

Part 29 | **The Gospel Alone**

Acts 15:1-35

I. There is a **DANGER** of adding to the gospel to preserve our cultural **IDENTITY**.

II. The **PROBLEM** is that adding to the gospel results in a **FALSE** gospel.

III. To **DISCERN** the way forward we must together seek the guidance of the **HOLY SPIRIT** as we are rooted in the **WORD OF GOD**.

IV. As Christians we must lovingly **GIVE UP** our preferences for the **ADVANCEMENT** of the gospel and the **UNITY** of the church.

Text us at **833-271-8805**.
Text this number anytime for prayer. Just say, "**Pray for...**" followed by your request.
Or if you just need someone to talk to, start texting us with whatever's going on and someone will be in touch via text.

5. NO SACRED COWS

Our 5th Core Value at Wawasee is "**No Sacred Cows.**" Here's what we mean by that...

Jesus is sacred. God's Word is sacred. The Gospel is sacred. But our opinions, methods, preferences, and traditions are not. Therefore we hold those secondary things in an open hand (with a loose grip), and are willing to let go of any of them if more people can experience life change through the Gospel! We are committed to having no "sacred cows".

A "**Sacred Cow**" is any idea, custom, institution, or thing considered immune from question or criticism—often unreasonably so.

Here are 3 Types of Sacred Cows We Must Avoid:

1. Loving TRADITION more than Jesus and his Word.

Churches can be famous for saying, "but that's the way we've always done it!" In Mark 7:1-13 the Pharisees say something similar to Jesus. In response Jesus accuses them of loving their traditions more than God. We must avoid the same mistake!

2. Following PEOPLE before Jesus.

Take a moment and go read Exodus 32. As you do, ask the question: "Who were the people of Israel truly following while they were traveling across the desert? Were the people following God, who saved them from Pharaoh, or were they following Moses?" The answer seems obvious. They were following Moses, not the Lord God. The people did not put their faith and trust in God, they were putting their faith and trust in Moses. Once Moses 'disappeared', they quickly lost faith.

3. Choosing my PREFERENCE over Jesus' mission.

There is nothing wrong with personal preferences. But it is wrong when we allow them to become idols. See 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.



Food for Thought

Questions & Scripture for Further Study

What is this? – Normally this section includes questions and a study for our Life Groups. If you're not in one, you should sign up in the Commons, let us know on a Connect Card, or contact the church office! Most groups break for the summer, but others will continue and use this for their study time together. Instead of our normal study guide, this is a smaller study and some questions for you to reflect/journal on throughout the week. Look for sign-ups for new groups in August!

Food for Thought...

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time, that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

1. We all have freedom in Christ, but as we heard this weekend, sometimes God calls us to lovingly give up our freedom and preferences for the sake of the Gospel and unity with one another. How do the following verses speak to what freedom in Christ means, and the responsibility that comes with it?
 - **Circle or highlight** any words or phrases that catch your attention.
 - **Underline** what you think is important to remember.
 - **Put an X** next to anything that confuses you.

³¹To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."³³ They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"³⁴ Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. **JOHN 8:31-36 (NIV)**

¹It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. **GALATIANS 5:1 (NIV)**

¹³You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁵ If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. **GALATIANS 5:13-15 (NIV)**

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to

(Food for Thought continues on back panel...)

Welcome to Wawasee!

OUR CORE VALUES

These are things you'll see to be true about us...



1. It's All About Jesus!
You'll hear us say this often.—Why? Because *it's all about Jesus!* Apart from his death, burial, and resurrection we're wasting our time.



2. God Wrote it All Down
God wrote a book—and we are to believe the Bible in all that it teaches, obey it in all it requires, and trust it in all that it promises.



3. All People Matter
No matter who you are, where you're from, what you've done, or what's been done to you—you *matter to Jesus and you matter to us!*



4. We All Need Friends
You were designed to belong, not to go through life alone. Jesus created each of us desiring friendship and to live in community.



5. No Sacred Cows
Jesus is sacred, God's Word is sacred, *but our opinions, methods, and traditions are not*—we'll let go of any of them if more people can experience life change through the Gospel!

