LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Acts 15 :1-35

The error of lawless men

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

We're in Acts 15, by the way. So, yeah, that's where we are. Open your Bible there, Acts chapter 15. And that's where we'll be here this morning. We're going to be reading about the first 35 verses of Acts 15 today.

And, all right, so follow along with me as I read. But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. So being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, talking about their first missionary journey, and brought great joy to all the brothers. When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.

But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, it is necessary to circumcise them in order to keep, excuse me, and to order them to keep the law of Moses. The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. And after there had been much debate, that sounds like church, doesn't it? Peter stood up and said to them, brothers, you know that in the early days, God made a choice among you that by my mouth, the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us.

And he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, 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? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will. And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as

they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. After they finished speaking, James replied, brothers, listen to me.

Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles to take from them a people for his name. And with this, the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written. After this, I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen. And I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord. And all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord who makes these things known from of old.

Therefore, my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols and from sexual immorality and from what has been strangled and from blood. For from ancient generations, Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he has read every Sabbath in the synagogues. Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders with the whole church to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas, called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers, with the following letter. The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings.

Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions. It has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements, that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what has been strangled and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.

Farewell. So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with many words. And after they had spent some time, they were sent off in peace by the brothers to those who had sent them.

But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others. Also, stop there, please. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we get into these verses this morning, we

ask that you would use them to instruct us and help us to understand your will and your redemptive plan. We pray that you would open our hearts and help us to hear.

We thank you, Father. In the name of Jesus, our Savior, amen, amen. As we look at these verses here today that we're dealing with in really the majority of Acts chapter 15, there arises five points of interest that we're going to be advancing, but each of them in the form of a question. I'll put them up on the screen for you. This is gonna be in the form of somewhat of an outline, if you will.

And the first thing that we're going to be looking at here this morning is simply the question, what is going on in this chapter? And of course, that's the way you should always begin, to read a section of the Bible and ask yourself the question, what's going on here? Secondly, what is the doctrinal error that is causing so much problem in this chapter that causes Paul and Barnabas, along with some others, to make their way down to Jerusalem, to get the opinion of the elders? Thirdly then, why was the error made and why is it still being made today? And that's gonna be really one of the more important points for us to deal with here today.

Fourthly, what did the apostles decide related to this problem, this issue? And then finally, we're gonna ask the question, what did they convey in their letter to the Gentiles? And the reason we're gonna be asking that final question is because there is some confusion over what they said. Well, so we're starting with then the first point of that, and that is, what is going on in this chapter? And it's pretty easy to tell because Luke starts off in verse one by identifying the problem.

Look with me there in your Bible. He says, some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. There, that's it. That's the problem. And it was a big problem.

And Luke tells us here that these were unnamed Jews, just some men who traveled all the way from Jerusalem north to Antioch, which was no small journey, and they took it upon themselves to begin to teach the believers. And these are mostly Gentiles up in Antioch. We're really happy that you guys came to Jesus. That's just delightful. We couldn't be happier.

But there's a problem. You haven't gone far enough. You're going to also have to do some other things in order to truly be saved. You need to submit to the right of circumcision, and you're going to also need to keep the law, so in order to be saved. So you can kind of tell where these guys are coming from, can't you?

Right? This is, by the way, repeated in verse five when they got together in their meeting in Jerusalem. There in verse five, we're told some believers who belong to the party of the Pharisees, and that tells us a

little bit more about who they were. They rose up and they said, look at these words. Look at the words in verse five in your Bible.

It is necessary, think about that word, to circumcise them, and look at this, to order them to keep the law of Moses. The word keep means to obey, right? So what are they saying? Well, they're saying that we're saved by keeping the law. Well, this was the belief of the Jews at this time.

And so Jesus, you know, he comes along, dies on the cross for the sins of mankind, and speaks to people saying that if you believe, whoever believes in him will have eternal life. But the Jews come along and say, well, yeah, that's not enough. That's not enough. You got to keep the law. You got to follow the law.

