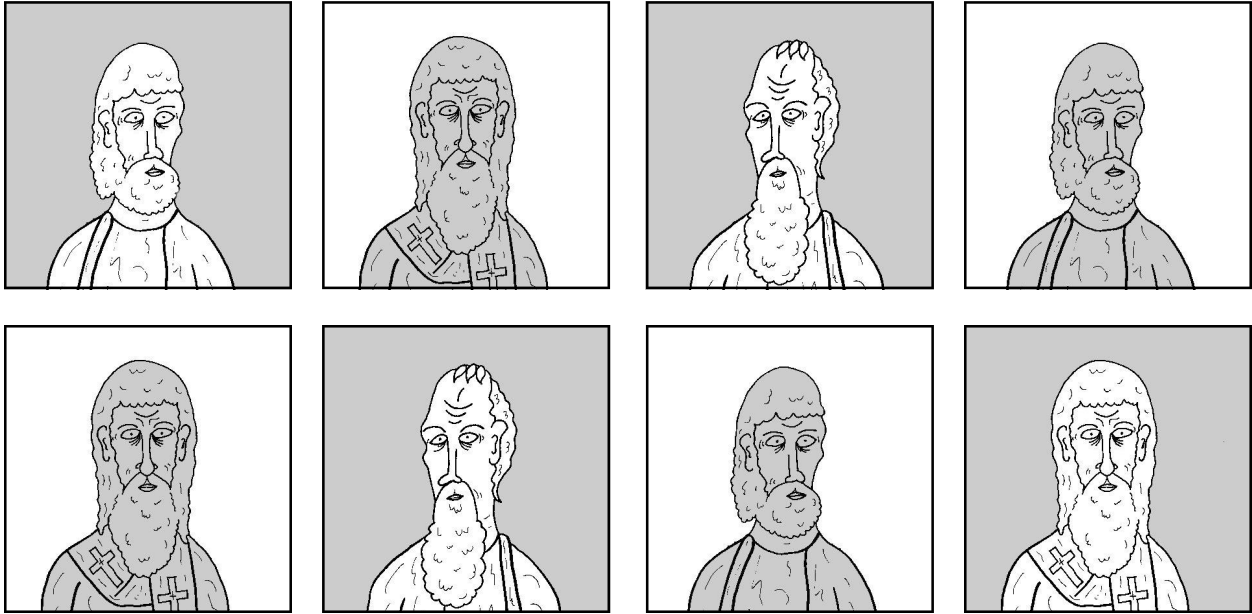


SAINT PETER THE APOSTLE



10.19.2011 A.D. + SESSION SIX THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL

- I. Both accounts of the Jerusalem Council (Galatians 2; Acts 15), which differ dramatically, remind us of the significant issues faced by the early church—Jewish/Christian, Gentile/Christian. (Or, Jewish-Christian?)
 - A. In the much earlier account in Galatians, the Apostle Paul, Barnabas, and Titus go to Jerusalem.
 1. Paul laid before them (James, John, Peter) the Gospel he proclaimed to the Gentiles—Galatians 2:2.
 2. Paul declares supposed leaders to be “false believers” who contributed nothing to his mission—Galatians 2:4a, 6.
 - B. The same leaders—James, Cephas, and John—were, as the Apostle states, “acknowledged pillars.”
 1. They recognized Paul as a missionary to the Gentiles, giving him and Barnabas the “right hand of fellowship”—Galatians 2:9.
 2. And then Peter, who came to the Antioch mission to the Gentiles, betrayed him—Galatians 2:11.

3. Peter, under pressure from James in particular, flipped and drew back as one who had formerly "eaten with the Gentiles"—Galatians 2:12.

C. Paul shockingly castigated Peter and the leadership—Galatians 2:14.

1. His argument was with a Peter who consorted openly with Gentiles but then, under pressure from Jerusalem leadership, could suggest that Gentiles needed to abide by Jewish law, e.g. circumcision, dietary laws.

2. His ultimate argument is that "no one will be justified by the works of the law"—Galatians 2:15-21.

II. Acts 15: a retelling of Galatians 2.

A. "Certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'"—Acts 15:1.

1. The brothers of Galatians 2 are James, John, and Peter (depending upon the audience).

B. Paul and Barnabas are "welcomed by the church and the apostles"—Acts 15:4.

1. Some others, Pharisees, stood up and announced their theological issues—Acts 15:5.

C. Apostles and elders came together to discuss the matter.

1. Peter is said to have acknowledged his ministry to the Gentiles in Antioch, and, with the same, suggest there is no distinction between "them" (Gentiles) and "us" (Jews).

D. James is said to have been "corrected" via Peter (Simeon) to full inclusion of the Gentiles, absent the Jewish practices—Acts 15:12-19.

1. The exception being that they still might "abstain only from polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood"—Acts 15:19-20.

2. James retains the dietary prohibitions.

E. The council in Acts 15 demonstrates a much more conciliatory mood.

1. Paul, still in a state of fixating on freedom, separates from Barnabas because the latter had sided indirectly with the Judaizers—Acts 15:36-38.