
SERMON NOTES AND SCRIPTURE

Acts 15:1-13, 19 (NIV)

Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “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. 3 The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad. 4 When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.

5 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses.”

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 did not discriminate 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 Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors 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.”

12 The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. 13 When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me... 19 “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.

Pressures that hinder the movement of the church:

- 1. The pressure of pleasing insiders rather than pursuing outsiders.**
- 2. The pressure of moving from grace to law.**
- 3. The pressure to focus on external conformity rather than internal transformation.**

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read the passage together as a group. In your own words, what is the overall message of this passage?

What stands out to you as we read those scripture verses?

Why do think the Lord thought it was necessary to include these verses in the Bible?

Have you had someone in your life that modeled the principles in this passage? Explain.

Can you think of a situation or circumstance in your own life where you experienced what these verses are teaching?

What are some of the benefits of applying these verses to your life?

As we've been discussing this, what is the Holy Spirit showing you personally?