Now, they put an emphasis, you'll notice, on circumcision. So let me remind you, the circumcision was the covenant sign between God and Israel. It was first revealed as such to Abraham, who was the father of the Jews, and that's recorded for us in Genesis. Let me put it on the screen. It says, this is my covenant, which you shall keep between me and you, and your offspring after you.

The Lord is speaking here. Every male among you shall be circumcised. circumcised, and he goes on as far as to say, any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people, because he's broken my covenant. That's a pretty strong word. And then this, you know, was later incorporated into the terms of the Mosaic Covenant when Moses received this command from the Lord.

Check this out from Leviticus chapter 12. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to the people of Israel saying, if a woman conceives and bears a male child, on the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. So here you are. It starts off with Abraham, it's incorporated into the law. Boom, this is a requirement.

This is a requirement. And for the Jews, it was really just a logical conclusion in their minds, because this was spoken so forcefully as it relates to the law of God, they decided and they had decided long before that if you want to be saved, you must follow the historical framework that has been laid out for the Jews by God. And that historical framework includes circumcision and the keeping of the law. It was just, you know, for them, it was like, of course, this is the way, you know, that you're saved. It's an absolute requirement.

So that's what's going on in the chapter, right? Well, the next question we have to deal with on our outline is what was the actual doctrinal error? In other words, where did they go wrong? Where did the

Jews go wrong in believing that we're saved by keeping the law? Well, we're not talking about all the Jews.

We're really just talking about these Jews who now claim to be Christians, okay? And we're talking to Christians about how you're saved. Where did they go wrong? Well, very simply, they were introducing the law into grace, and that's where the error took place. It's very simple.

They took grace, the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, and they introduced the law into it and said, you must do these things. Now, I want you to remember something here, that these events in Acts chapter 15 are happening before the church really ever had to deal with this sort of a situation. I mean, you know, the fact that the church started off with Jews kind of meant that this was probably, I mean, you know, this was going to happen because they'd been raised in legalism all their lives, and to make the jump from legalism to grace is incredibly hard. People who have come out of legalistic churches, you know, that teach legalism, you must, you must, you must, you must wear certain clothes, you must do, you know, and on and on and on. For them to make that jump into the understanding that we're saved by grace through faith and nothing can be added to grace, that is extremely hard.

And so for these Jews, you could kind of, you could have guessed that this sort of thing was going to happen. But, and you know, they didn't really have the word like that you and I have today. We can deal with legalism. If somebody's struggling with legalism, there's a lot of Bible passages I can take them to. In the New Testament that are going to help them to understand what's really going on, you know, and the problem.

But you know, this is before all those Bible verses that you and I love so much had even been written. You know, Paul and Barnabas is experienced, they're experiencing these issues, but Paul has yet to write about it because this issue of legalism is not going away anytime soon and Paul is going to have to write about it and he will write about it. In fact, when he gets to the point of writing to the church in Ephesus, he's going to deal with it quite strongly, not quite as strongly as he does in his letter to the Galatian churches, but even in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul wrote something that for you and I, this is what we lean on when we're dealing with legalistic thoughts, you know, from people and it's from Ephesians 2, 8, 9. You guys know this up on the screen. You know, Paul wrote for it is by grace, you've been saved through faith, but he didn't stop right there.

He went on to say, and this is not from yourselves. In other words, it's not an effort. It's not a work. What is it? It's a gift.

It's a gift. Salvation is a gift, he says. How many of you have ever, ever paid for a gift that you received from someone else? Never. You've never, ever, ever paid for a gift.

You know how I can say that so forcefully? Because if you did pay for it, it would cease to be a gift at that point. And so he says it is a gift. And then he doesn't even stop there. He goes on and says, not by works that no one can boast.

But again, these words were written later. These words were written after this issue had become an issue. And but here in Acts 15, this is really the first recorded challenge that we're seeing that the church is dealing with related to this issue of salvation as a free gift. And that really brings us to our third point on our outline and why was the error made and why is it still being made today? And this is again, perhaps the most important question of our series because this same mistake continues to be made all these years later.

