

The Limits of the Law

November 8, 2015

Acts 15:1-21

Read 15:1-6

Do you have to obey God to earn, keep, or prove salvation?

Read Acts 15:7-19

Grace Needs No Law

1. God makes no distinction between law-followers and law-breakers (verses 8-9)
2. Why: because none of us are law-followers - Verse 10
 - Romans 3:23
 - Matthew 5:20-22; 27-29; 48

Therefore...

1. Salvation must be by grace alone – Verse 11
 - Grace means “getting something good you don’t deserve”; a gift
 - Read Ephesians 2:8-9
2. So stop adding the Law back in – Verse 19
 - Read Verse 19

Does obedience make us better than other people?

- Legalism says “Yes”

- Legalism: your place in God's family is determined by how well you keep the rules
- Often the rules cited by legalists are biblical commands
- But legalists turn legitimate commands into a litmus test

How do the Apostles respond to that challenge? Read Acts 15:20-21

- James' point is that love is better than the Law

Love is better than the Law at unifying the people of God

- Life in the family of God is:
 - Not about keeping rules that make us better than other people
 - About loving one another sacrificially – doing things that bless others
 - Avoiding immorality out of love for God and others

So what does God want us to learn from Acts 15?

- As members of God's family we are to be people of grace and love, not the Law