

Jesus Christ's work through the Apostles to the Uttermost

The Jerusalem Council & Paul's second missionary Journey

"... and ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judae'a, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." **Acts 1:8**

Introduction: Acts chapter 14 closes with Paul and Barnabas abiding at Antioch a "long time." No doubt we could liken this to the matter of furlough for our missionaries today. After a certain amount of time trouble comes to the relatively young converts at Antioch. The matter of Judean law and practices comes into question. Does salvation require a keeping of the law? Since this matter originated from the church at Jerusalem the matter would be dealt with by the church at Jerusalem. At the end of this chapter, Paul and a new missionary partner head on the second missionary journey pushing the Gospel even farther into the uttermost.

I. The Problem Posed v1-2

A. Gospel Denied – v1

1. "certain men which came down from Judaea" - later we will find that this problem originated in Jerusalem
2. "that certain which went out from us have troubled you" **v24**
3. What is the Gospel? The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus without context is just history.
4. **1 Corinthians 15: 3-4**
5. **What is added to the Gospel in this case?** "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."
6. **What does circumcision have to do with Salvation?** Genesis 12, Genesis 17, Romans 4
7. **Romans 11:6** "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: **otherwise work is no more work.**"

B. Gospel Disputed – v2

1. "When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small **dissension and disputation** with them," – two words here
2. Dissension – A standing position., Disputation – A mutual questioning/ reasoning.
3. Not disorder, Not without love. **Ephesians 4: 11-16**
4. **Jude 3-4**

C. Gospel Doubted v2

1. "should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." – In questions regarding interpretation of the Bible talk to your Pastor

II. The Positions Examined v8-21

A. Travelling to Jerusalem v3-4

1. **They were escorted by brethren from Antioch**
2. They were perhaps provided the things necessary for travel
3. **v3** *“And being brought on their way by the church”* – It is right and good for us to care for our brothers and sisters in Christ, particularly for those who labor in the Word
4. **1 Thessalonians 5: 12-13** *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.*
5. **1 Timothy 5:17-18** *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*
6. **They declared what God has done along the way**
7. **v3** *“**declaring** the conversion of the Gentiles: and **they caused great joy** unto all the brethren.”*
8. *“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”* **Luke 18:10**
9. **They declared now to the church at Jerusalem**
10. **v4** *“they declared all things **that God had done with them.**”*
11. *“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.”* **1 Corinthians 3:9**

B. Trying Situation v5-7

1. v5 *“there arose up certain of the **sect of the Pharisees which believed**”* – differing backgrounds when we get saved
2. Religious practices of some cast upon others (is it our job to add to the Bible?)
3. v5 *“it was needful to circumcise them”- “to command them to keep the law of Moses.”*
4. v6 *“the apostles and elders came together for to consider this matter.”*
5. v7 *“And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up”*

C. Telling Testimonies v7

1. Peter's Testimony concerning Gentiles v7-11
2. *"God made choice among us"*
3. *"And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness"*
4. *"And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith"*
5. What do we already know about God?
6. **Paul and Barnabas' Testimony v12**
7. What God has blessed in and through us?
8. *"declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."*
9. **James' Testimony v13-21**
10. **2 Peter 1: 16-21**
11. *"And to this agree the words of the prophets" v15*
12. *While the previous was true, notice that James looks to the Bible, 'a more sure word.'*
13. **Amos 9: 11-15**
14. *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." v18*
15. *"God sees everything future; he knows what he will accomplish; he has a plan; all his works are so arranged in his mind that he sees everything distinctly and clearly. As he foretold these, it was a part of his plan; and as it was a part of his plan long since foretold, it should not be opposed and resisted by us." – Albert Barnes*

D. Tactful Treatment

1. *"Wherefore my sentence is" v19*
2. They abstain from pollutions of idols – eating things offered to idols
3. They abstain from fornication - immorality
4. They abstain from things strangled – eating things such as die of themselves or are torn of beasts
5. They abstain from blood – eating of blood
6. **Romans 14: 14,15** *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.*
7. **Immediate things to promote unity and promote sanctification**
8. *"Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day." v21*– The Scriptures are available
9. **John 17:17** *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

III. The Principle Explained v22-35

A. The Unity Brought By Leadership

1. *"Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church" v22*
2. The apostles
3. The elders
4. The local church body

B. The Unity Brought By Doctrine

1. What does the Bible say?
2. *"Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law:" ?*

C. The Unity Brought By God

1. *"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost" v29*

D. The Disunity Brought By Some

1. *"that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:"*
2. Notice these were acting apart from the whole
3. Notice these were 'Subverting' – Turning away from the truth doing violence.
4. Notice these were not given commandment – In other words it was self-constituted authority
5. **James 3: 13-18** *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

IV. The Purpose Continued

A. Gathered the church together v30

1. Read - *the epistle* (the letter) **v30**
2. Rejoiced **v31** – they rejoiced for the *consolation* (comfort)
3. Remained **v35** – “*Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.*”
 - a. We must continue
 - b. We must serve
 - c. We must influence

B. Arranged to go again v36-41

1. The design **v36**
 - a. Visit the brethren
 - b. View their situation
2. The determination **v37-39**
 - a. Was to take John Mark
 - b. Previously left them in **Acts 13:13**
 - c. Remember Barnabas’ heart – last mentioning of Barnabas
 - d. Remember Paul’s heart
 - e. Remember John Mark’s track record
 - f. Am I dependable?
3. The departing **v39-41**
 - a. departed asunder
 - b. departed different directions (Cyprus, Syria/ Cilicia)