It'd be great if it, you know, the Bible dealt with it and the Bible does deal with it. Don't get me wrong, but it'd be great if the Bible dealt with it and people paid attention to how the Bible dealt with it and never, ever made it again, but they keep making it. It is being made today, the same error. And that tells you a little something about just how strong legalism is and the gravitational pull in human beings to be legalistic because of various reasons. But the error that these men made and the error that continues to be made today involves a failure to recognize the incompatibility of the covenant that God made with Israel through Moses and the covenant that Jesus inaugurated at the Last Supper and established through the cross.

Christians throughout the ages, beginning with these Jewish Christians in the first century and up until today have failed to understand the incompatibility between these two covenants and they are constantly trying to merge them. And it causes untold confusion and difficulty because they're just not paying attention. And that's the bottom line. Legalism gets introduced to the church because people aren't paying attention to the word of God and they are attempting to mix. And you know what they're doing.

You remember what Jesus, he talked about this. He said, guess what happens when you put new wine into old wine skins? It bursts the skins and the wine is ruined. And that is exactly what happens. You see, when I say people aren't paying attention, what I'm saying is there are ways that God prepared the Jews to understand that the incompatibility of the Mosaic covenant and the covenant of grace, but they didn't hear it.

And one of those is a passage that the vast majority of you are very familiar with, a prophetic passage from the book of Jeremiah 31. Most of you know this. On the screen, it says, and I've even highlighted some of it, but behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord. He's telling them, guys, pay attention. The days are coming when I'm gonna make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

And here's the key to understanding when it happens. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. What covenant is that? The Mosaic covenant. He says, that's the covenant that they broke, though I was a husband to them, declares the Lord.

What is the key of that passage? That the new covenant isn't going to be like the old one. Did you see it? Did you see it, people? Why is it people don't see this?

They don't pay attention. The Jews didn't pay attention. Christians, many, don't pay attention today. Oh no, we're going to work the old covenant in there. It's got to work in somehow.

Sure, whether it's Sabbath keeping, or food laws, or keeping the feasts, or whatever the thing, no, no, no, no. We got to work it in there somehow. It's the only way we're going to make this thing usable. Yeah, guess what happens when you put new wineskin into old, or new wine into old wineskins. So God says, I'm going to make a new covenant, and it's not going to be like the old covenant.

When did he, when did he establish the new covenant? Well, you guys took communion this morning, right? One of the things Jesus said during communion, check this out, Luke records it, verse, chapter 22, verse 20, and likewise, the cup after they had eaten, saying, this cup is poured out, that is poured out for you, is the new covenant in my blood. There you go. Inaugurated during the last supper established on the cross, when that very blood was poured out for you and me.

Oh, but that doesn't stop people from, you know, just doing what they think they should, and that's what these Jews were doing. Nobody told these guys to get up one day, and go to Antioch, and teach the Gentiles that you had to be circumcised, and keep the law to be saved. Nobody told them. They decided on their own, and that's what people do. They run off half cocked, and they just say, well, you know, this is what it is, and I'm going to start telling people what it is.

You know, if you've studied through the book of Hebrews, you know that it is absolutely chock full of exhortations and warnings, and you get some of the most serious warnings to the body of Christ in the book of Hebrews. In fact, it freaks a lot of people out because they don't understand the warnings, but the warnings are all about trying to think that the old covenant actually has saving power. That's what the

book of Hebrews is about. It's a warning to Jews who are experiencing persecution because of their faith in Jesus, because they wanted to go back to the law in order to keep that persecution at bay, and the writer of Hebrews wrote to them saying, did you think that the law could save you? Did you really think that the law never has saved anyone?

No one has ever been saved by the law. Look at what Paul wrote in Romans chapter 3. He says, no one, and I mean no one, no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law. What does the law do? He says it right there.

It just makes us conscious of our sin. That's all. It's like your bathroom scale. I've said that many times. Makes you conscious of something, but it can't help you change that something, right?

