

Acts 15:1-12 Mixture

I came across a website this week called seriouseats.com – Pastor Steve is the Pres

It listed some weird food combinations that people mix together.

A) For all of you who complain that I talk about food to much – and it makes you hungry – this will probably have the opposite affect

B) Consider these combinations : Main meal combos

Brushing salmon with dry/uncooked strawberry jello and grilling it.

Ketchup goes good on everything – Denise Steak what R U Doing ?

Mashed potatoes mixed with ketchup /brocoli andcheese

Pancakes and ketchup.

The South Street Heart Attack (Buy a cheese steak at Jim's Steaks, walk up to Lorenzo's and buy two of those huge slices, wrap a slice around each half of the cheese steak, people can hear your arteries clog across the room)

Snacks and Dessert

An oreo mcflurry with popcorn

Chocolate chip cookies mixed into popcorn

Chocolate cake with pinto beans.

Frito's and caramel sauce.

Chocolate Cake with Tabasco sauce.

Those are examples of weird things that People will put into their stomachs –

A) Although some of those combos might give them a major stomach ache- but will probably do NO REAL DAMAGE.

B) But there are things that people – **sincere well intentioned people**, mix with their theology – that can be down right DAMAGING – very DESTRUCTIVE.

1) We see an example of that in our text this morning – Acts 15

C) Ch. 14 Paul and Barnabas concluded their first missionary Journey and returned to Antioch to meet with the Church – **give a report – stay awhile refreshed**.

D) **They arrived to discover a major Problem. Read about it in V.1**
And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

E) **In other words if you really want to be a Christian you need to become Jewish.**

Circumcision the cutting away of the foreskin of the male was the identifying mark – that God made with Abraham.

A) **It would be the mark that separated the Jewish race from the rest of the world. Hebrew babies were to be circumcised with they were 8 days old.**

B) **At the time one might have thought it was a weird practice – especially if you were an adult Gentile seeking to convert to Judaism –**

1) **But we know today that it has health benefits – and is another example of God looking out for his pp long before modern medicine discovered the wisdom in God's logic.**

C) **But these well meaning believers – had come to Antioch a Church that was predominantly Gentile with this message.**

1) **Believing in Jesus is not enough** – if you really want to be saved – you need to add to your faith – Circumcision.

D) Now imagine the horror of that revelation physically – These guys break out their knives – Running the blades –

But as painful as that would be to go through physically in a day where they didn't have the antiseptics of our day

A) It was down right – DAMNING spiritually.

B) See Any theology that says – You need to add something to what Jesus did is wrong & destructive.

1) Any theology – any idea – any belief that says – What Jesus did on the Cross at Calvary was not enough – you want to run from that.- fast

C) Which is why we read in the next verse Acts 15:2 **Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them,**

No small dissension and dispute: No small Uproar and debate – Yelling – tense it was heated – conversation

NLT disagreed arguing with them **VEHEMENTLY**

Paul and Barnabas were up on their feet at once in fierce protest. **THE MESSAGE:**

“Those are fighting words” - Paul would say later in his letter to the Churches of Galatia – Book of Galatians – Those who say that – cut themselves off.

A) Talk about Honest and graphic!

B) But Paul was not trying to be gross or like some today – **Saying something outlandish for Shock Value**

1) He was illustrating the seriousness of taking anything and adding it to the work of Christ on the Cross.

C) Well the dispute was so strong it was decided that they needed to take it to the BIG BOYS in Jerus.

RDV.2b- 12

Now Peter asked a question in v. 10 that is something I want us to consider this morning.

A) Because although we might not say that someone needs to add this or that to their faith in order to be saved.

B) We can be guilty of looking to external things as a mark of peoples **real commitment to Christ.**

C) We can be guilty of laying Yokes or burdens on others that are supposed to prove their commitment to Christ –

1) Often times it involves things that we ourselves don't faithfully or consistently practice.

D) Why do we do that? Five reasons

#1 We put yokes on people because we sincerely care about them.

