



*Acts 15*  
Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

*Galatians 2:4*

**Legalism is always divisive. *1 Timothy 1:3-5***

**How has legalism impacted your faith?**

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**Trouble should be handled by the church leaders. *Acts 15:4–5***

**How do you typically handle troubles/disputes in the church?**

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**Church leaders must always follow God's Spirit.**

**Why do we try to handle disputes on our own?**

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Slides

**Baggage**

*Acts 15*  
Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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*Acts 15:1 NLT While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch of Syria, some men from Judea arrived and began to teach the believers: “Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved.”*

*Galatians 2:4 NLT Even that question came up only because of some so-called believers there—false ones, really—who were secretly brought in. They sneaked in to spy on us and take away the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to enslave us and force us to follow their Jewish regulations.*

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What really is happening here is called **legalism**.

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**Legalism is saying I am right and you need to listen to me and do things my way!**

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**Legalism is always divisive.**

*1 Timothy 1:3-5 NIV As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer<sup>4</sup> or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith.<sup>5</sup> The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

*Acts 15:2 NLT Paul and Barnabas disagreed with them, arguing vehemently. Finally, the church decided to send Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, accompanied by some local believers, to talk to the apostles and elders about this question.*

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**Trouble should be handled by the church leaders.**

*Acts 15:4–5 NLT When they arrived in Jerusalem, Barnabas and Paul were welcomed by the whole church, including the apostles and elders. They reported everything God had done through them.<sup>5</sup> But then some of the believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and insisted, “The Gentile converts must be circumcised and required to follow the law of Moses.”*

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**You have to quit smoking/cussing/drinking before you can become a Christian.**

**Once you are a Christian, it is expected that you dress nicer/volunteer for the nursery/use KJV only.**

*Acts 15:6–11 NLT So the apostles and elders met together to resolve this issue.<sup>7</sup> At the meeting, after a long discussion, Peter stood and addressed them as follows: “Brothers, you all know that God chose me from among you some time ago to preach to the Gentiles so that they could hear the Good News and believe.<sup>8</sup> God knows people’s hearts, and He confirmed that He accepts Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us.<sup>9</sup> He made no distinction between us and them, for He cleansed their hearts through faith.<sup>10</sup> So why are you now challenging God by burdening the Gentile believers with a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors were able to bear?<sup>11</sup> We believe that we are all saved the same way, by the undeserved grace of the Lord Jesus.”*

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*Acts 15:19 NLT And so my judgment is that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.*

**“We need to stop trying to get people starched and ironed before they’ve been washed!” Vance Havner**

*Acts 15:20 NLT Instead, we should write and tell them to abstain from eating food offered to idols, from sexual immorality, from eating the meat of strangled animals, and from consuming blood.*

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*Acts 15:21 NLT For these laws of Moses have been preached in Jewish synagogues in every city on every Sabbath for many generations.”*

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*We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.*

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*Acts 15:22-31 NLT Then the apostles and elders together with the whole church in Jerusalem chose delegates, and they sent them to Antioch of Syria with Paul and Barnabas to report on this decision. The men chosen were two of the church leaders—Judas (also called Barsabbas) and Silas.<sup>23</sup> This is the letter they took with them:*

*“This letter is from the apostles and elders, your brothers in Jerusalem. It is written to the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Greetings!<sup>24</sup> We understand that some men from here have troubled you and upset you with their teaching, but we did not send them!<sup>25</sup> So we decided, having come to complete agreement, to send you official representatives, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,<sup>26</sup> who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>27</sup> We are sending Judas and Silas to confirm what we have decided concerning your question.<sup>28</sup> For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay no greater burden on you than these few requirements:<sup>29</sup> You must abstain from eating food offered to idols, from consuming blood or the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality. If you do this, you will do well. Farewell.”*

*<sup>30</sup> The messengers went at once to Antioch, where they called a general meeting of the believers and delivered the letter. <sup>31</sup> And there was great joy throughout the church that day as they read this encouraging message.*

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**Church leaders must always follow God’s Spirit.**

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