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Message 14 of 23

**Don’t Be Law Abiding**

***Acts 15:1-35***

# Introduction

### Confusion over salvation in the OT and NT has led to four views.

### But salvation has always been by grace though faith!

### But how do we affirm grace?

# I. Expect attacks against grace (15:1-5).

## Gentile believers in Antioch became confused whether they must obey the law of Moses to be saved (15:1-5).

### Unauthorized Jewish teachers from Jerusalem traveled north to Antioch and taught circumcision for salvation (15:1).

### Paul and Barnabas unsuccessfully debated this works salvation (15:2a).

### So Paul and Barnabas traveled to Jerusalem and en route encouraged the Jewish congregations with Gentile salvation (12:2b-4).

### At Jerusalem, some believing Pharisees mistakenly taught that Gentiles must be circumcised and obey the law of Moses (15:5).

### Paul had already opposed circumcision for salvation to the Galatians (5:1-4). But this letter was not known yet to the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch.

## Many people oppose salvation by faith today.

### Some churches add to faith and ruin it—like True Jesus Church.

### People like legalism ultimately due to pride.

# II. Uphold grace equally (15:6-18).

## The Council upheld grace for Jew and Gentile alike (15:6-18).

## All believers have the same way to Jesus—by simple trust in him.

### Galatians 3:28 affirms no difference in the way of salvation.

### We don’t need to abide by the law of Moses.

#### Jesus was the end of the law (Rom 10:4).

#### Jesus nailed the law to the cross (Col 2:14).

#### Jesus abolished “in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations” (Eph 2:15 NIV).

#### Paul said he was not subject to the law (1 Cor 9:20).

# III. Uphold morality for unity (15:19-35).

## Jerusalem’s leaders preserved a unified church by prohibiting Gentiles from idolatry, eating blood, and immorality (15:19-35).

## These practices show our salvation with moral living that unifies.

### Idolatry: We worship Jesus as God.

### Blood: We don’t eat blood.

### Immorality limits sex only between a married man and woman.

# Conclusion

### Don’t be law abiding— trust Christ by grace through faith for unity (Main Idea).

### Exhortation: How can *you* better affirm grace?

#### How are you attacking grace with legalism?

#### From whom are you withholding grace?

#### How can you better show grace in moral living?

### Jesus is the final sacrifice pointed to by the law of Moses.

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