

I. Text:

Acts 15:22-35 22 Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers. 23 With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. 24 We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. 25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul-- 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. 28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell. 30 The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. 31 The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. 32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers. 33 After spending some time there, they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. 34 35 But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Overall, are some observations, insights, or questions that you had from reading this text?

II. Review:

3 General insights into the Jerusalem Council:

1. The Church has always been attacked by false doctrine, false gospels, and false leaders that the Elders must debate, defend, and decide. (Titus 1:9)
2. The Church as always been governed by Elder Rule (decisions of a church are made by a plurality of Elders) (*Acts 14:23, Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23, 20:17, 21:18, 1 Tim. 4:14, 5:17, *Titus 1:5, James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:1, Rev. 4:4, 10, Rev. 5:5,6,8,11,14, 7:11,13, 11:16, 14:3, 19:4)
3. The Church as always had leaders of leaders (Peter, James, John) (Galatians 1:18-19, 2:9)

Main Points from Last Sermon on Acts 15:1-21: (9 Points to Know, Learn, and Live from the Jerusalem Counsel)

1. (Acts 15:1) Discern False Gospels that are UnBiblical
2. (Acts 15:2) A Strong DEFENSE and DEBATE over primary doctrinal issues such as the GOSPEL is not only good but is required of the church and all Christians to defend.
3. (Acts 15:2) There is a place for strong & courageous REBUKE & CORRECTION of false doctrine in the Church by standing firm on the foundations of Scripture
4. (Acts 15:2b-4) Expect Trials, Push back from Satan or Opposition from unbelievers, or even internal Division – which usually comes on the heels of major spiritual breakthroughs, progress, and victories in the CHURCH
5. (Acts 15:5) Know that some of our greatest struggles and fights for Biblical truth/doctrine will come from WITHIN the church
6. (Acts 15:6) The Elders of a Local Church should come together to SOLVE difficult matters facing the Church
7. (Acts 15:7-11) Good Spiritual Leader's Speak Up and SHAPE the conversation by pointing to God's will/choices like including the Gentiles in His plan of salvation (Peter's Input)
8. (Acts 15:12) Good Spiritual Leader's recount not what they have done but what God has done (Paul and Barnabas's Input)
9. (Acts 15:13-21) Good spiritual leaders base their contributing comments and decisions on SCRIPTURE (James' Input)

In reviewing these take aways and applications from the Jerusalem Council that our church can and should also do and excel in – what areas do you think our church (of these 9 points) is strong in and weak in?

Another PARALLEL passage giving Paul's insight into the Jerusalem Counsel (Acts 21:17-25)

How are the four things that the Jerusalem Apostles and Elders instructed the new churches established on Paul's 1st Missionary journey still a problem, challenge, or applicable to the modern church today (meat sacrificed/dedicated to idols, demonic practices – drinking of blood/killing animals a certain way etc., and fornication (Greek word pornia)?

III. Main Points in Detail (4 Additional Points to Know, Learn, and Live for our church)

1. (Acts 15:22a) Elder Unanimity –

How Elders make Decisions (it seemed good to the Apostles, Elders, and whole church...)

3 groups/all pluralities – not single person deciding (22:25 seemed good to US ... of one mind) also 22:28 "seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us)

How do leaders practically arrive what "seems good" or the same mind / one passion?

1. **Prayer** (individual and corporate prayer)
2. **Searching**/studying the Word (individual and corporate study)
3. **Discussing** together (gathering information, hearing different positions, persuading each other)
4. **Deciding** with unanimity or majority support

2. (Acts 15:22b) Egalitarian vs Complementarian - God's plan and will is for men to be the leaders of the home and the church. Choose men... leading men among the brethren.

