

sermon notes

October 5, 2025 | Pastor Tony Caffey, Messiah Bible Church
No Other Name | “The Liability of Jesus + Legalism” | **Acts 15:1–35**

- 1) Jesus plus legalism _____ the gospel
(15:1–5)

- 2) Jesus plus legalism _____ new converts
(15:6–12)

- 3) Jesus plus legalism or license _____ church unity
(15:13–35)

Questions for further application of God’s Word:

GO DEEPER

Read Acts 15:1–12. Briefly summarize the theological conflict between the Judaizers and Paul. What did Peter say about the matter? Why did Peter side with Paul on this issue?

What are some things people add to “faith in Christ” as necessary for salvation? Why must we protect the purity of the gospel from legalism and misguided traditionalism?

GET PERSONAL

What are some ways legalism encroaches on your heart and intrudes on your freedom in Christ? In what ways can tradition inhibit or distract from God’s work of salvation? What unbiblical cultural expectations do we sometimes place on others inside the church?

How can traditions be beneficial for us? When are they harmful?

Do you have a natural tendency towards legalism or license? Has that tendency ever compromised your relationships with people in the church? How have you curbed that tendency in order to protect the unity of the church?

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What’s the difference between godly discipline and ungodly legalism or ritualism? How do we avoid the trappings of legalism while still striving to become more like Christ?

Read 1 Corinthians 8:1–13. How might legalism hinder church unity? How might license hinder church unity? How does 1 Corinthians 8, along with Acts 15, help us understand the issue of not becoming a stumbling block to our brothers? Is there anything that you are doing right now that could become a stumbling block to a weaker brother or sister?

ADVANCED QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER STUDY

Read Acts 15:13–35. What compromise did James and the leaders in Jerusalem reach? Was this a theological compromise that perverted the gospel? If not, why not? Should Christians today abide by the prohibitions listed in Acts 15:20? Why or why not?