

# Everyone

## Today's Message – "Everyone Is Included" (Part 2)

### Message Study Guide

#### Introduction

I love talking to people who do not attend church about church. Whenever the conversation gets around to me asking them the big question, "why don't you attend church", the answers I receive are interesting to say the least. In all my years in the ministry, I've never had a single person say that they don't attend church because they "don't believe in God", "they don't believe in Jesus", "they don't believe in the Bible", or a multitude of other theological issues.

They always say things like, "I use to go to church", or "I'm looking for a church", or "we go to the lake on the weekend", or "church is only for church people".

In post 9/11 America, people flocked to churches all across the country looking for answers to real life issues. Within weeks, church attendance fell to an all time low. Why? What happened? Is it possible that the church messed up the single greatest opportunity in 2000 years to reach out to people who were confused and hurting and point them to the greatness of Jesus Christ?

Obviously, when people went back to church after 9/11, they saw and heard the same message they had always heard. Church must only be for church people! Only some are invited, only some are included, only some are welcomed.

I believe today that more people have a problem with the church than they do with God. Churches have a tendency to be complicated and secluded. In Acts 15, just a short time after Jesus had returned to heaven, Christians were already complicating this simple message of the gospel, that "Everyone is Invited", "Everyone is Included", and "Everyone is Welcomed".

#### Discussion Points

1. Everyone must be Invited  
See John 4:1-42 and Matthew 22:1-14
2. Everyone must be Included  
See Acts 15:1-31 and Romans 10:1-17
3. Everyone must be Welcomed  
See 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 and Luke 14:12-24

#### Discussion Questions

1. Make a list of the five things you believe churches do that knowingly or unknowingly complicate the simple message of the gospel.
2. What lessons can we as a church learn from the account in Acts 15 concerning the disagreement between many of the new converts and the apostles about salvation?
3. What simple life lesson can you learn from Acts 15:19? Write it out somewhere in your bible as a daily reminder.
4. How was the crisis of disagreement about salvation resolved in Acts 15:30-31? How can this passage help you to solve future disagreements with people?

#### Think About It

Have you ever been "Excluded" from anything? How did you feel? Now do you better understand why the message of the church must be that "Everyone is Included"?

#### Do Something About It!

Put two or three steps in place in your own personal life to make certain that you send a clear message to everyone that they are included.

#### Be Willing To Change

Great life verse: "Therefore, it is my opinion that we should not put obstacles in the way of and annoy and disturb those of the gentiles who turn to God" – Acts 15:19