1. Qualifications for Elders and Deacons are always masculine plurals in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3
2. Clearly the leaders of the church are to be a husband of one wife (impossible for women to meet unless battling for the wrong team – abominations just recently legalized and our wicked society/culture trying to "normalize"
3. There are several key commands and prohibitions regarding the Biblical roles of men and women in the home and church – 1 Timothy 2:12-15, 1 Cor. 14:34-35, Titus 2:5, Gen. 3:16, 1 Cor. 11:3-19
 - a. Most women stepping into leadership roles are not usually because they are usurping but because men are abdicating their authority and responsibility – not doing their God given roles and responsibilities & roles in the home or church and women are often stepping up to fill the void.

- b. Women working outside the home and depending on others to raise their children – the God given mission to evangelize, disciple, and train them in the fear and admonition of the Lord.
- c. Women not submitting to their husbands (Ephesians 5:24), not taking literally the first half of 1 Corinthians 11 about head coverings for a number of reasons – fear of man/no one else is doing it/people will think I'm crazy or old fashion, doesn't fit with my style/fashion/modern beauty trends, or self will – I just don't want to do it so I'll find a way to excuse the command based on culture/that was what the ancient Corinthian church practiced but not me, or the text is not clear – but it is an imperative (command for women to do something specific – he is not commanding them to put on their hair... men also have hair – me very little – and they are not to be covered in public worship while praying or prophesying... we'll I'm not praying or prophesying – I hope every woman prays when she comes to TBC worship.

Finally – God has ordained different roles for men and women, but equal value and importance – women or co-HEIRS (1 Peter 3) they have just as much heavenly rewards/importance to God – after all remember that the only thing that lasts in this life is the souls of people – and God has given women the majority of TIME to evangelize and disciple our greatest lasting treasure – the souls of our children – what has He given men – Working hard from dust to dust to protect, provide, but also be the Pacesetters – the spiritual examples and leaders of the home and church (and in my personal opinion and conviction... the country as well).

3. (Acts 15:23-29) The power of Christian/ (church letters / spiritual letters for instruction, comfort, correction, encouragement)

1. Notice they delivered the letter in person by trusted and leading men of the church (Judas and Silas – Silas who will become one of Paul's right hand men/traveling companion - Acts 15:22, 27, 32, 34, 40, 16:19, 25, 29, 17:4, 10, 14, 15, 18:5)
2. Notice the Salutation/Greetings – warm greeting from the Jerusalem Church (Apostles/Elders) to Gentile Christians in the church/region of Antioch Syria Cilicia (Greetings in Jesus!)
3. Notice the genuine Concern, Responsibility, and Clarification – we're sorry some from our church disturbed/upset you – unsettled your souls (questioning your salvation/saying you must be circumcised to be saved) – clarification - we did not send them... but none the less also notice how the Elders take responsibility to fix a problem they did not start or intend but find themselves as part of the problem/solution.
4. Notice the clear solution/resolution/instruction (essentials):
 - a. We diligently worked on this – to become of ONE MIND – know what seems good/best path forward
 - b. They affirm their local church leaders - Barnabas and Paul – they risked their lives for Jesus
 - c. We have sent Judas and Silas to say the same things in person (for even greater CLARITY)
 - d. They state the ultimate authority and main points of the letter – here is what seems good to the Holy Spirit (God) – to keep to the ESSENTIALS (we should keep to the essentials of the Gospel)

The essentials for Gentiles to practice live by as new Christians are SIMPLIFIED

- Abstain from things sacrificed to idols (have nothing to do with darkness/evil)
- Abstain from eating/drinking blood or eating animals not properly killed or butchered – removing their innards, draining their blood, cutting up the meat – why its not kosher to eat road kill, drink blood, or eat organs like they do in pagan/idol practices – whether it's a demonic expression of Ozzy Osborne biting/eating a bat, drinking blood, etc. This was prohibited by God before the Mosaic law after the flood in Genesis 9:4 (don't do anything to cause someone else to stumble or that is unhealthy)
- Abstain from sexual immorality – (pornia) ANY form of sexual intercourse or gratification outside the bound of marriage. (Do not defraud someone else out of sexual selfishness, don't betray/cheat on your spouse, or become one in flesh with a prostitute) (God calls us to be holy and be reminded that our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit – owned by God – therefore honor God with your body – may it be an instrument used for righteousness things not unrighteous things.

