

THE CHURCH UNLEASHED



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STUDY OF

ACTS

Does the Bible Really Say That? Taking a Stand against Legalism

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Acts 15 NIV

1 Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.

6 The apostles and elders met to consider this question. 7 After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. 8 God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. 9 He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. 10 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? 11 No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

Even the early church had conflict.

Well-meaning Christians can get caught up in legalism.

The antidote to legalism is not license.

The foundational question: Is it biblical?

Tests for Disputable Issues:

1. Will it lead to freedom or slavery? (1 Cor. 6:12)
2. Will it make me a stumbling block or a stepping-stone? (1 Cor. 8:13; 10:33)
3. Will it build me up or tear me down spiritually? (1 Cor. 10:23)
4. Will it only please me, or will it glorify Christ? (1 Cor. 10:31)

When the Bible is silent, grace must prevail.