That's what the law does. But even with statements, you know, like these that we have, well-meaning but misinformed individuals continue to try to merge the law with the covenant of grace, and so let's move on to point four in our outline, which is what did the apostles decide to do about this? Look at verse 2. It says, after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, so they talked with them for quite a while, those two men, Paul and Barnabas, were chosen along with some of others there in the church at Antioch and appointed to go to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders to basically take up this question there, and I think this was wise because this meant that it wasn't just a difference of opinion, right? Now, we can't go to the apostles and the elders in the same way that they did in that physical way of saying, I'm going to make a trip to go talk to Peter and James and John and that sort of thing, but we can go to the word, which is our authority, right?

So we can still do essentially what they did. We just go to the written word to bring these things to light, and then that's where we read in verse 5 that some of these believers, and it says believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and they just made their statement once again. No, we don't think that Jesus is enough. I noticed they didn't say that, but that's what I'm saying because that's the bottom line of their message. Whenever you introduce something into grace, what you are saying is Jesus isn't enough, okay?

That's what you're saying, whether you have verbally said it or not. So these guys stood up and they said, no, Jesus isn't enough. You got to be circumcised. You got to keep the law. In fact, you guys need to order them to keep the law.

So the apostles and elders, they gathered to consider the matter. Again, there was much debate over this. Finally, in verse 7, we read that Peter stands up. He starts talking to everybody, and here's what he

says. He begins by reminding them that the gospel first went to the Gentiles through him when he went to the home of Cornelius, and we read this.

He says, Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us. And that was the point you'll remember that Peter made when he came back to Jerusalem and had been criticized for going into the home of a Gentile and sharing the gospel with them. Peter stood up and he said, Guys, you want to know what happened there? I shared the gospel, and the Holy Spirit fell on those men and women and people that were in that home, and they received the Holy Spirit just as we did.

And the very strong inference there is that God made no distinction. Why are you making one? And after Peter said that the first time, it says that the room fell quiet and the people were like, Okay, wow, well, I guess the Gentiles are going to be saved after all. But they've had time to kind of simmer on this thing. You know how that happens?

Somebody hears a logical, reasonable argument, but then they marinate on it for a while and they decide, Wait a minute. I don't know. And they basically reject what they've heard and they go back to what they believed before. And that's what's going on. And so, you know, Peter's reminding them of these things.

Notice what he says there at the end of verse, or in verse 9. He says, He made no distinction between us and them, meaning the Gentiles, having cleansed their hearts by faith. I want you to think about circling or highlighting or just remembering that in the text. What did Peter say? What did Peter say right there?

He said, God showed us in no uncertain terms that he had cleansed their hearts by faith. Now, don't forget that. That's an anchor in this passage. He says in verse 10, Now, therefore, 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? In other words, we haven't kept the law perfectly.

You're going to tell them they have to do that now in order to be saved? Now, listen carefully to what Peter says in verse 11. This is very important. He says, But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will. And guys, circle, highlight, do something to the word grace there in that verse.

Because grace means favor with God that is unearned, unmerited. So what is Peter saying? No, he says, No, we believe that we're saved by grace. We believe they're saved by grace. And that means they don't, we don't have to merit salvation and they don't have to merit salvation.

That's what we believe. Okay, this is very important. See, Peter is establishing the gospel here, which is the real good news, right? You throw legalism into it and it's no longer good news. This is the real thing.

Verse 12, And all the assembly fell silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. And this was super important because this is kind of similar to what Peter reminded them about related to what happened in the house of Cornelius. Now Paul and Barnabas are testifying to the fact that as they went out and shared the gospel among the Gentiles, God said to them, affirmed that gospel and the reception of that gospel by the Gentiles by doing signs and wonders among the people. Right? There you go.

And by the way, Paul and Barnabas didn't have to say because it wasn't necessary, but they didn't have to say, we didn't circumcise a one of them. And we didn't tell any of them about keeping the law. It wasn't necessary. But God moved among them powerfully. And then finally, James speaks and he agrees with everything that was said by Peter and Paul and Barnabas.

