

Acts 15:1-35 • The Law vs. Grace

1. (v.1-2) This is not about establishing some kind of church **hierarchy**, but the direction of the Spirit to bring **unity** where **doctrine** is concerned.
2. (v.3-21) **Fellowship** and **ministry** were not by-passed in order to get to the “more important” business on hand.
 - a. Whereas Israel was exclusively designated as “God’s people”, God is now taking from **every nation**.
 - b. God will return to the work first begun **in Israel** to complete it at the last.
 - c. It is no longer “saved by the Law”, but “saved by grace”. This is the transition point from the **Old** to **New Covenant**, the transition from “**Peter**” to “**Paul**”.
3. (v.22-35) Not **dogmas** handed down by men, but the leading of the Holy Spirit to attain **unity of doctrine**.
 - a. The common ground is to separate from **false worship** and **influences**.
 - b. The practical effect was being more deeply rooted in **God’s Word**.
4. Summary
 - a. It began with a dispute concerning the proper application of the **Word of God**.
 - b. The discussion was guided by the **Word of God**.
 - c. The final judgment was rendered according to the **Word of God**.
 - d. But the proper attitude and behavior of love and fellowship were never compromised in the course of pursuing the **Word of God**.
5. Today’s Tragedy (Gal. 1:6-9)
 - a. Pursuing the early part of Acts – to bring in the **kingdom** – without the latter revelation of the role of the **church**
 - b. Some try to make strange combinations of **law** and **grace**, **Israel** and the **church**, **kingdom** truth and **church** truth.