

1-14-26 Galatians Background Acts 15, 1-36

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SPEAKERS

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Alright, let's pray, Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for this day, Lord, thank you for the opportunity to open Your Word with the body of Christ. Lord, I just pray, Lord, that this would bring about change in our hearts and lives. Lord, we would understand our identity, and we would understand what's worth fighting for and what's worth defending as well as Lord, we would understand the things that are getting kind of taken out of context, and things that are being taken for granted, Lord. So we know this book talks a lot about those things, so we're excited for the next few months to dive into this. So Lord, just pray that you'd be glorified. Thank you so much for this opportunity in Jesus. Name Amen. So anyway, that was I saw some of you that were cold out there, and that's why we did it, I will say, and I'll make this announcement on Sunday also, and I will humbly apologize for something here tonight. I made a decision and staff a couple weeks ago, and I really did not think it was going to cause any problems, but I think it has for some people. So I am sorry my thought in taking the pictures off the wall over there was, we had 33 that had passed away. We had people been divorced and remarried. We had people who don't even go to the church anymore. And there's and we have a lot of new families that have come and where were we going to put them on that wall? I mean, that wall is very limited. You can only put so many and so my thought was, we wanted to do everything a little bit more digital, and so it can always stay up to date. You can update a picture really quickly that way. And so I kind of, I wanted that space to be changed, and I didn't. I guess a few people were surprised when they came in. Maybe I should have given you a heads up. So it's my fault on that, but I am sorry if that's offended you. I will ask you to show me a little grace on that. My heart is good with that. And also, the other piece of this was the world's different than when they put that wall up, and now we have a bunch more people coming through these doors. And I wasn't real comfortable having faces and names of people that anybody could just take pictures, or anybody could do a little bit more research once you have those two things, and some bad things could happen, and somebody could just approach you saying, Oh, I go to church with you, and then maybe your information gets stolen and different things. I just never felt real comfortable that people's names and faces were just out there. So that was another reason for me for that. So we want to convert everything more to a digital format, to where it can be updated more quickly and easily than that was. And takes a lot of work to have to move all those out to put one in. It's It was a hard thing to manage. So if, if you were offended by that, or if I hurt your feelings, I apologize. It was not my intention. I think I had good motives with it, but maybe I should have given a heads up on it. So if that has hurt anybody in here, please forgive me. And I would say, let's move forward for the for the cause of Christ. What'd you say? So there is one I didn't know who put the burning bag of poo in my mailbox, but now I do so anyway, so I'll mention that again on Sunday. But that was my responsibility, so that also was my decision. So it's

nobody else's. I own that. So anyway, Alright, moving on to Galatians, some other people that got their face slapped, right? So Galatians is a really awesome book, and it is one that has, I guess, really profound importance to really the pull out of Catholicism and the Reformation. I mean, this book was the, really the catalyst for Martin Luther. In fact, he wrote that the Epistle to the Galatians is my epistle to it I am, as it were, in wedlock. Galatians is my Catherine, that was his wife's name. So this is how strongly he felt about this letter to the Galatians, that it changed everything for him. You know, this was in a world where whatever the Catholic Church kind of said is what went you know, and people were not encouraged to read and study for themselves. And so here Luther puts the proclamation, puts it on knocks, puts it on the door. And you know, the birth of Protestantism. And it really, this book here is really, you had him question a lot of things about salvation, specifically justified, justification by faith alone. So this is a very good, very good, useful book. This will not be a waste of your time for the next few months. I can't stress that enough. We were talking a lot. Lot in Philippians about rejoicing and that being kind of the nature and understanding, really why Paul was writing that what was going on in Paul's life. This one's going to hit things. It's going to hit really hard in this whole liberty in Christ versus legalism under the law. And although circumcision might not be the thing today, there is a lot of legalism that's constantly fighting against grace, and lot of people will be big proponents of James, and then the people from Galatians, they'll just fight, you know, head butt a lot. So I'm hoping that this will not be drudgery, that you will love going through this, and that it will do a lot for you, and I'm super excited kind of about that. Now, I did put the same map on the first page that I did with Philippians, because you'll notice that green section of Galatia was a large section. It was a region, right? It wasn't merely, and you can see it on the screens there. Philippians is very different. It was specifically a city that Paul was writing to. This is to an entire region. You could argue that Ephesians is kind of the same way, but a lot of his letters are very specific to a city. This is to an entire region. And I think that's good, because when you're seeing the words that he's saying weren't affecting just one local church, but a whole area. And that's usually the way it works, right? When Satan gets in, if you do not thwart the enemy, if you do not protect the doctrine, it spreads like wildfire. I mean heresy and just bad doctrine or failure to interpret Scripture correctly, any of those things, if not dealt with, really does spread. And this fact, this, in