

## **EVERYONE IS INVITED**

Simple Strategy #2  
August 19, 2007  
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Intro:

Last week started series about "everybody". When I ask people if they attend church NO one has ever given me a deep theological reason.

- \* **Most people say they don't have a problem with God- *it is just with the church.***
  - I got hurt at a church, my parents, it's irrelevant... something like that.
  - The proof is Christmas & Easter. - At least a couple times a year try to connect with God.
  - \* **911 churches were filled for months**... after they went for a while they said, "Oh yeah that is why I don't go to church."
    - \* It was not relevant, done with excellence, I didn't feel like I had anything in common with the guy (he had on a robe) - I felt like everyone there knew what to do...
      - \* I feel comfortable at work, golf-course, the gym, but at church - well...
  - \* **Summarize it- "Church is for church people."**
  - \* Church is not just for church people...

Acts (The book after the church was launched)

- \* **There is a business meeting** - all the original Christians were Jewish... Most Christians considered that Christianity was an EXTENSION of Judaism.
- \* Many of them kept their traditions and tacked on the new thing called Christianity.
  - As Christianity began to spread the Jews that had become Christians felt like the Gentiles had to become Jewish.
- \* **Meantime Paul & others come along on the fringe** & went among the Gentiles, & began to tell the gospel story- this man came from heaven... and they did miracles and many Gentiles began to put their faith in Christ.
  - \* But they WEREN'T Jewish- & many were saved lives were changed...
    - But word got out that this was happening & those in Jerusalem said they needed to do the Jewish things as well.
  - \* Jesus said my burden is light & whosoever will may come...

\*\*\* The Christians were complicating salvation.

SO they all get together & discuss this issue...

**Acts 15:1-2** (Background to the meeting)

**Acts 15:4-5** The Pharisees (those that had Jesus crucified) had been converted because they had been wrong about Jesus. (Why? He resurrected after the crucifixion)

**Acts 15:7** Peter speak & refers to his experience in (**Acts 10**) (various verses here - the story)

- \* **15:34** "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive **that God is no respecter of persons:**"
  - \* God made it clear that I want everybody to come to salvation.

**Acts 15:8** When accept Christ the Holy Spirit comes to live in their heart...

**Acts 15:9** "No difference" once you are in. By FAITH, not the works of the law.

**Acts 15:10** Saying God has done something NEW- God has done something SIMPLE -  
"None of us Jewish people couldn't even do the law..."

**Acts 15:11**

\* **Key verse...**

**Acts 15:19** "**Trouble**"- "**To agitate; to disturb; to put into confused motion.**"

- \* God made it simple - so why should we cause "TROUBLE" for these people?
- We need to make the gospel easy & accessible.

(To get on board - on the ladder)

\* **What we (I) want to happen at Paradise...**

People really want "to get it", but they are looking for solutions to their marriage, problems, dealing with their kids, how to survive the work place...etc.

\* To make it easy - SIMPLE!

\* Peter & James explain this to the church at Jerusalem...

**Acts 15:20 They are saying be a little bit sensitive- for the Jewish sensitivities brethren...**

They don't have to get circumcised, and keep all those regulations BUT there are a couple things that you Gentiles could do: (690 things no)

(1) Eating meat offered to idols (2) Abstain from sexual sins

**Acts 15:30-31 "Everyone consoled..." (Key verse)**

\* **"Consolation" - "Comfort; alleviation of misery, or distress of mind; refreshment of mind or spirits"**

\* So the message got back to Antioch & they were so happy to NOT have to do all that "Jewish thing".

\* We can just put our faith in the risen Messiah Jesus. - **SIMPLIFICATION.**

\* 1500's Martin Luther - saved by grace... you don't have to be in HIGH CHURCH (on top the ladder)

- **"I don't know Latin, I don't have any money, I didn't understand religion)**

\* **"Faith alone"**- millions came to Christ.

\*\*\* 100 years later complicated again...

\* **All the denominations**... "This is the way, no this is the way, no this is the way..."

\* Non-believers' say, "You guys don't even agree amongst yourselves."

\* When they come - they can't get on the ladder... it has been complicated.

**Conclusion:**

**Most people would like to have a connection with God**- but they don't know how...

\* So at Paradise we have decided that we **want all the rungs on the ladder.**

So that the church is not just for "church people" BUT people people.