CONCLUSION OF THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL LETTER

- ▶ Conclusion/Valediction (vale decree “to say farewell”) – keep yourself free from these things and you will do well/what is right (righteous in God's eyes) (we can say from the rest of Scripture – free from sin – all sin – sins of commission – doing things God clearly prohibits and sins of omission – not doing things God clearly commands) Farewell in my opinion is too generic and plain –
- ▶ The Greek word is ῥῶνυμι (rhonnumi: to strengthen, be strong from Origin: rhoomai (to move with speed, dart) ... Be strong/move out with speed)

4. (Acts 15:24-35) The edification (building up of the church)

1. The congregation gathered TOGETHER (isolation is primary strategy of Satan – to keep us from encouragement from other believers)
2. Reading the letter (like us reading Scripture together) brings JOY χαίρω (chairō): to rejoice, be glad – they rejoiced – btw rejoicing (not the political redefinition of “joy” of the DNC – true joy is only from God not man, only by the truth/Scriptures not lies, and only “enjoyed” by believers filled with the Holy Spirit (love...JOY...peace etc) and not available to unbelievers.
3. They were mutually encouraged - παράκλησις (paraklesis): a calling to one's aid, i.e. encouragement, comfort, Origin: παρακαλέω (parakaleo): to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage (one of the 9 spiritual gifts according to Romans 12:8)
4. They were strengthened by a LONG/lengthy message. Lit. Many/much word (singular) so translated much words, much message, lengthy message. ἐπισηρίζω episterizo {ep-ee-stay-rid'-zo} : 1) to establish besides, strengthen more 2) to render more firm, confirm, Origin: στηρίζω sterizo {stay-rid'-zo} : 1) to make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix 2) to strengthen, make firm 3) to render constant, confirm, one's mind
5. They spent TIME there – Judas and Silas stayed a while not only to strengthen but until the problem was fixed – instead of disturbed, the church had PEACE. εἰρήνη eirene: welfare, undisturbed, origin: from εἶρω eiro (to join): lit. or fig. peace, by impl. Welfare
6. Silas even decides to STAY (make Antioch his new home church instead of Jerusalem – ok because he is obviously NEEDED more there, where he can be fully utilized for the Kingdom, best grow and serve) and will eventually become Paul's new right hand man on the 2nd Missionary Journey
7. The church benefited from multiple and various Apostles/Elders/prophets teaching and preaching. (every unlike American churches who predominately have the Senior or Lead Pastor do most of the preaching) 35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching, with many others also, the word of the Lord. Notice the words – many others also – but always THE WORD of the LORD.

What stood out to you from among all these details on the main points? Are there any additional main points or applications you would add about the Jerusalem Counsel? Do you have any questions about the Jerusalem Council or about this sermon?

IV. Conclusion and Application:

It is good to have many godly men with their various strengths, expertise, focus/angles to teach us the Word – well rounded, not followers of a man, subject/submissive to the LORD/Holy Spirit through a plurality of Elders – all of whom should and must teach and preach if they are truly Elders and not YES men. (just the big givers, most popular or successful, or the closest friends of the Pastors – many Elders in America do not meet ALL of the Qualifications for an Elder in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Many Elders can't or won't or don't ever teach or preach but just make decisions or vote in the Board meetings, many Elders are NOT spiritual shepherds who mend, tend, fend, and tend the sheep. But Paul and Barnabas STAYED (spent quality time with their people in their home church) doing the main things of Pastor/shepherd – TEACHING and PREACHING... and that is what strengthened, equipped, and encouraged the church – OVERALL MANY godly men teaching, preaching, discipling, counseling, and shepherding the church so that it GREW, MULTIPLIED, and ACCOMPLISHED it God's given mission (Great Commission Mt. 28:19-20, Acts 1:8 to make disciples, baptize them, teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded us... to be His witnesses in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and ends of the earth. So even though I will speak less at that campus, and many others will speak more – you have all that you need – you have His word, you have His Spirit, you have each other the church, you have many able teachers/preachers. So Farewell – be strong, be strengthened - move out with speed.