fact, was spreading across a pretty large swath. Another thing to think of, and we'll look at tonight, is that there's a whole lot of Paul. He would go to the synagogues first, and then as he starts going out, you'd have this group of Judaizers that would kind of follow him from city to city, to make the people start doubting what Paul was saying almost immediately. And so this is kind of what is being said here. I liken it a lot to in the Rightly dividing world, in the grace world. It's like when you finally kind of see the light and then you want to tell a friend about it. I don't know. I don't know if any of you guys have really had experience with that or not. Sometimes it takes you maybe a little while to where you have confidence to articulate it. But how quickly people want to throw water on your fire. You're excited, you're reading, you're studying the Bible for the first time. It's no longer just devotional. You understand it. And then somebody else is just saying, Ah, well, they don't want to baptize. It's heresy. They just think that they worship Paul. That's heresy, I mean. And then you start doubting immediately, and they kind of throw that hot that water on you, and they're like, Oh, well, you know, they don't do communion every Sunday and and so there is a lot of that that I think happens even to us today, that the minute we try to share this, somebody else is trying to say, well, you're you're wrong, or you're not complete unless XYZ. So I think we're going to see, even though maybe it's not directly circumcision, like it was back then. That's a large reason of this, but there it still exists today, just in different forms, and we'll probably, as we go along. I'm sure we're going to discuss those things in more detail. But this letter is maybe best described as a defense of a couple of things, really, and that is Paul's apostleship as well as Paul's Gospel, you're going to find both of those out next week. I mean, we are going to hit the ground running. There is a reason that Paul says what he says about himself and his apostleship right at the beginning of this letter. We have to remember that the the 12, if you will, or the 11, until Judas kind of did his thing, right, but, but this group was with Jesus in His earthly ministry. Paul was not so a lot of people to discredit this message. They they couldn't. They got to a point where they couldn't

really attack the message. So they want to attack Paul's credibility. They want to say, well, he's not really an apostle. After they couldn't really debate him on what he was saying, it was quickly, alright, Paul, we need to trust the 12 and not the apostle. Paul, he didn't. He wasn't even with Jesus in His earthly ministry. He's not even an apostle, and you guys are following him. You've been misled by him. And so they would try to come in with their lineage, with their titles of whatever tribes that they're members of, right? And then to be able to come and say, here's our credibility, here's who we follow. This man's a fraud. He wasn't even a real apostle. So it's this letter in Second Corinthians. He spends a great deal of time. Defending how he is an apostle, because it was so different than the other apostles. You know, this became something that people would kind of common knowledge, that he would be attacked on. And there's still a lot of attacks on Paul's writings today. I mean, there's efforts still, there's groups and efforts being made to remove Paul's writings from the Bible. It is unbelievable to me, and you're like, why is there any other author in Scripture that they're challenging like that? It really comes down to, we recognize that so many things Paul's Paul is saying is different than the rest, so shouldn't have been canonized. We need to remove it instead of, Why did Paul say what he said? And then how do we understand how it all fits together? This letter, of course, like I just said, is a defense to Paul's apostleship in his Gospel. Judaizers have infiltrated the region with the law and circumcision as a necessity. This letter is also a defense of liberty in Christ versus legalism in the law. Now, this area was kind of founded by the Gauls or the Celts. They settled in Asia Minor around 200 BC, and they were under Roman authority within 11 years of that. Now, previously, they would kind of beat up on the Romans and the Greeks a little bit, and there would be these fights. Eventually, though, they were under Roman authority. By 25 BC, this territory had grown and right at that point, it included Phrygia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, and was known as a Roman province. And this is commonly known as Asia Minor if you're ever looking at any geography from the biblical times. But today it is modern day Turkey. This is that area. So when you go and do any of those cruises with Paul, and you're like, traveling everywhere that he went to if you do that, you're going to end up in Turkey. Now, there's quite a bit that was done there, and that's where this was here today. Now the big, I guess the only confusing part, I guess, if you're reading different common commentaries, it's not so much the author, no question, it's Paul. But there is two different theories, both a northern Galatian theory and a southern Galatian theory. And some people spend more time with this on others. And really it boils down, if I could simplify this to you, it's the fact that when Acts is recording where Paul went, it's really only they're listed by names only the southern part of Galatia. And so a lot of commentators say, well, could he maybe on the third missionary journey, even though it wasn't written here, could he maybe have reached some of these other churches up in the northern part, and that might have put this date of writing after the third missionary journey. That's really the only issue here is how early was the letter written? I propose more of a southern Galatian, early epistle writing date. But I mean, I don't think we're all going to be in heaven together, whether or not you think it's more of a northern Galatian or southern Galatians. So if you're researching this at home, if you look at some commentaries, you'll probably see both of those there. And really the only difference is going to be the date of writing. I think that this letter was written more