

“We Are Saved By Faith & Grace Alone!”

Acts 15:6-12

Now the **Apostles and Elders (Jerusalem Church Council)** came together to consider this **Matter (Fully)**. And when there **had been much dispute**, **Peter** stood up and said to **Them (Whole Combined Church Council & Delegates)**: **“Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among Us (Jews), that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the Word of the Gospel and Believe (Answer - #1). God, Who knows the heart, acknowledged Them (Gentiles) by giving Them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to Us (Jews), and made no distinction between Us (Jews) and Them (Gentiles), purifying Their Hearts by Faith (Answer - #2). Now therefore, why do You (‘Judiazers’) test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the Disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear (Answer - #3)? But We (Jews) believe that through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ We (Jews) shall be Saved in the same manner as They (Gentiles).”** Then all the **Multitude (Whole Combined Church Council & Delegates)** kept silent and listened to **Barnabas and Paul** declaring how many **Miracles (Signs) and Wonders God** had worked through them among the **Gentiles**. **Acts 15:6-12 (NKJV)**

The 1st Church Council Ever Held Was Of Great Importance To The Future Of The Church’s Success In Providing A Framework Of What Was Important & What Was Not When It Came To Orthodox Essential Theology & Understanding Of The Gospel Message & The Minimum Interaction Between God’s Chosen Old Testament People, The Jews, & God’s New Testament People, The Rest Of Humanity, The Gentiles! Thus, Luke Gave This 1st Church Council Top Billing In His Second Half Of The Book Of Acts, Found Here In Chapter 15.

1st Ever Ecumenical Council of the Church Asked Three Essential Theological Questions!

- 1) “Are The Old Traditions & Signs Of Faith Necessary For All Peoples Who Put Their Faith & Trust In God, Through His Son, Jesus Christ?”
(With A Special Emphasis On Circumcision)**
- 2) “What Is The Proper Way To Worship The One True God?”**
- 3) “What Foods & Purity Laws Are Essential For Good Health & Wholeness In Mind, Body, & Sprit?”**

The Answers To These Fundamental Theological Framework Questions Concerning The Christian Faith Were Primarily Answered By Peter, Paul, James the Brother of Jesus (Head of the Church in Jerusalem), & The Other 11 Apostles & Other Disciple Elders Gathered Together.

Now the Apostles and Elders (Jerusalem Church Council) came together to consider this Matter (Fully). Acts 15:6

First, Peter Gave Their Ruling On Questions 1 # - 3 # Concerning Traditions & Signs - Especially Circumcision

- 1) “Are The Old Traditions & Signs Of Faith Necessary For All Peoples Who Put Their Faith & Trust In God, Through His Son, Jesus Christ?”
(With A Special Emphasis On Circumcision)**

Peter stood up and said to **Them (Whole Combined Church Council & Delegates)**: **“Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among Us (Jews), that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the Word of the Gospel and Believe (Answer - #1) ... Acts 15:7**

- 2) “What Is The Proper Way To Worship The One True God?”**

... God, Who knows the heart, acknowledged Them (Gentiles) by giving Them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to Us (Jews), and made no distinction between Us (Jews) and Them (Gentiles), purifying Their Hearts by Faith (Answer - #2).” ... Acts 15:8-9

3) "What Foods & Purity Laws Are Essential

For Good Health & Wholeness In Mind, Body, & Sprit?"

... "Now therefore, why do **You** ('**Judiazers**') test **God** by putting a yoke on the neck of the **Disciples** which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear (Answer - #3)? But **We** (**Jews**) believe that through the **Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ We** (**Jews**) shall be **Saved** in the same manner as **They** (**Gentiles**)."
Acts 15:10-11

Old Emphasis With A Heavy Burden Of Law & Tradition

Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to **His Disciples**, saying: "The **Scribes** and the **Pharisees** sit in **Moses' Seat**. Therefore, whatever **They** tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to **Their Works**; for **They** say, and do not do. For **They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders**; but **They Themselves will not move them with one of Their Fingers**."

Matthew 23:1-4

New Emphasis On An Easy Yoke Of Faith & Grace

Jesus taught, "Come to **Me**, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest**. Take **My Yoke** upon you and **Learn from Me**, for **I AM Gentle and Lowly in Heart**, and **you will find rest for your souls**. For **My Yoke is Easy** and **My Burden is Light!**"

Matthew 11:28-30

Q

"What Was Peter's Theological Evidence Supporting His Arguments To The Combined Church Council?"

A1

His Experience In Joppa (Cornelius & His Household) At The Holy Spirit's Prompting

See Acts 10:1-48

A2

Theological Disputes & Debates With Paul Recorded In Galatians (Mid 47 A.D.)

