

## Sermon Notes

*A Counsel Full of Wise Counsel*

*Acts 15: 1–29*

*Pastor Jeff Hinds*

1. The gospel of Jesus is salvation, by faith, in the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection as the payment of our confessed, and empowered by God's Spirit, repented-of, sins. Jesus died to pay for our sin and rose on the third day, conquering sin, Satan and death. All who believe in Him alone, as Savior and Lord, are given eternal life. Sola fide – faith alone, Sola gratia – grace alone; in Solus Christus – Christ alone (Acts 15:1-29).
2. The gospel has been treated as though it is not sufficient: "grace plus...". However, the gospel is sufficient to save. Good works are right acts of worship – a right response after receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord (Ephesians 2:8-10).
3. The gospel is all about God's grace towards us. As recipients of grace, we should be driven to live out grace towards others (Acts 15:1-29).
4. The gospel must never be added to – the gospel always stands alone. However, "strong" believers, who have extra freedom from legalism should not flaunt one's personal freedoms and thus risk a "weak" Christian falling into sin (Acts 15:1-29; Romans 14-15; I Corinthians 9:24-27, Galatians 5:13).

## Sermon Questions

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### CONNECT:

- When have you benefited from wise counsel? Please share the story

### GROW:

- Read Acts 15:1-29. What serious issue threatened to divide the early church?
- What are some ways that people today "add" to the gospel?
- How do Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:4-7 clarify the gospel for us? What is conspicuously absent from these descriptions of the gospel?
- In Acts 15:10, Peter asked "Why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?" What is the yoke Peter refers to (see Galatians 2:16)? Why would this "put God to the test" (see Amos 9:11-12 and Isaiah 49:6)?
- How would the instructions and concessions lead to unity between Jews and Gentiles (Acts 15:19-21)?
- What barriers might we unknowingly place in front of someone coming to faith in Christ? How can we bring those barriers down so that the gospel is clear?

### GO:

- How might you clearly explain the gospel to someone who has never heard of Jesus?