probably to the Galatians, no doubt, to the church in Galatians, but specifically as a result, to his ministry in the southern Galatians churches, shortly after the council in Acts 15, and I'll share with you why I believe that. But again, if you have a different opinion on that, it's okay. Now let's just look, first of all, though, to maybe understand this a little bit. What did Luke actually say? Since that seems to be the issue, right is, why did Luke not mention any of the Northern places in Galatia. So that's kind of, I feel the same way the Holy Spirit, I think would have probably shared that. But anyway, Acts 13:14, it says when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. So this is going to kind of take us, if you're going back to that first page of your map when you're looking at some of these places, we're going to mention, like Perga and Pamphilia in Pisidia, you'll see that Perga is very, very south there. And essentially what had happened was Mark has left. Now they're going into modern day Turkey or Asia Minor at this point, they had just gone on to the coast, and this is where Luke picks

this up later in verses 47 through 49 it says, So hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have sent thee to be a light of the Gentiles that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many were ordained to eternal life believed. Now here's the part where I think you don't really have to see him physically going and starting these northern churches you see right here, in Acts 13, it says the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. So even if Paul didn't specifically set up some of these churches up north, they probably would have been a recipient of the letter, right? More often. We just think Paul visited this place, and so he's writing a letter back to him. Well, this he's writing to an entire region. We definitely know this was his first really public sermon. A lot of people will compare and contrast Acts 13 with Peter's and Philippians two, and see the differences there. But at the very end of this, it says that the word of God was published throughout all the region. So this was during the first missionary journey. Now on the second one, Acts 16, five through six, it says so were the churches established in the faith and increased in number daily. Now, when they had gone throughout Phrygia in the region of Galatia, there, Luke, again, is saying the region, but the region of Galatia and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia. Now this was when they were going, and this would actually lead them into Philippi, right? Because their intention was to go back to these churches and to check in on them, but the Holy Spirit forbade them, right? And it kind of kept pushing him until Troas, and that's where he sees the Macedonian man, the vision of the Macedonian man, he goes over into modern day Europe, and then that's where we see Philippi, and then Thessalonica, but it was a result of him being stopped over here in this area, from going back to these churches, and was forced to go a different direction. So that's where this was here. But the idea, though, was, let's go and check on them now in Galatians 1822, through 23 on that third missionary journey, it says when he had landed in Caesarea and gone up and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch, and after he'd spent some time there, he departed and went over all the country, over all the country of Galatia. This is for the northern people who hold on to the northern thing. This is where they said, even though he doesn't specifically mention it, it does say that he went over all the area of Galatia and Phrygia in order strengthening all the disciples. So whether you're a northern Galatian or a southern Galatian, I was like, it's got its own debate, similar to whether you're a Miami hurricane fan or an Indiana Hoosier fan, right? But I think the bottom line is, Paul established churches in the area. Paul clearly wrote this letter to all the churches in the area of Galatia. And so whether or not he established all the churches in there, or whether or not they sent people and they got established, we definitely know there was a conclusion there that really boils down to just an ideal of when was it written? I'm more of an early writing period. You may be more of a later, but anyway, that's really the difference there. Now we also do know a little bit from Galatians 4:13, through 15. If you're kind of an early dater, then you're probably in the early 50s, closer, probably to 51 or 52 later dates, probably later in the 50s that you're probably looking at, possibly even into the early 60s. But that's really the difference there. The Council in Acts 15 sounded very recent in his writings, and that was in 50 as we talked about in the Philippians thing. But here's one thing we do know Galatians 4:13, through 15. What does Paul specifically say about his relationship with this region of churches of Galatia? And he says in verse 13, you know how, through infirmity of the flesh, the flesh, if I could talk, I preach the gospel unto you at the first and my temptation was in my flesh. Ye despised not nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ, Jesus. Where is then the black, the blessedness ye spake of for I bear you record that if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and had given them to me. So clearly with this, Paul had personal interaction, shared the gospel personally, and sometimes, you know, we think that the Philippians were the crown jewel of his but here he clearly says that these Galatians, he's going to have strong words, but it's more towards those from the outside who are perverting inside. But he does say this about the Galatians. He says, if it were possible, you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me knowing he was having an infirmity of his eyes. So clearly there was a relationship there as well. Now he does mention, I think, some buzz phrases that might help us to feel like things were probably a little bit more recent if quite a bit of time had taken place. I feel like maybe the language might have been a