And if you skip down to verse 19, he says, therefore, my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turned to God. And what James is saying here is we should add nothing to the cross of Christ as it relates to salvation. Here's the problem. Here's the problem. Verses 20 and 21 seem to go back on that.

This is where the confusion lies. And this is what brings us to our fifth and final point. And that is what did the apostles convey in their letter? Because they're going to make a distinction here for the Gentiles about how they ought to live. But a lot of people read this and they go, OK, this does not make a lick of sense because they just got done saying salvation is by grace through faith alone.

And then in verses 20 and 21, they tell them all the things they're supposed to do. Look at verse 20. But we should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols and from sexual immorality and from what has been strangled and from blood. And so we're all kind of reading this and we're going, why did they say that? Did they just do a reversal on us here?

Did they just pull a bait and switch with the gospel? Skip down for a minute to verse 27. And this is where we actually see the contents of the letter that they wrote and had the men read to the Gentiles. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth, for it

seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements. And then they repeated that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what has been strangled and from sexual immorality.

If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell. And so we're kind of reading this and we're going, what is this? To some people, again, this sounds like the apostles said one thing and then turned around and said another. But what people fail to understand is that what they said about abstaining from food that had been sacrificed to an idol, abstaining from blood, strangled animals, sexual immorality, those things had nothing to do with salvation.

And that's what's misunderstood. You see, that's why I put such emphasis with you as we were reading through this passage on the statements that were made related to salvation. You know, I wanted you to see and understand. They use the word grace. That means unmerited favor, unmerited.

You can't do anything to earn it. And when Paul and Barnabas stood up and started to talk to when Paul and Barnabas stood up and started to talking about how God had poured out his Holy Spirit through signs and wonders, miracles among the Gentiles, even though they had not been told to be circumcised, they had not been told to keep the law. And yet God put his stamp of approval upon the ministry that they were doing and all the other things that were said. No, Peter says, we believe that we are saved the same way they're saved by grace through faith. You see, the issue of salvation was settled.

You see, they're doing something different here when they're talking about all these other things. They're not talking about salvation. This is advice to the Gentiles for the sake of fellowship with the Jews. And what people stumble over is what they said in verse 21. Here's why these four things were given to them.

Look at verse 21 in your Bible. For from ancient generations, Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him for he has read every Sabbath in the synagogue. See, that's the explanation of why they gave them these relational rules or guidelines. They said, guys, here's the deal. You need to get along with the Jews and they've been taught these things.

And if you guys are going to begin to be accepted by the Jews in the cities where you live, it would really be good if you followed our advice and stay away from these things. What are these things again? Let me put them on the screen. These are the four things that they mentioned. Stay away from that which is sacrificed to a pagan idol.

You see, the Jews believed very strongly. Well, of course, you know, paganism was the bane of their own existence in the past. It was through paganism that they lost their homeland for many, many years. And they believed that the modern practices of paganism were very defiling. Therefore, to eat meat that had been donated or dedicated to a pagan deity, they believe, would defile you.

Now, Jesus taught otherwise, but that doesn't matter. The Jews still believed it. And so these guys are saying to these Gentiles, listen, this is going to be a real problem with the Jews. So just when you're around the Jews, don't do it. Don't eat things that have been sacrificed to a pagan idol, OK?

Later, Paul is going to deal with this at length in his epistles, and he's going to say to them, you know what? An idol is nothing. And so if you want to eat meat sacrificed to an idol, it's not going to change who you are or your relationship with God or your standing with Him. But if you have a brother who thinks that it's wrong, then don't do it for his sake. And that's really what they're saying here to the Gentiles.

They're also telling them to abstain from blood and from that which has been strangled. And these really, these things really go together. You see, the Jews had a very, very high view of blood because it was used in the sacrificial system. And they had that high view of blood because God taught them to have that high view of blood. And God told them, listen, when you kill an animal, make sure it is thoroughly bled before you cook it and eat it, right?

Don't eat meat that still has the blood in it because the blood has been sanctified for the use of sacrifice. You with me? So the Jews were, this was a very, very big deal to them. So they're saying to these Gentiles, guys, honor the blood when you're, especially when you're around the Jews, because this is a big deal for them and you're not going to get along with these people and they're never going to accept you if you don't follow these basic guidelines. And then sexual immorality.

