

ACTS 15: COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM

While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch of Syria, some men from Judea arrived and began to teach the believers: “Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved.” Paul and Barnabas disagreed with them, arguing vehemently.

Finally, the church decided to send Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, accompanied by some local believers, to talk to the apostles and elders about this question. ...

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.”

The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me. Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles.

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

Acts 15:1-2, 7-14, 19

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS:

- What are they coming to realize in this council?
- What are the challenges they are facing?
- What conclusion do they come to?