See Galatians 2:1-14

Paul Writes To The **Church In Galatia**, "Then after fourteen years **I** went up again to **Jerusalem** with **Barnabas**, and also took **Titus** with **Me**. And **I** went up by revelation, and communicated to **Them** (**James the Brother of Jesus**, **John the Son of Zebedee**, & **Peter**) that **Gospel** which **I** preach among the **Gentiles**, but privately to **Those Who** were of **Reputation**, lest by any means **I** might run, or had run, in vain. Yet not even **Titus** who was with **Me**, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And this occurred because of '**False Brethren**' ('**Judiazers**') secretly brought in ('**Who**' came in by stealth to spy out our **Liberty** which **We** have in **Christ Jesus**, that '**They**' might bring **Us** into **Bondage**), to '**Whom**' **We** did not yield submission even for an hour, that the Truth of the Gospel might continue with **You**. But from '**Those**' who seemed to be '**Something**', whatever '**They**' were, it makes no difference to **Me**; **God** shows personal favoritism to no man, for '**Those Who**' seemed to be '**Something**' added nothing to **Me**. But on the contrary, when '**They**' saw that the **Gospel** for the **Uncircumcised** (**Gentiles**) had been committed to **Me**, as the **Gospel** for the **Circumcised** (**Jews**) was (committed) to **Peter**. [for **He Who** (**Holy Spirit**) Worked effectively in **Peter** for the **Apostleship** to the **Circumcised** (**Jews**) also **He Who** (**Holy Spirit**) Worked effectively in **Me** (for the **Apostleship**) toward the (**Uncircumcised**) **Gentiles**], and when **James** (**the Brother of Jesus**), **Cephas** (**Peter**), and **John** (**the Son of Zebedee**), **Who** seemed to be (**the Three**) **Pillars**, perceived the **Grace** that had been given to **Me**, **They** gave **Me** and **Barnabas** the **Right Hand of Fellowship**, that **We** should go to the **Gentiles** (**Uncircumcised**) and **They** to the **Circumcised** (**Jews**). **They** desired only that **We** should remember the poor, the very thing which **I** also was eager to do. Now when **Peter** had come to **Antioch**, **I** withstood **Him** to **His Face**. Because **He** (**Peter**) was to be blamed; for before certain '**Men**' ('**Judiazers**') came from **James** (**the Brother of Jesus**), **He** would eat with the **Gentiles**; but when '**They**' came, **He** withdrew and separated **Himself**, fearing '**Those**' ('**Judiazers**') '**Who**' were of the **Circumcision**" ...

... “And the rest of the **Jews** also played the Hypocrite with **Him (Peter)**, so that even **Barnabas** was carried away with ‘**Their**’ Hypocrisy.” But when **I** saw that ‘**They**’ were not straightforward about the Truth of the Gospel, **I** said to **Peter** before ‘**Them**’ all, “If **You**, being a **Jew**, live in the Manner of Gentiles and not as the **Jews**, why do **You** Compel **Gentiles** to live as **Jews**?”

Galatians 2:1-14

A3

Paul & Barnabas’ Report Of 1st Missionary Journey To Gentiles As Evidence Of God’s Approval
Then all the **Multitude** (**Whole Combined Church Council & Delegates**) kept silent and listened to **Barnabas** and **Paul** declaring how many **Miracles** (**Signs**) and **Wonders** **God** had worked through them among the **Gentiles**.

Acts 15:12

Q

*“In Light Of This Evidence, What Are We,
God’s Church Gathered This Morning In Unity
To Do With This Central Question Placed Before Us?”*

CQ

*“Is The **Gospel Message** of **Salvation** in **Jesus Christ**
Dependent Upon **Law** & **Tradition** Or **Faith** & **Grace**?”*

A

We Are To Answer That Question Again & Again Until He Returns In Glory!

Wherever A Dispute, A Disagreement, Or Disunity
Arises In The Body Of Christ - His Church
Or In The Fallen World Around Us

We Are To Give The Answer Handed Down To Us Faithfully
By His Holy Spirit & All Of The Holy Scripture ...

... With The Fullness Of All The Prophet’s Teachings In The Old Testament,
With The Authority Of All Of Our Lord Jesus’ Teaching In The Four Gospels,
With The Completeness Of All Of His Apostle’s Teaching In The New Testament,
& With The Testimony Of The Orthodox Theology Of His Church Ever Since ...

Our Bold & Unified Answer Shall Forever Be Proclaimed To All The World

*“The Gospel’s Message of **SALVATION** In **Jesus Christ**, The Lord,
Is Dependent Yesterday, Today, & Forevermore,
On **FAITH** & **GRACE ALONE!**”*