

The Corrupted Gospel: Acts 15

Read: Acts 14:24-27, 15:1-31

This account is very important for many reasons. But today we want to cover **Seven Lessons for Ministry:**

#1 There is a kind of 'gospel message' that once _____ ceases to have the power to _____.

We cannot be so naïve to think that we will purely present the gospel without attaching (*even non-verbally*) that the gospel requires something else in addition to faith. It may not be as blunt as demanding circumcision, but other requirements we may add directly or indirectly may be: **Baptism, Church attendance, Tithing, Good behavior**

#2 It is very important to _____ what you should teach as the gospel. You could be _____ people.

We must determine what we believe to be the gospel and be unified in our presentation of it...it is worth the time and energy to discuss what an accurate gospel message should contain. Briefly, a gospel message must contain elements of the following:

- The _____ of God
- The _____ of God revealed in the law
- The _____ of the sinner
- The _____ for sin
- The _____ of salvation

#3 Expect _____ and people to come against you when _____ the gospel.

When setting correct parameters around the message of salvation it will incite disagreement...some will feel very strongly that a certain point be included, while others demand another be excluded. We must be resolved, when determining what an accurate gospel message, to:

- Use _____ as the ultimate guide
- Do not attempt to _____ people
- Do not _____ ourselves with others
- Do not _____ to the word of God

#4 'Human effort' loves to _____ in and create a _____ on people.

The flesh will fight desperately to retain some level of involvement in our own salvation...and we must be resolved to not appease the flesh or pride of self to give in, by adding any degree of human effort to the gospel.

#5 We must make every _____ not to _____ those who do not know Christ.

Knowing that the flesh will fight desperately to retain some level of involvement in our own salvation...we must go above and beyond to reassure those who do not yet believe that they are not too weak, not too evil, not 'unable' to be saved. We should be extra cautious to not directly or otherwise indirectly (*or subconsciously*) imply that **x, y, z behavior is required or true salvation.**

#6 We must do everything we can to _____ blockades that may _____ the lost from finding Christ.

There are certain customs and traditions that we have as a church and as Christians that are not scripturally required of us, that unnecessarily create a cultural and/or spiritual blockades to the lost in finding salvation. We must seek to remove anything that is unnecessary (*not the non-negotiables, biblical absolutes*) that are creating a blockade for the lost, such as: Implied clothing requirements, 'Christainese' (vernacular), Outdated or abrasive music, Schedules, days, time constraints...

#7 (A) Major on the majors and (B) do not mix _____ with salvation.

(A) There are certain customs, traditions, truths that are non-negotiable and must exist regardless of the culture. And those should be the ones that we major on.

(B) There are certain behaviors that should begin to be true in the life of a genuine, born again, growing Christian...and those truths fall in the realm of sanctification. We should not mix the 'requirements' of sanctification with that of salvation.

Follow up Questions:

- Do you believe that it is important for a church and its members to be unified on their definition of the gospel? Why or why not?
- Have you ever had someone attack you or go up against you in your definition/portrayal of the gospel? What happened?
- In what ways have you seen 'human effort' sneak its way into your own confidence in your salvation? Do you often hear the voice of the enemy whispering 'you're not good enough' to be saved? How do you respond?
- Do you ever find yourself having to 'do something good' to feel better about a confessed sin?
- What are some blockades that we have in our church culture that could prevent an unbeliever from finding Christ? What are some things that we could do to make our church culture more inviting to an outsider?