



October 22th, 2017: BOTTOM RUNG

OPENING

- Describe a time when you felt like an outsider? Is there a time when you felt like an outsider specifically in the church?
- What are some ways the church has made others feel like outsiders?

DISCUSS & APPLY

[Read Acts 15:1-20](#)

- Describe the conflict the early church was having. Why was it a challenge for non-Jews to be Christians?
- Why do you think it can be difficult for a church to be focused both on people inside the church and on those outside the church? How have you experienced this tension? How do you think Grace experiences this tension?
- Why do you think it's difficult to both empathize with sinners while also striving towards deepening your faith, holiness and truth? How do you experience this tension?
- Eric defined an "Explanatory Comma" as a parenthetical explanation in the middle of speaking that gives some background on a potentially unknown social phenomenon. Can you give some examples of explanatory commas? What are some situations in which they are helpful, and when are they unhelpful?
- What are some ways that we unintentionally make it difficult for people to come to faith? What are some ways we can remove unnecessary difficulties?
- What sins do you think must be stopped before someone could be considered a Christian? What ways must we be like Jesus to follow him?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you say or do that might make it more difficult for those far from Jesus to encounter his grace through you? What is one practical thing you can do to help instead of hinder them?