A) I have no doubt that was the case here – these were not vindictive guys who had an ax to grind with the Gentiles –

B) These guys were sincere in their beliefs – They sincerely cared for these Gentile believers

C) **When I was High School Pastor CARNAL – Holiness / { You need to be Holy – you need to Change in these areas.**

D) I sincerely cared for them and wanted them to have vibrant walks with God – I felt the way to achieve that was to address all the issues.

1) Wasn't working – at all - ONE NIGHT – LORD – I can't reach them

D) Tell them how much I love them – tell them what I have done for them
1) Tell them – I have made them Holy in my eyes – Live like it.

Taught Mark – Looking at Jesus – kids started falling in love with Him.

A) Started walking in Holiness

B) Love is brings a whole different MOTIVATION.

1) The Green Station wagon. – Pledge

#2 We lay burdens how people because we think we know what is best for them.

A) Often times the reason for this is we come into the faith with preconceived ideas – especially if we come from a religious background.

B) Everyone gets saved with baggage and often times the baggage is spiritual baggage.

C) That was the case with these guys V.5 identifies them as being Pharisees

Cc) They came into the faith with a strict religious background – very legalistic and their relationship with God was all about performance.

D) Notice they added – criteria for being saved – was to circumcised and to keep the law of Moses – added that from v.1

1) Always the case with legalism – always adding to the criteria

E) Never enough!

Sometimes it is not our spiritual baggage but our spiritual convictions

A) We get convicted about something – we think everyone should feel the

same way. TV – Movies –

B) Granted there is a lot of garbage on TV – a lot of horrible movies – but that is not to say everything is bad – or especially sinful.

C) Many things that are just neutral like sports.

Another example: smoking – You shouldn't smoke if you are a Christian

A) Smoking – bad for you – Yes – smell – Yes – Sinful makes you a bad Christian – NO!

B) But your body is the temple of the HS – Destroying it

C) So does eating Chocolate – icecream – over eating – lack of exercise

1) Build a huge case for how most Americans are not taking care of their temples.

D) Saddest thing is when this type of condemnation gets heaped on someone who is really going for it spiritually

1) Someone who is growing in so many other areas – still has this one – struggle - {Most want to quit

Young woman 25 saved – smoking since 15 – could not quit – wanted to tried but Jesus just didn't give her victory

A) Leading a girls study – 25 young girls coming – they were getting on fire

B) She was really making an impact:

C) Some older lady in the Church discovered that she smoked – not publically but it came out – asked for prayer

1) **Protested** – she shouldn't be leading a Bible study. {**Big point of controversy**}

D) **Elders met** {**It wasn't sinful – didn't disqualify her.**}

E) **Pastor was later asked** – Is she still smoking – Cigs – **I have no idea but she sure is smoking for JESUS.**

#3 We put yokes on people because we desire control over them.

A) When Rehoboam, Solomon's son, ascended the throne, he called the older men of the kingdom together and said, "Give me some advice." 1 Kings 12

B) "Your dad worked us hard and taxed the pp heavily," they said. "Free them from the yoke he put upon them, and they will serve you to the end."

C) Then he called the younger men together and said, "What do you guys think I should do?"

1) "Put a *heavier* yoke upon the people,"

Rehoboam followed the advice of the younger men.

A) Under his rule, the people labored continuously, were taxed outrageously—and finally rebelled completely.

B) The country split in two because yokes always lead to division and rebellion.

C) **Word to Parents.** Compassion for people will produce what control over them never can.

D) The heavy yokes you think will control your kids may do just the opposite and cause them to rebel, dividing your entire household in the process.

#4 We put yokes on people because we want to be esteemed by them.

A) Some of the Pharisees wanted to be thought of as more spiritual than they really were, they strutted through town with their phylacteries, praying long prayers on the street corners.

B) We want pp to think – We are sooo Spiritual!

1) Praying this morning – for 3hrs –

C) During Ezekiel's ministry: Ch.8 He has a vision – God takes him to Jerusalem and God had him do something very peculiar.

