11. At what point does our freedom in God’s grace create an unhealthy Christian experience? Share how this has affected your own approach to God.

Apply

12. In what way do you still need to develop a healthy Christian response to the unique combination of God’s grace and our need for obedience?
13. In what way is this lesson reassuring to you? In what way is it a challenge for you?
14. How does this passage lead you to worship Jesus?
15. How does this passage most call you to respond to Jesus?

Prayer

Spend time thanking God for His amazing grace and indiscriminate steadfast love. Ask Him to bring clarity, assurance, or discipline to your Christian walk - whichever you most need.

Church-Wide Prayer Focus, from the Prayer Team

Personal Prayer Focus: Please pray we will not make it difficult for people to come to know Jesus.