little differently now we know, obviously the Holy Spirit is writing this through the apostle Paul, but I think Galatians one six, which will be something we look at next week. It says. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. Now some might just argue say, Yeah, well, he was just saying that, you know, they they turned pretty quickly from this original Gospel. Well, yeah, but then he would have sat on this information for several years before he addressed this with them. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me. I think that there was some urgency, some reports coming back to him of what was happening, that several were going back and going under the law. And so I think he's saying, I'm I marvel that you so soon are removed. Now that's one area also in Galatians three, one which this will be several weeks before we get there. But says, oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that you should not obey the truth. So we're looking at them, and we see that they were so soon removed. There were those who were bewitching them. That was why the removal was taking place there. So like, there's a couple of things there that maybe say he's handling what sounds like an urgent issue with them, and not something that's just old information that he sat on for a while. Also, I think you can look at there being nine months between First Corinthians and Second Corinthians. You see close proximity time. Philippians is a little bit of exception, maybe 10 to 12 years. But seems like when he had something to say and it was urgent, he was going to get that word out there. So again, take, take what you will with that. Now in Galatians chapter two, when we get there, he's going to reference this council in Acts 15. What I wanted to do for at least half the time that we have tonight, I wanted to talk about this council, because this, if you understanding acts 15, you have understood the back story of Galatians. And so it is important, you know, acts really sometimes works like a table of contents for a lot of the New Testament. And this is one of those places where Paul's going to reference some things that happened. You really only have two options. There were basically two councils that he had, and one was a much smaller Council. One, though specifically involved Peter. That's why, clearly it's this first council. So since this is going to come up quite a bit, especially when we get to Acts chapter two, I wanted to spend the rest of our time focusing on this council. So we're going to be in Acts 15 for the rest of the night. We might chase a couple of rabbits, but everything's right here on your sheets. So acts 15 starts out and says certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren and said, except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved. And this statement right here is describing what was happening to the Galatians. There were people following up behind him. They knew that when they couldn't beat him to death, as they caught word where he was, they wanted to go and they wanted to discount everything that he had said, because really, what Paul was preaching, it took away some of that prestigious position of the Jew. And if you're a Jew, you don't like hearing that, because you're God's chosen people. In fact, a lot of them could chase their lineage back to one of the 12 Tribes. And now these Gentiles, who were previously called dogs, right, are now basically fellow heirs with Christ. Well, that doesn't sound fair. I mean, they're not from Abraham, they're not part of the 12 Tribes. And so at the very least, we're acknowledging God's doing something with them. To the very least, we're going to put them under the thumb of the law, like we have to be, and they're kind of following around, because here Paul is setting people free from the law, essentially. So this is what's happening here. Now it's interesting that they make a statement here that James claims later that they never made. Now, what they say, these Judaizers, if you will, except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved. And all the men said, just kidding, amen, I'll cut it out. No, I'm sorry. Anyway, circumcision causing you to be saved. That could be miserable for some alright. Verse two, it says, When, therefore, Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them. They determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders. About this question. It's funny the way it's worded, because lot of times in Scripture when somebody says, You go up, but you're looking at a map and it looks like you're going down, that's because a lot of times when the author is speaking, he's not so much talking about the map like we're looking at. He's more so talking about elevation, right? And so going up to something might be more elevation, but even though, on the map it looks like they're going south, and so they were, in fact, going south. They were coming down

south. They had to go through Samaria to get down here to answer in Jerusalem. You know, here they are up north. They go through Samaria down to Jerusalem in order to give an account for this. This account essentially was, how are these people being saved without being circumcised? First they come and they're saying, How can you be saved if you've not been circumcised after the manner of Moses? And there's probably, it says that there was there. There was a discussion. There was a great debate that was going on about this, so much to the point where neither side is giving in. And so the solution, let's take this to the leadership team. It's kind of like your businesses today, right? You got two co workers that can't, can't agree on anything, so they gotta run it up the channel to the manager, right? That's kind of what we're dealing with here. I don't know at this point if, if Barnabas and Paul just said, we'll just go somewhere else. I don't know that the council happens, but they stood their ground, and he's going to talk about this a little bit in Acts chapter or in Galatians chapter two. Now he says that it was Paul Barnabas and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question, can a person be saved apart from being circumcised after the manner of Moses, this was the question, but the certain other of them included a man by the name of Titus. He becomes a main focal point in this council. Does anybody know why, and specifically, what was his situation? Hmm? It's amazing. He's going to be the star witness. Clearly, this guy's