Word Find in the Word

Find the words from a passage related to this week's message.

Word Find for Ephesians 4:1-6 (ESV)

Find the words **bolded** below.

¹ I **therefore**, a **prisoner** for the **Lord**, **urge** you to walk in a **manner** worthy of the **calling** to which you have **been called**,
² with all **humility** and **gentleness**, with **patience**, **bearing** with one **another** in **love**,
³ **eager** to **maintain** the **unity** of the **Spirit** in the **bond** of **peace**.
⁴ **There** is one **body** and one **Spirit**—**just** as you were **called** to the one **hope** that **belongs** to your **call**—⁵ one **Lord**, one **faith**, one **baptism**,
⁶ one **God** and **Father** of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

B A P T I S M A N N E R
 L E B O D Y A S A D P C
 F A T H E R I U L O R D
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Food for Thought (continued)

righteousness. ¹⁹ I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. **ROMANS 6:15-23 (NIV)**

- Which of the above verses is most helpful for you when it comes to consistently experiencing freedom?

- 2. The early church experienced a lot of confusion over whether Gentiles who became Christians had to be circumcised and follow the Old Testament Jewish laws. In **Galatians 2:11-16**, we read about Paul defending the Gentile Christians' freedom from these requirements. After reading the story, answer the questions below.

- What surprises you or confuses you in this story?

- What do you think Paul, Cephas (Peter) and Barnabas were feeling before and after Paul spoke up?

- What was happening that was so important that Paul felt compelled to speak up?

- What is the significance of this incident for us today even though we don't struggle with the issue of following the Old Testament Laws?

This week's Food for Thought is adapted in part from a study by North Coast Church in Vista, CA. North Coast is a sister church of Wawasee Bible and part of the EFCA.

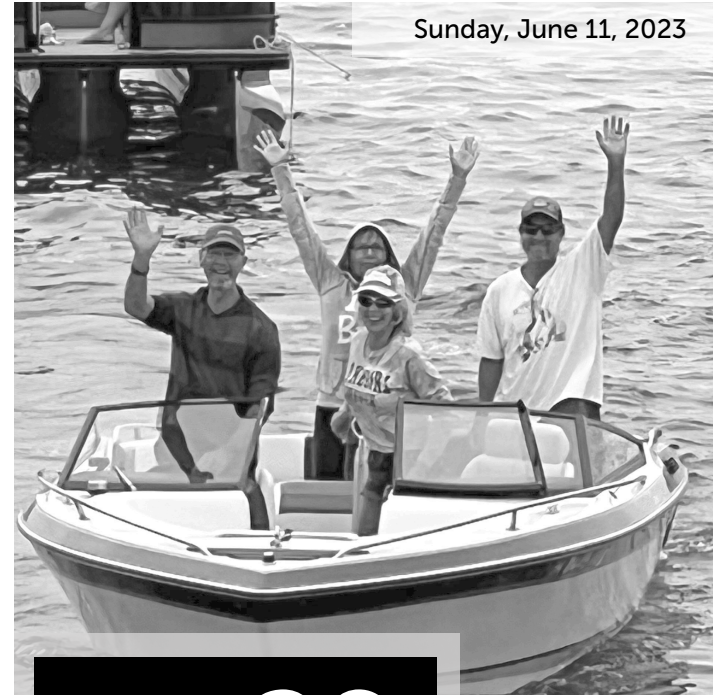


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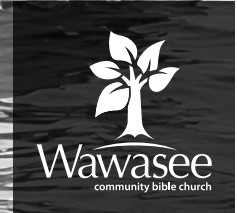
EMPOWERED FOR JESUS'S MISSION

Sunday, June 11, 2023



PART 29

The Gospel Alone



ACTS 15:1-35



We're Glad You're Here Today!
Please register your attendance on our **digital Connect Card** by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera, or by visiting **wawasee.today** in your web browser. Update your contact info, share prayer requests, or just let us know how we can serve you! You can also access today's bulletin using the same QR or link.