TBC Goal: One Mind (Unity in Doctrine), One Passion (One Driving Priority – pleasing Jesus) (Acts 1:14, 2:46-47, 15:25-26)

What is ONE thing you learned or want to apply from this sermon? What is 1 way we can better be unified/of one mind at TBC?

TRUTH BIBLE CHURCH



FOLLOWERS OF JESUS SEEKING TO...

LOVE GOD SUPREMEPLY

Matthew 22:37-38 ³⁷ And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." ³⁸ "This is the great and foremost commandment.

SERVE PEOPLE SINCERELY

Matthew 22:39 ³⁹ "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

John 13:34-35 ³⁴ "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

REACH THE LOST URGENTLY

Matthew 28:19-20 ¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

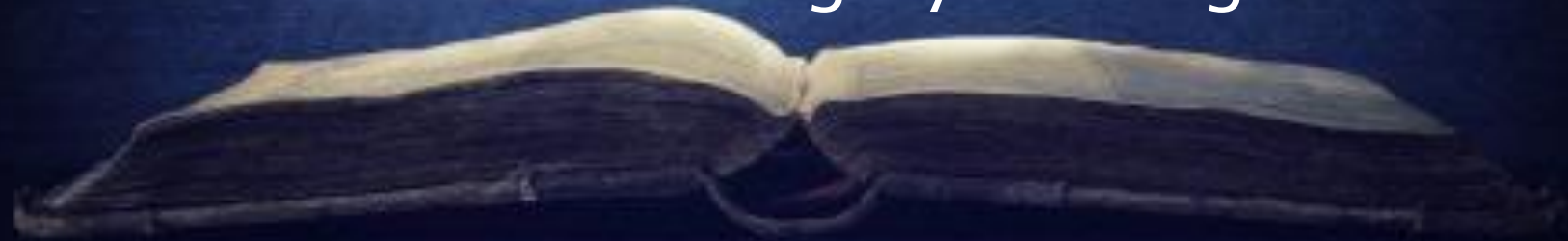
Acts 15:22-35

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas-- Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, 23 and they sent this letter by them, "The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings. 24 "Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words, unsettling your souls, 25 it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Acts 15:22-35