a Christian. I mean, they're good. We're going to talk to him. I mean, at this point, the debate is going to become, now, you tell me, Is he really a Christian or not a Christian, right? So it's a certain other one. It's Titus. He's going to become, really the focal point of a lot of the discussion that's going to take place here. And we know from Galatians two, one that Paul says, and again, getting ahead of myself on a little bit of this when we get there. But I want us to understand acts 15. But he says 14 years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me. Also sounds an awful lot like what we just read. He is referencing the events of this council in Galatians chapter two, which is another reason why I'm like, it would have been kind of silly for there to be a lot of years that had passed and him writing this again so soon removed, and now in chapter two, he's he's narrowing, zeroing in on this council here. So it sends to me to point to an earlier writing of this letter. So in verse three, now going back to Acts 15, it says, being brought on their way by the church. They passed through Venice and Samaria declaring the conversion of the Gentiles. So now we're making our way down south. Now I shared with this, I think a few weeks ago, on a Sunday morning, you probably go back and check this out. I think it was thankful for the grace message. Talked a little bit about this, but the Samaritans, they weren't mad about what was happening. Did you catch that the very end of this verse, it says they cause great joy unto all the brethren, so as they're making their way south through Samaria, there's great joy in Samaria. Now remember up north in Galilee, there was like, Oh, well, yeah, we got to go talk to the elders about this, this question, right? But now we're going through Samaria, and we're telling people what's happening, and there's great rejoicing. Now, what do we know about the Samaritans? The Jews hated the Samaritans. In fact, to travel to Judea from Galilee, they would literally go over the Jordan and go south, and then once they got into Judea, come back over the Jordan because the Samaritans were viewed as half breeds, and that's part of the reason, when you read this, the account of the Samaritan woman, why there is a lot of issues going on there. In fact, she even says, basically, you don't have Jews, don't have dealings with us. So I think it's really interesting that they take them that way and that there is rejoicing by the Samaritans, they're probably like, yeah, we know what it's like to be told that we're not good enough. And yet the Gentiles and Samaritans probably feel like, you know what, both of us, both of us here, aren't part of the privileged, the privileged group. We may not have the lineage that the rest of you do, but we believe now, verse four says when, now we're going to follow the pronouns here, when they. So who's the they? What is this group? But it's definitely Barnabas. It is Paul. Paul, and it is Titus. So when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all the things that God had done with them. So the first people that spoke a lot of times, when you read through this, it's like, All right, we get them down there, and Peter starts speaking well. It says that they them, they were able to declare the things that God had done. What were they declaring? It's an answer to that question about circumcision, apart from or a circumcision under the

manner of Moses. Yet they were saved, even though they weren't possessing that. And they probably got their star witness that they're in there talking about, hey, this guy right here, you know, there's probably some questions about what he knows and what he believes, but then there may be astonished that he's not circumcised. But privately, this is kind of going on. This isn't the real public thing yet. But then verses five and six, kind of shares that you know right there. The audience did have some in there, and some of these would have been the Pharisees. But it says there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them and to command them to keep the Law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together to consider the matter. So you've got these Judaizers up north. They are. They're going behind Paul, trying to undo the damage that Paul's done regarding this circumcision of Moses not being done yet. People are getting saved. They've now come down here, and it's a smaller kind of meeting first, you know, there's some Pharisees around. It doesn't even say all the Pharisees, but certain of the Pharisees which believe they're like, well, they have to keep the law. And now the apostles and the elders, the leadership team of the church, right? This would be James is the head of the church at this point, and and they're like, What do we do with this? Let's talk about this. And this begins the discussion. Now I will take a little pause here. There are a few places in Galatians that might help us to understand who else was involved with this. Galatians, five, four. He says they, because of false brethren, unawares, brought in who came in, privily, to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. So he's referencing this in Galatians, five, four. This would likely be this group that was kind of following him around there. There's probably multiple of these groups. There's probably an organized collision coalition of trying to undo the damage that Paul was doing Galatians. Two, two, he says, I went up by revelation and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run or had run in vain. So there is a part of this where there was a private council with the elders and apostles. But then he says, I communicated to them as a whole this gospel that I preached Galatians 118, and 19. Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him 15 days. But other of the apostles saw I, none save James, the Lord's brother. So we know the reason putting that part in there is that at this point, James is the head of the church, not Peter. And that begs a lot of questions for those maybe who have a Catholic background, you have to ask yourself, from what I'm about to read to you is the very last time in Acts that Peter has ever mentioned. I know that's shocking. Look it up yourself. We'll see Peter, and then I like two verses later, see Simeon for the entire rest of Acts. Peter is not mentioned, but James is and Peter, so Paul has to give an account to who James just three chapters later. That's for a different night. But let your head explode on that one. Okay, alright. So the other part is, I already mentioned this earlier, Galatians, two, three. Neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. So whatever was going to be talked about here did not result in Titus saying, Okay, where's the chopping block. That did not happen. He left there unconvinced. And it wasn't just him that was left unconvinced of this, I guess, argument that was being made by the judaizer and then some of the Pharisees coming along as well, saying, hey, you need to keep the law. Now we obviously are going to look at what did James and Peter and the 12 What did they have? What did they decide? And that will be forthcoming here in just a couple of seconds. So. Verse seven, though, when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago, God made choice among us that the Gentiles, by my mouth, should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And this is the last verse that Peter is mentioned by name, specifically by Peter. He has mentioned, like I said, Simeon a few verses later. But this, this, this. It verse seven. We still got a lot of acts left, and Peter is not mentioned. Crazy. But Peter, it's interesting. He says that the Gentiles, by my mouth, should hear the word of the gospel and believe so people would say, See Peter, from this point on, ministered to the Gentiles. He was the guy, except there is no evidence anywhere, besides the one occurrence in Acts chapter 10 of Peter ministering to any Gentiles. In fact, he's part of the group that says, Oh well, you're going to go to the sixth circumcision, and Paul, you're going to go to the uncircumcision. All he is saying is to his Jewish brethren that I had an encounter with the Gentiles. I had a vision. It was

made clear to me that things were changing, but it didn't change. What Peter did. In fact, you could read Second Peter. The very last few verses of Second Peter talk about really a mind blower. He's telling his audience that the things Paul says, they're hard to understand. Well, why is he saying that, if it's the same stuff, why is he telling a Jewish audience that it's really hard to understand what Paul's saying, right? I think you have to understand that this epiphany, if you want to call it that, that that Peter had in Acts chapter 10 didn't put Peter on a course of ministering to Gentiles. But here's what I think did happen. If that would not have happened to Peter, then Peter could not have stood up in this council and essentially help Paul get out of the situation. Because I wonder if Peter's testimony wasn't here, I wonder if they would have killed Paul. Peter's words carried a lot of weight. Now listen to what happens after this. Peter says, Hey, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel. And so let's back up a little bit, Acts 10:19, kind of here is the background of him saying what he just said. Peter's thought on the vision the Spirit said unto him, Behold three. Why? Three men seek Thee. Arise therefore and get thee down and go with them. Here's two key words in this verse, doubting nothing, for I have sent them. It was important that those words were told to Peter, because he would have definitely doubted, because they were Gentiles. Remember the vision, and he's seeing animals that are unclean, that he's not allowed to eat, right? And so it's important, at this point that he's hearing do not doubt this is going to be very different. This is going to really mess with your mind, Peter, this is going to go against everything that you've studied, everything that you've learned. I need you to not doubt right now, because this is going to challenge you in Acts 10:28, he said, you know how that it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation. But God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. This is why he was told to doubt nothing. Towards the end of this in verses 44 through 48 says, while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word, and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished. Well, how about that? They couldn't believe that people from the uncircumcision were getting saved without the law. It says they were astonished as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now, if they're astonished in Acts chapter 10, then that should tell you that in Acts chapter two, there wasn't a bunch of Gentiles being having the Holy Spirit poured out on them. Why would they be astonished eight chapters later, because Acts chapter two was all Jews and proselytes. Now he's astonished. The Gentiles could have this happen to them. It says they heard him speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water? So Peter's response to these Gentiles treated them like proselytes. He says, Well, let's get him some water. Remember, you're supposed to repent be baptized, so let's treat them like proselytes. Right after he says, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days. So this is the background. So in verse seven, when Peter's saying, Hey, by my mouth, the Gentiles heard, this is what he's referencing. So now in verse eight, we're going to pick it back up. What Peter's testimony is at this council says in God, which knoweth the hearts bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, and he put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear, but we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved future tense, even as they present tense or potentially past tense. This was Peter's testimony. Now, what if Peter wasn't there? Hadn't experienced that, and Paul's just saying, God's told me this the 12 all knowing that they had earthly ministry with Jesus, and that's why they were apostles. So there's already probably a little bit of hard feelings, right? They already knew that previously, even though it now had been maybe 14 years that he was a persecutor of the church. But it started building his reputation back. But now they would probably think, now he's out there preaching people to avoid being circumcised and not obeying all the law. I wonder, without Peter's testimony, what would Paul's fate had been at this council? So instead of looking at so Wow. Peter in Acts chapter 10, he's really where the Gentile explosion begins. You don't find any record of that. You see this one verse, and in this instance here that God allowed him to experience this that he never

