

Following the Real Jesus: Make It Easy

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Acts 15:1, 7-11, 19-21;

1 Timothy 2:3-4

Following the Real Jesus: The purpose of the church is to make disciples who make disciples.

You are going to be my witnesses. Tell your story of Jesus.

¹ Then some people came to Antioch from Judea and began teaching the non-Jewish believers: “You cannot be saved if you are not circumcised as Moses taught us.” Acts 15:1

All you need is Jesus + Nothing. You don’t need to become Jewish.

⁷ After a long debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God chose me from among you to preach the Good News to the nations. They heard the Good News from me, and they believed. Acts 15:7

⁸ God, who knows the thoughts of everyone, accepted them. He showed this to us by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us. Acts 15:8

We see gentiles, categories, stereotypes, behavior. When all you can see is the surface, the superficial is what you try to change.

God sees differently, deeply, sees what we all are and have in common. He works for nothing less than a change of heart.

⁹ To God, those people are not different from us. When they believed, he made their hearts pure. Acts 15:9

God alone knows who you really are. What you really need. What you can really do.

¹⁰ So now why are you testing God by putting a heavy load around the necks of the non-Jewish believers? It is a load that neither we nor our ancestors were able to carry. Acts 15:10

Testing God. Anything done to “the Church” is being done to God.

“Church people” habitually look backward instead of forward. They drift toward fairness rather than grace.

¹¹ But we believe that we and they too will be saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 15:11

No one gets in because they are “good enough”. No one is kept out because they are “bad enough”. God is gracious enough for all of us.

¹⁹ “So I think we should not bother the other people who are turning to God. Acts 15:19

We should not make it difficult. When Jesus begins to purify your heart, life should become easier not harder.

²⁰ Instead, we should write a letter to them telling them these things: Stay away from food that has been offered to idols (which makes it unclean), any kind of sexual sin, eating animals that have been strangled, and blood. Acts 15:20

²¹ They should do these things, because for a long time in every city the law of Moses has been taught. And it is still read in the synagogue every Sabbath day.” Acts 15:21

Church doesn't have to be driven by policies and categories. Grace and Truth Conversations.

Grace and truth must coexist, not contradict, in Jesus' church. Let's be more concerned with whom we are reaching rather than who we are keeping.

³ This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to know the truth. 1 Timothy 2:3-4

God's heart is for all to be saved. Make disciples who make disciples, until there is no place left that Jesus is not known.