1) He was instructed by God to dig through a wall in the temple, Ezekiel discovered a door through which he saw **"every form of creeping things, abominable beasts and all the idols of the house of Israel"** being worshiped by the elders of Israel (Ezekiel 8:10, 11).

D) "This is what is happening in the chambers of imagination of the elders of Israel," said the Lord. Ezekiel 8:12

"Then He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, 'The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land.'"

D) God never intended us to walk in false piety or phony spirituality—which is why Jesus said, Matthew 5 **"Blessed are the pure in heart and the poor in spirit"**

1) God likes it when we are real! And Dependent –

#5 We put yokes on people because we want them to share in our misery.

A) There are believers who can't stand joyful Christians - because of their misery and lack of joy,

Bb) So they make everyone around them equally miserable by placing yokes of rules and regulations upon them.

B) If I can't do that – neither should they! – If I can't have any fun – they are not going to either.

C) This ought not be. God's desire is that we walk in joyfulness and with gladness of heart (Deuteronomy 28:47).

D) Note the contrast that we see in this Chapter – V.1 – Judaizers were laying this burden – led to lack of Joy – consternation

1)V.3 Paul and Barnabas with this message of Grace – everywhere they went they caused great Joy among the Brethren.

Jesus said, Matthew 11:28–30 **"Take My yoke upon you**—not the yoke of religion, legalism, manipulation or expectation. **My yoke is easy.**

Well fitting – not striving - **My burden is light. Under My yoke, you will find rest for your souls."**

Does that describe your walk with the Lord – Following Jesus is well fitting

A) Load is light – allowing Jesus to carry it – walking in His grace.

B) When asked the reason for his wealth, a multimillionaire is reported to have said, "As a young man, when I was first married I was dirt poor. Those were tough times, but being energetic, I took my last nickel and bought an apple. I spent the night polishing it until it became so shiny that it was indeed a thing of beauty. The next day, I sold it on the street corner for a dime. I took the dime and bought two apples, which I again laboriously polished. The next day, I sold those two apples for twenty cents. I took the twenty cents and bought four apples, which I polished and sold for forty cents. I took the forty cents, bought eight apples, and went on this way until I reached \$1.60. Then, my wife's dad died—and left us a million dollars."

C) That's just like us! We try to say, "I am rich in the things of God because of my fasting and prayer, my devotion, sacrifice, and apple polishing"—

1)when in reality we are rich only because Jesus died and opened the floodgates of God's grace upon us.

Wrap up by quickly looking at V.6-9 where Peter does a great Job of laying out The PURE WAY of Salvation.

RD V.6-9 AGAIN

V.7 They *heard* the gospel preached!

A)Romans 10:17 **"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."**

B)Power in the Message of the gospel – good news what Jesus did!

V.7 They believed – The gospel was embraced through faith

Ephesians 2:8-9

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast."

Romans 5:1-2

"having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

V.8 They received the Holy Spirit.

A)KJV – Acknowledge = bare them witness

B)New Mark: not a mark on the flesh – cutting away of the flesh circumcision

C)The new mark of their conversion God gave them the Holy Spirit

1) Dwell in our hearts thru faith

D) God's spirit within the heart – Mark of a person saved – inside work of the Spirit of God – affects outside – affects attitudes – actions

V.9 They were purified by faith just like us.

A) They were purified *because* of their belief, not *before* their belief.

B) Although we're to be fishers of men (Matthew 4:19), the problem with so many Christians today is that they are trying **to clean** the fish before they **catch them**.

C) Christianize America – get back to roots –

1) Founding fathers came here with a faith.

D) In reality, it is not until *after* men are hooked on Christ and brought into the boat of salvation that their hearts will change.

E) Therefore, the great need of our world, our communities, and our families is not reformation but regeneration.

Your need to today: Saved! – Heard the Word

Embrace it – faith – believe –

Receive the HS –

Purified – Justification

Sanctification – on going!

Already saved – get rid of the Yokes – Be free!