did anything with, or never felt compelled to do anything with. But at this moment, he becomes the key witness on Paul's behalf. Now we have Titus, who's the living example, but now we have one of what would have been considered the apostles and elders, one of the leadership team, saying, Hey, I've got something to say. You remember a while back, if Peter doesn't have this testimony on this day, what is Paul's fate? So moving on from there. That's one council, and we're going to look at the rest of it, but there is a second Council a few chapters later, in Acts, chapter 21 and I put it in here because, in case we're trying to weigh out which counsel he's talking about in Galatians chapter two, I think it's very clear. It was this one in Acts 15, however, in Acts 21 says the day following Paul went in with us unto James and the elders were present. No mention of Peter here at all. It's clear who is calling the shots in the early church. It says James and all the elders were present, and when he had saluted him, he declared particularly what things that God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. This is after acts 15. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord and said unto him, Thou seest Brother, how many 1000s of Jews there are which believe and they, in Acts 21 are all zealous of the law. The Jews are still very zealous the law. Nothing has changed. They're still very zealous of the law. In fact, it says they were informed of thee. He said, James is like Paul, these Jews, they're being told by you that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. So the second Council is Paul basically saying, hey, it's not just these Gentiles are getting saved. You're now telling some Jews this, which means that the path did not change for the Jews between acts 15 and 21 even though they've been set aside, they are still keeping the customs they're under the law. James is the head of the church. You at this point, business as usual to the circumcision, Paul was being called into the question the second time because accusations were made that he was telling the Jews, not just the Gentiles in the first council, but the Jews also. So what was kind of the response? Response to all of this, we will get back in Acts 15 to close out here just in a few minutes. But it is interesting what Paul says in Galatians, chapter two, verses five through nine, that, again, puts us the evidence that it's back to this first council in Acts 15. But he says, starting in verse five, to whom We gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour. Now think about the wording there. He says, we heard, we listen, we did not give in. He says We gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But of these who seem to be somewhat whatsoever, they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepted No Man's person. This actually is kind of a little dig at the fact of their leadership, of being apostles and elders and things like that. He's like, I was not going to back down from the gospel. It really didn't matter what was going to happen at that point. But if they were going to tell me, do not preach this gospel, I wasn't going to hear it, not even for a it, not even for a minute. It didn't matter how powerful they were. They were didn't matter what their titles were. He said, It mattered nothing to me. You know, I just wonder today. So we fold the tent so easily anytime somebody even wants to question the gospel. And here Paul's just saying that, hey, it really doesn't matter who comes to me, who tells me I'm a quack, who tells me I'm I'm not doing the traditional things right. He said, matter not to me because I was not going to get away from this gospel, because it needed to continue. And I would encourage you today and those listening, for those of you who have been studying the grace message now for a while, and you're having troubles, and some of your friends are saying, want to bring up tradition. It's really no, really different from here. I would, I would encourage you, do not back off that the gospel is Jesus shedding His blood on the cross for the sins of mankind, and that He was buried and rose again three days later, that finished work on the cross is all it takes for one to have a right relationship with God, period. We add nothing to it. And it doesn't matter what tradition says. Doesn't matter what certain denominations say. Don't you give in, just like Paul did not give in, and Luke and I were talking about this earlier today. But there's a lot of people who I think maybe I'm not questioning everybody's salvation. I just think sometimes we just have a lot of denominationalism in the way that we articulate it. I think there's a lot of people that are saying that they're born again, not meaning that they were Israel or anything like that, but they're just trying to describe what it means that they are now different, and they have the Holy Spirit living inside them, but the danger when we articulate it incompletely, poorly or intentionally misleading, is

that the truth of the gospel does not go out and then people get confused and they start adding things to the gospel. I like how Paul just says here, I wasn't going to be swayed. I wasn't going to be influenced away from this message. It didn't matter their titles or anything. I did not listen. No, not for a moment. And then it says here after the the parentheses ends, he says, For they who seem to be somewhat in conference, what do you say next? Added nothing to me. It is okay to stand on truth, even if it is not mainstream, even if it is not popular, in fact, it's more than okay. I think we are called to do it. We shouldn't back down, because you can't find roots of it in Origins, writings or or somebody like that. I'm like, Well, how much do we trust that stuff? It wasn't inspired scripture. And if you want to go that far, then you can look at the Apostles Creed, and I seen creed, and say, Oh, well, how come baptism wasn't mentioned in these things? Here it goes both ways, right? How come the idea of believers baptism