

Acts # 62 “The Jerusalem Council” Acts 15:3-7 ;Galatians 2

The church at Antioch was important because it had certain distinctions.

It was first of all Gentile churches as the household of Cornelius couldn't be considered a church the size of the group that Antioch was.

And from the Antioch church; the first authorized missionaries were sent to the lost world.

Antioch was the center where church leaders met; at one time or another, Peter, Barnabas, Titus, John Mark, Judas Barsabbas, Silas and Luke himself, were all connected with this church.

Legalism which has many aspects is man's attempts to please God and or emphasize himself before his fellow man and generally speaking, there are 2 major forms: 1. Salvation by works; 2. Spirituality by works.

In salvation by works we have many different illustrations: like believe and repent but anything you add to believing is legalism and wrong; believe and confess; believe and fully surrender; believe and be baptized; believe and join the church; believe and beg God to save you or forgive you; believe and give up something; or in our context believe and be circumcised and believe and keep the law.

Remember that everything God does for us, everything He provides for us, is provided on the basis of grace.

We don't earn it or deserve it and we don't work for it; therefore, everything in the divine plan is provided for us apart from human merit because everything depends upon the grace of the Lord.

There is absolutely no place in the Christian way of life for the Mosaic law except as a communication of biblical truth by way of illustration of the fact that man is bankrupt and does not have the ability within himself to save himself—Titus 3:5.

They weren't excluding the work of the cross and that's what makes it so subtle; they're saying you must believe to be saved but once you have believed you're still not really saved, you then must be circumcised.

Grace means God is not basing His free gift of salvation on our relative righteousness and because of that, God has given us all our blessings in eternity past although we begin to receive them at salvation but if we don't grow up spiritually to capacity so we can handle the blessings, God will withhold those blessings.

The congregation of the Jerusalem church was over-emotional and not objective; they were being led by their emotion instead of being led by biblical truth and responding with proper emotion.

The Word of God is the standard of the Christian life not our emotion.

Emotion is to be understood and then evaluated and then enjoyed but this is impossible

without the absolute standard
for the Christian way of life: The Word of God, biblical truth.

Emotion is a response to something in our thought pattern, a result of what we think and when we think Bible truth, we appreciate things on the basis of Bible truth.

Emotion (when it is not in its proper place) has an effect on the physical body, like psychosomatic illness.

So, when we refuse biblical truth, we create a vacuum which draws religious emotionalism and when such emotions become involved and we make emotion our standard, we then become the most miserable people.

But when we have God's Word, we can truly appreciate the details of life because they become points of His truth as we relate to them.

Paul is telling the people in this big reception all about what he said to the Gentiles and what he said to the Gentiles aroused great anger in these legalists.

The emphasis is simply on what God is doing; it's God's work and God's plan.

It is God who provides the assets, the grace, the protection; it is God who sustains and they are operating under His assets

in the Christian way of life and that always rubs the legalist the wrong way.

These legalists are saying in effect that ritual must be involved in salvation and morality must be involved in the Christian way of life which is merely a system of man-made integrity and they ignore the great body of Scripture which says that Christianity is what you think not simply what you do.