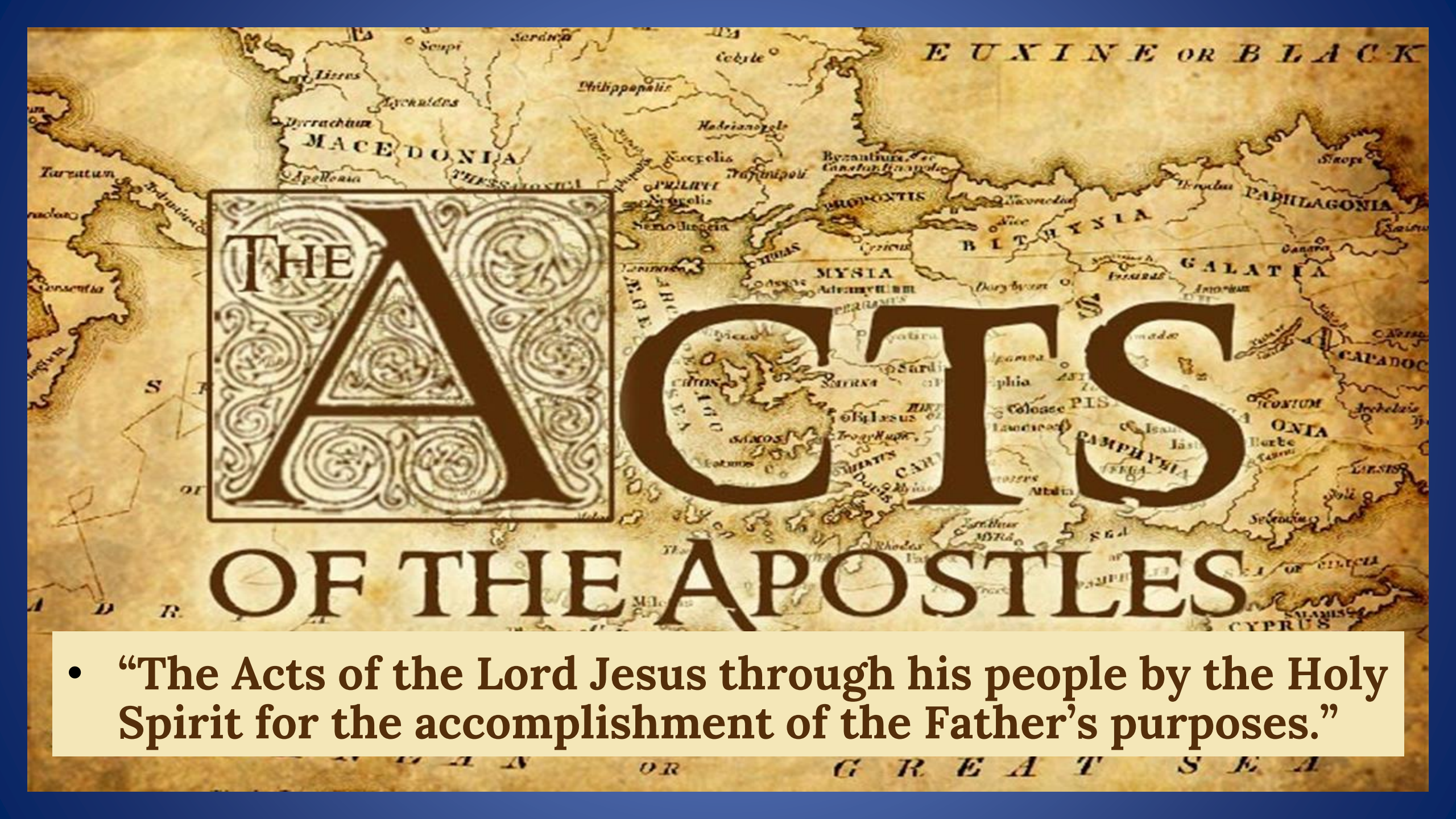
27 "Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word of mouth. 28 "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: 29 that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell." 30 So, when they were sent away, they went down to Antioch; and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. 31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. 32 And Judas and Silas, also being prophets themselves, encouraged and strengthened the brethren with a lengthy message.



Acts 15:22-35

33 And after they had spent time there, they were sent away from the brethren in peace to those who had sent them out. 34 But it seemed good to Silas to remain there . 35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching, with many others also, the word of the Lord.





THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

- “The Acts of the Lord Jesus through His people by the Holy Spirit for the accomplishment of the Father’s purposes.”



This Week's Sermon Title:

“The Jerusalem Counsel” pt. 2 (It seemed good to everyone)

Acts 15:22–35



The MacArthur Study Bible (Acts 15 Introduction)

- ▶ **15:1–30** Throughout its history, the church's leaders have met to settle doctrinal issues. Historians point to 7 ecumenical councils in the church's early history, especially the Councils of Nicea (a.d. 325) and Chalcedon (a.d. 451).
- ▶ **Yet the most important council was the first one—the Jerusalem Council—because it established the answer to the most vital doctrinal question of all: “What must a person do to be saved?” The apostles and elders defied efforts to impose legalism and ritualism as necessary prerequisites for salvation. They forever affirmed that salvation is totally by grace through faith in Christ alone.**

