

# NORTH HILLS NOTES

## A NEW & BETTER WAY: Religion Or Jesus May 31, 2008 Terry Benson

### A FORK IN THE ROAD

*“Some of the believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and insisted, ‘The Gentile converts must be circumcised and required to follow the law of Moses.’ So the apostles and elders met together to resolve this issue.”*  
Acts 15:5, 6 (NLT)

*“At the meeting, after a long discussion, Peter stood and addressed them as follows: ‘Brothers, you all know that God chose me from among you some time ago to preach to the Gentiles so that they could hear the Good News and believe. God knows people’s hearts, and he confirmed that he accepts Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he cleansed their hearts through faith. So why are you now challenging God by burdening the Gentile believers with a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors were able to bear? We believe that we are all saved the same way, by the undeserved grace of the Lord Jesus.’”*  
Acts 15:7-11 (NLT)

Issue: What are the RULES for Gentiles (non-Jews)?

Resolution: Abstain from FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS, BLOOD, MEAT THAT WAS STRANGLED, SEXUAL IMMORALITY. see Acts 15:22-29)

### WHO CHANGED THE SIGNPOST?

*“When I saw that they were not following the truth of the gospel message, I said to Peter in front of all the others, ‘Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you now trying to make these Gentiles follow the Jewish traditions?’”*  
Galatians 2:14 (NLT)

### Trying to pass Rule-focused Religion off as the Way of Christ...

- has its roots in FEAR.
- leads to HYPOCRISY,
- ends in CONDEMNATION & DEFEAT.

### IT’S A MATTER OF DEATH AND LIFE

*“When I tried to keep the law, it condemned me. So I died to the law—I stopped trying to meet all its requirements—so that I might live for God. My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*  
Galatians 2:19-20 (NLT)

Attempting to keep the law always results SIN AND DEATH.

Accepting Christ’s death frees me to LIVE HIS RESURRECTED LIFE.

*“Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God’s grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily.”*  
Galatians 2:21 (Message)