

BIG DRIFT
Big Church – Part 5
October 29, 2017

While Paul is starting the Church among the Gentiles all over the known ends of the earth, we see that...

Back in Jerusalem, there was controversy.

John 1:14 (NIV) *“The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

The Council of Jerusalem...

Acts 15:1 (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.’”*

Acts 15:2 (NIV) *“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.”*

Acts 15:3-5 (NIV) *“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.’”*

613 Jewish Laws and Customs

Acts 15:7-8 (NIV) *“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.”*

Acts 15:9 (NIV) *“He did not discriminate between us and them, for He purified their hearts by faith.”*

Acts 15:10-11 (NIV) *“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.”*

Grace was the message of the Church then and it needs to be the message of the Church today.

Acts 15:19 (NIV) *“It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.”*

Acts 15:20 (NIV) *“Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.”*

Acts 15:30-31 (NIV) *“So the men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. ³¹ The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.”*

The Big Drift Issue:

What you have to “DO” in order to belong.

Three Actions To Avoid...

- Drifting toward insiders and away from outsiders.
- Drifting toward law and away from grace.
- Drifting toward preserving rather than advancing.

Three Commitments To Keep...

- Let’s be BOLD.
- Let’s err on the side of grace.
- Let’s remain openhanded.