Some Important Church Councils

Jerusalem Council (50 AD)	A person is saved by faith not by keeping the law
Council of Nicaea 325 AD	Affirmed Christ's deity
Council of Ephesus (431)	Emphasized the unity of Christ's personality
Council of Chalcedon (451)	State the relationship between two natures of Christ
Council of Constantinople (553)	Deals with claim that Christ had one nature merged rather than two
Council of Constantinople (680)	Christ had one or two wills
Council of Nicea (787)	Restore permission for Christian images

Making Significant Decisions

(Acts 15:1–36)

– The Jerusalem Council –

The Bible Teacher's Commentary

Paul J. Bucknell

- ▶ Church councils are not always right.
- ▶ Councils should keep to the scriptures.
- ▶ Councils should avoid political government interference.
- ▶ Councils should include church leaders (vocational and non-vocational).
- ▶ What happens if church councils make poor decisions?
- **Genuinely listen to one another**
- **Believe in absolute truth**
- **Stand up for truth (debate okay)**
- **Value God-led experience**
- **Use scripture for final judgment**
- **Submit to the scriptures**

3 General Observations about the Jerusalem Counsel

1. The Church has always been attacked by false doctrine, false gospels, and false leaders that the Elders must debate, defend, and decide. (Titus 1:9)

2. The Church as always been governed by Elder Rule (decisions of a church are made by a plurality of Elders) (*Acts 14:23, Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23, 20:17, 21:18, 1 Tim. 4:14, 5:17, *Titus 1:5, James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:1, Rev. 4:4, 10, Rev. 5:5,6,8,11,14, 7:11,13, 11:16, 14:3, 19:4)

3. The Church as always had leaders of leaders (Peter, James, John) (Galatians 1:18–19, 2:9)

Acts 15:1–21:

9 Points to Know, Learn, and Live from the Jerusalem Counsel

1. (Acts 15:1) Discern False Gospels that are UnBiblical
2. (Acts 15:2) A Strong DEFENSE and DEBATE over primary doctrinal issues such as the GOSPEL is not only good but is required of the church and all Christians to defend.
3. (Acts 15:2) There is a place for strong and courageous REBUKE and CORRECTION of false doctrine in the Church by standing firm on the foundations of Scripture
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7. (Acts 15:7–11) Good Spiritual Leader's Speak Up and SHAPE the conversation by pointing to God's will/choices like including the Gentiles in His plan of salvation (Peter's Input)
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SO WHAT?

Application



1. **Check** every Bible teacher/preacher to make sure they are inline with God's Word The Bible like the Bereans. **Acts 17:11** ¹¹ Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so.
2. **Hold** your Elders accountable and ensure they are experts in the Bible and good spiritual examples and pacesetters.
3. **Ask** them your honest questions and make sure that your Elders are making decisions based on the Bible after careful listening/debate/discussion, prayer, and examination of the decision or questions in light of the Scriptures as our final authority for faith (what we believe) and practice (how we live).
4. **Trust** God to work through the plurality of Elders (safety net of the Holy Spirit) unless they teaching outside the Bible and you have specific Scriptural evidence to the contrary of their teaching or advise
5. **Obey** your spiritual leaders - Too many people think they know better than their Elders so that they don't seek out their counsel, don't heed their advise, or totally reject their wisdom often to their own determent and folly. **Hebrews 13:17** ¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Another PARALLEL passage giving Paul's insight into the Jerusalem Counsel

Acts 21:17-25 ¹⁷ After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ¹⁸ And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ After he had greeted them, he *began* to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ And when they heard it they *began* glorifying God; and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law; ²¹ and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. ²² "What, then, is *to be done*? They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³ "Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow; ²⁴ take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law. ²⁵ "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication."

