



“Clarifying the Gospel” Part 1

Acts 15:1-12 ♦ Pastor Jim Lennon

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Introduction – *The apostle Paul and Barnabas travel back from their first missionary journey to the church which sent them in Syrian Antioch and then on to Jerusalem for a church council assembled to clarify the message of the Gospel of Christ.*

I. The Importance of the Gospel’s Accuracy.

- A. Paul and Barnabas leave a thriving ministry to travel to Jerusalem to convene a church council on the content of the Gospel.
- B. Historically, the most important theological issues were settled by Church Councils.
 - 1. The Council in Jerusalem 48 AD.
 - 2. The Council in Nicea 325 AD.
 - 3. The Council in Constantinople in 381 AD.
 - 4. The Council on Chalcedon in 451 AD.
- C. Ancient and modern people don’t like the concept of “absolute Truth.”
 - 1. Truth is not relative.
 - 2. Truth isn’t about how you feel.
 - 3. Truth is something you must submit to.

II. The Debate Over the Gospel’s Freedom.

- A. Jewish believers insisted that Gentile believers must be circumcised and follow the Mosaic ritual Laws.
- B. But Paul and Barnabas witnessed uncircumcised Gentiles believe in Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit.
- C. They argued that the Gospel gives us two kinds of freedom.
 - 1. Cultural freedom.
 - 2. Spiritual freedom.
- D. The Gospel takes burdens off.
 - 1. Believe in Jesus.
 - 2. Receive forgiveness and eternal life as a free gift of grace.
- E. Whenever you add something to the Gospel, it ceases being the Gospel.

Conclusion.