

The Jerusalem Council – the Church’s Judgment & Letter (Acts 15:5-29)

1. The problem at hand: the important matter of justification alone (v.1)
2. A sharp dispute arose between the Jews and Paul and Barnabas (v.2)
3. Paul and Barnabas sent by the church of Antioch to Jerusalem (v.3)

I. The Debate in Jerusalem (15:5-21)

1. Peter (15:7-11)
 - i) Peter humbly attributed the whole initiative to God (v.7)
 - ii) God who knows the heart gave them the Holy Spirit: accepted them
 - iii) God made no distinction between us, He purified their hearts by faith
2. Paul and Barnabas (15:12)

Whole assembly became silent, Barnabas & Paul testified of God’s work

3. James (15:13-21)

James quotes *Amos 9:11-12* in support of Paul & Barnabas’ Gentile ministry

James states: not to trouble the Gentiles with the laws & customs of Moses

abstain from *polluted by idols, sexual immorality, things strangled, & blood*

(19,20)

II. The Council’s Letter (15: 22-29)

It pleased the apostles & elders, whole church to send chosen men & letter

The gospel of divine grace was affirmed

The unity of the church was safeguarded

Evangelism of the Gentiles could proceed without hindrance

Gentile churches that were already established were encouraged

The future of the church as a whole was guaranteed