4 Additional Points to Know, Learn, and Live for our church

- ▶ 1. **(Acts 15:22a)** Unanimity – How Elders make Decisions
- ▶ 2. **(Acts 15:22b)** Egalitarian vs Complementarian – God's plan and will is for men to be the leaders of the home and the church.
- ▶ 3. **(Acts 15:23–29)** The power of Christian letters (church letters / spiritual letters for instruction, comfort, correction, encouragement)
- ▶ 4. **(Acts 15:30–35)** The edification (building up of the church)

Point 1: (Acts 15:22a) Elder Unanimity – How Elders make Decisions (it seemed good to the Apostles, Elders, and whole church...)

- ▶ (3 groups/all pluralities – not single person deciding/Moses model (22:25 seemed good to US have become of one mind) also 22:28 “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us)

How do leaders practically arrive what “seems good” or the same mind / one passion:

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4. **Deciding** with unanimity or majority support

B. Point 2 (Acts 15:22b) Egalitarian vs Complementarian –
God's plan and will is for men to be the leaders of the home and the church. Choose men... leading men among the brethren.

1. Qualifications for Elders and Deacons are always **masculine plurals** in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3
2. Clearly the leaders of the church are to be **a husband of one wife** (impossible for women to meet unless batting for the wrong team – abominations just recently legalized and our wicked society/culture trying to “normalize”)
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1 Timothy 2:12–15, 1 Cor. 14:34–35, Titus 2:5, Gen. 3:16, 1 Cor. 11:3–19

a. Most women stepping into leadership roles are not usually because they are usurping but because **men are abdicating their authority and responsibility** – not doing their God given roles and responsibilities and roles in the home or church and women are often stepping up to fill the void.

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d. **Women Pastors** (Ex. – God told me/had a dream/vision and that trumps Scripture)
– Local church in our area – several families have come here – because they recently ordained women Elders – why because women in the church demanded equality and the Pastor wrote a paper in college but not primarily based on Scripture or with Biblical hermeneutics (literal, contextual, historical, grammatical, total)

- ▶ Finally – God has ordained **different roles** for men and women, but **equal value and importance** – women or co-HEIRS (1 Peter 3) they have just as much heavenly rewards/importance to God – after all remember that the only thing that lasts in this life is the souls of people – and God has given women the majority of TIME to evangelize and disciple our greatest lasting treasure – the souls of our children – what has He given men – Working hard from dust to dust to protect, provide, but also be the Pacesetters – the spiritual examples and leaders of the home and church (and in my personal opinion and conviction... the country as well).

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1. Notice they **delivered the letter in person** by trusted and leading men of the church (Judas and Silas – Silas who will become one of Paul's right hand men/traveling companion – Acts 15:22, 27, 32, 34, 40, 16:19, 25, 29, 17:4, 10, 14, 15, 18:5)
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The essentials for Gentiles to practice live by as new Christians are SIMPLIFIED

- **Abstain from things sacrificed to idols** (have nothing to do with darkness/evil)
- **Abstain from eating/drinking blood or eating animals not properly killed or butchered** – removing their innards, draining their blood, cutting up the meat – why its not kosher to eat road kill, drink blood, or eat organs like they do in pagan/idol practices – whether it's a demonic expression of Ozzy Osborne biting/eating a bat, drinking blood, etc. This was prohibited by God before the Mosaic law after the flood in Genesis 9:4 (don't do anything to cause someone else to stumble or that is unhealthy)
- **Abstain from sexual immorality** – (pornia) ANY form of sexual intercourse or gratification outside the bound of marriage. (Do not defraud someone else out of sexual selfishness, don't betray/cheat on your spouse, or become one in flesh with a prostitute) (God calls us to be holy and be reminded that our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit – owned by God – therefore honor God with your body – may it be a instrument used for righteousness things not unrighteous things.

