

## **ORIGINS Pt 5**

### **“The Struggle of Distinction”**

In this series, we are looking into the Book of Acts, entering into the chaos of the beginnings of this movement or reorientation around the Kingdom of God that Jesus brought with His death and resurrection.

Luke wrote this book to chronicle the events, both the teachings we see, the experiences of those who followed, and the impact on the culture around them. There are arrests and beatings and miracles and of course, we see the drama that goes with change.

Context:

The question: What do the Gentiles have to do in order to belong?

#### **Acts 15:6–11 NIV**

6 The apostles and elders met to consider this question. 7 After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. 8 God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. 9 He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. 10 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? 11 No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

#### **MEETING AGENDA**

Peter shares His experience.

Paul and Barnabas share what they are seeing.

James (the brother of John) offers a summation and a recommendation.

#### **Acts 15:19-20 NIV**

19 “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them...

#### **Acts 15:23-27 NIV**

The apostles and elders, your brothers,

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:

Greetings.

24 We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. 25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul—26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing.

### **Acts 15:28-29 NIV**

28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell.

### **TWO SPECIFIC IDEAS**

**Impure Food** (offered to idols, strangled, or blood)

You can see Paul elaborate on this in 1 Cor. 8-10 and Romans 14-15.

### **Sexual Immorality**

- Nothing really governs our sexual desire and attraction.
- We are all affected by the sexual brokenness in our world.

### **TWO FLAWED ASSUMPTIONS**

1. Sex cures lust.
2. Sexual appetite should be satisfied and not governed.

### **WHY THIS MATTERS**

The issue is that of human dignity and cooperation and the restoration of trust.

- Sexual desire doesn't tend towards restraint.
- Ungoverned Sexual Desire and Unclear Sexual Vision is the cause of great harm.

We need a vision of the human experience in which sex & sexuality find its proper place.

My aim isn't to bring shame or advocate a return to some kind of prudish view of sex. But rather to acknowledge that what is currently happening is not helpful or healthy, but in fact, undermines the kind of life we are intended to live.

The Point is not MORAL COMPLIANCE but a DISTINCT WITNESS in a Chaotic World.