And you kind of, you're kind of looking at this going, well, duh, everybody should avoid sexual immorality. Here's the deal though. Here's what people don't understand. The Jews believed that all Gentiles were sexually immoral. They just, they just believed they were.

And frankly, most of them were because they, the Jews were ungodly in, in, in this, in the Roman culture and the Jews knew it. Now these, these Gentiles had gotten saved that they're writing this letter to. And so they were naturally going to stay away from sexual immorality, but he's saying, listen, this is going to be a big bugaboo with the Jews. Stay away. Make sure that sexual immorality is just not even mentioned around you for your own good, but also for your relationship with the Jews, because they're going to assume that you're sexually immoral.

They're just going to assume that. If you ever had somebody think the worst of you, you know, just, just because you're you, and that's kind of the way the Jews treated the Gentiles. They assumed they were all sexually immoral. So they're basically saying, listen, just don't do these things and things are going to go better with you. So that's why those four things are mentioned.

They have nothing to do with salvation. Okay. They have nothing to do with salvation. Salvation is through Jesus Christ on the cross, but through faith in what he did. That's how we're saved.

They're not giving them four ways to make sure you're, you're saved. I want to end this morning by reminding you of something that many of you already know. And that is that the issue that the, the apostles dealt with in this chapter didn't go away. It would have, again, it would have been great if this would have ended the controversy, but these Pharisaical legalists, they didn't give up and they continued to travel. They followed Paul around even and went to the churches that he had established after he left and they began to spread their false teaching.

In fact, the entire book of Galatians is written to combat what these people were going around doing. And so if you want to really. be brought up to snuff on the whole stinky problem because it really was, then that's what you should read. Read the book of Galatians. But I want to remind you, and we're going to end with this this morning, with a statement that was made in Peter's second letter.

And it's by way of exhortation. Here it is. This is what Peter writes. He said, therefore, beloved, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish and at peace and count the patience of our Lord as salvation. Just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters.

And he says, you know, I know there are some things in them, in Paul's letters that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction as they do the other scriptures. You, therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you're not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. So that's the exhortation that I think is fitting at the end of this study.

And that is you, therefore, take care. First of all, not to be carried away because the error of lawless men is still very pervasive in the body of Christ today. And what can you do? Keep growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Keep growing, keep studying, keep knowing the word of God and rely on the Holy Spirit.

Boy, I tell you, the Holy Spirit is so faithful when we hear something that is in error. I've talked to so many people who have come out of Mormonism who will say almost the same thing to me. They'll say, yeah, you know, I was raised in the Mormon church or I went to the Mormon church for a while and you know, I just knew something wasn't right. And they didn't know really anything about the word of God. And that was basically God just by his grace and mercy, bailing them out because they didn't really know enough to know what was right and what was wrong, but they knew that something was wrong.

They knew that they knew that they knew, I gotta get out of here. And that's the Holy Spirit. So rely on him, but don't use that as an excuse not to grow. Keep studying, keep digging in, grow in the grace and knowledge and be careful because lawless men are still to this day speaking false about what it takes to be saved. So do not move, do not move from your understanding from the Bible that we are saved by grace through faith, this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, amen?

Let's stand together, we'll close in prayer. If you need prayer, we'll have some folks up here to pray with you as you're getting ready to head out. So Father, thank you so much for your word. Thank you, Lord, for the safety that we get from the scriptures and being in the word and studying the word and understanding the attacks that have come throughout the years and that continue even to this day, the attacks on the simple gospel of Jesus Christ that we are saved by grace through faith and this not of ourselves. Lord, help us to stand strong, help us to maintain our stability in our faith and not to succumb to the error of lawless men.

We thank you, we praise you, we worship you and rejoice in the fact that you are coming soon. We lay our hearts at your feet in Jesus' precious name and all God's people said, amen. God bless you, have a good rest of your day.