CONCLUSION OF THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL LETTER

- ▶ Conclusion/Valediction (vale decree “to say farewell”) – keep yourself free from these things and you will do well/what is right (righteous in God’s eyes) (we can say from the rest of Scripture – free from sin – all sin – sins of commission – doing things God clearly prohibits and sins of omission – not doing things God clearly commands) Farewell in my opinion is too generic and plain –
- ▶ The Greek word is **ῥώννυμι** (rhonnumi: to strengthen, be strong from **Origin:** rhoomai (to move with speed, dart) ... Be strong/move out with speed)

D. (Acts 15:24–35) The edification (building up of the church)

1. The congregation gathered TOGETHER (isolation is primary strategy of Satan – to keep us from encouragement from other believers)

2. Reading the letter (like us reading Scripture together) brings JOY χαίρω (chairō): *to rejoice, be glad*
– they rejoiced – btw rejoicing (not the political redefinition of “joy” of the DNC – true joy is only from God not man, only by the truth/Scriptures not lies, and only “enjoyed” by believers filled with the Holy Spirit (love...JOY...peace etc) and not available to unbelievers.

3. They were mutually encouraged – παράκλησις (paraklesis): a calling to one's aid, i.e. *encouragement, comfort*, **Origin:** παρακαλέω (parakaleō): to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage (one of the 9 spiritual gifts according to Romans 12:8)

4. They were strengthened by a LONG/lengthy message. Lit. Many/much word (singular) so translated much words, much message, lengthy message. ἐπιστηρίζω episterizo {ep-ee-stay-rid'-zo} : 1) to establish besides, strengthen more 2) to render more firm, confirm, **Origin:** στηρίζω sterizo {stay-rid'-zo} : 1) to make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix 2) to strengthen, make firm 3) to render constant, confirm, one's mind

D. (Acts 15:24–35) The edification (building up of the church)

5. They spent TIME there – Judas and Silas stayed a while not only to strengthen but until the problem was fixed – instead of disturbed, the church had PEACE. εἰρήνη eirene: welfare, undisturbed, origin: from εἰρω eiro (to join): lit. or fig. peace, by impl. Welfare

6. Silas even decides to STAY (make Antioch his new home church instead of Jerusalem – ok because he is obviously NEEDED more there, where he can be fully utilized for the Kingdom, best grow and serve) and will eventually become Paul's new right hand man on the 2nd Missionary Journey

7. The church benefited from multiple and various Apostles/Elders/prophets teaching and preaching. (every unlike American churches who predominately have the Senior or Lead Pastor do most of the preaching) 35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching, with many others also, the word of the Lord. Notice the words – many others also – but always THE WORD of the LORD.

Conclusion

It is good to have many godly men with their various strengths, expertise, focus/angles to teach us the Word – well rounded, not followers of a man, subject/submissive to the LORD/Holy Spirit through a plurality of Elders – all of whom should and must teach and preach if they are truly Elders and not YES men. (just the big givers, most popular or successful, or the closest friends of the Pastors – many Elders in America do not meet ALL of the Qualifications for an Elder in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Many Elders can't or won't or don't ever teach or preach but just make decisions or vote in the Board meetings, many Elders are NOT spiritual shepherds who mend, tend, fend, and send the sheep. But Paul and Barnabas STAYED (spent quality time with their people in their home church) doing the main things of Pastor/shepherd – TEACHING and PREACHING... and that is what strengthened, equipped, and encouraged the church – OVERALL MANY godly men teaching, preaching, discipling, counseling, and shepherding the church so that it GREW, MULTIPLIED, and ACCOMPLISHED it God's given mission (Great Commission Mt. 28:19–20, Acts 1:8 to make disciples, baptize them, teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded us... to be His witnesses in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and ends of the earth. So even though I will speak less at that campus, and many others will speak more – you have all that you need – you have His word, you have His Spirit, you have each other the church, you have many able teachers/preachers. So Farewell – be strong, be strengthened – move out with speed.

SO WHAT?

Application



One Mind, One Passion

Acts 1:14 14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 2:46-47 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 15:25-26 25 it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.