is you can't find anywhere historically until the 1500s and that wasn't after the till the break off of Rome, the Anabaptist slaughtering all of them who started questioning the Catholic Church that, why are infants being sprinkled and baptized when they don't even know? And so it was a group of them that rose up and says, We think you should at least know. We think that you should be a believer to be baptized, and it cost them their lives. Look at his history. Doesn't lie. So the Catholic Church did when the doc, when people want to challenge the doctrine, you cannot find believers baptism even existing until the 1500s when people want to talk about some of the things, the traditions that go clear back into here. Look it up. First of all, not into that at the end. I'm getting off topic, but Paul even said at the end, only the Lord stood with me. At the end of Paul's life, he said most had forsaken me. So you can explain. Explain why you don't see this mad rush of this doctrine being published everywhere right after Paul's life, and also the dark ages affected a lot of things. The printing press, we have limited information that we could find on things. However, the point all that saying that don't ever back off the one gospel that is able to save today, no matter what it cost you, no matter who tries to influence you, no matter how many degrees they have and how many letters they have after their name. If it's not the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the shed blood of Jesus on the cross, then it will not save today. It's not found in church, membership is not found in water baptism. It's not found in taking communion. It's not found in giving your money to the church. It's not found in how good you can be compared to how bad you've been. Paul says, I will not compromise on this message regardless who tries to come to me, no matter how much power they have, no matter how much authority they have. And to me, I think that is commendable. And I think if he can take that stand, then why can't we now chase the rabbit? I don't do that often, but I did there. So verse seven, he says, contrary wise, instead of them adding nothing to me, contrary wise when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter, for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles. And when James Cephas and John, who seemed to be the pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship that we should go into the heathen. And they unto the circumcision, Peter did not continue to minister to the uncircumcision prior. I mean, contrary to to a lot of common belief out there today, you cannot support it biblically, you absolutely cannot. So challenge you to study that out. So what was the verdict? I know I'd have to pick up some time here, a little bit the verdict of this council in Acts 15, going back, starting verse 12, all the multitude kept silence. It's a great place to say, okay, so what was the verdict? I mean, they're like, Okay, first of all, we were not silent at the beginning, when we said they must keep the law, but Peter talked, and all of a sudden there was silence. For a second. People were pondering, well, if Peter said this, and as a result, they actually gave audience, it says, to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles. By them, they go from saying they have to keep the law to Well, tell us, give us a little bit more information. And after they held their peace, James answered. It was James who did the answering, because James was the head of the church. If you can't see that also in this then you are not looking close enough. It wasn't Peter that stood up. Peter gave the testimony, the verdict, though, came from James. And here's what James said, Men and brethren, hearken unto me, Simeon, or Peter, hath declared how God, at the first did visit the Gentiles

to take out of them a people for His name. Now what he's going to say here is, James is going to come to the conclusion that what was prophesied about in the prophets was beginning to happen. However, what Paul was describing was something that was kept secret before the world began. So even though there was this agree to go separate ways, they truly did not understand that the mystery of Grace had began. Now listen to what James says here. To this, agree the words of the prophets. So now he's going back saying, well, the only explanation we can have for this is that what the prophets talked about, which is going to happen in the kingdom, is what's going on right here with the Gentiles right now, he says the prophets, as is written. After this, I will return and I will build again this tabernacle David which has fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof. And I will set it up that the residue of men might seek after the Lord and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the LORD who doeth. All these things known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, what James is describing and how he's reconciling This testimony is what will take place in the kingdom period. There's still no knowledge at all from Jesus or from James and the 12 of the Body of Christ, the rapture. Their their time frame is still, huh, tribulation kingdom, just as is written back here, the Gentiles are going to be saved through Israel. They're still not seeing anything different. Different there. And this is still pretty early for Paul too. He does not have full revelation at this point. Now, what he says then and as far as his sentencing in verse 19, Wherefore, my sentence is that we trouble them not which from among the Gentiles are turned to God, but that we write unto them. So there's going to be a letter published. Is it going to be the 10 Commandments? Is it going to be all the laws of Israel? Is that keep all the feast of Israel? That's not what this was. He says that we write unto them that they abstain from pollution, of idols and from fornication and from things strangled and from blood for Moses of old time hath in every city, or hath in every city, them that preach him being read in the synagogues every day. Still in that Jewish mindset about the synagogues, he wants a letter. Essentially, Gentiles are going to be able to carry a card around saying, hey, hey, we only have to keep these four things. So this way they clear in the synagogues. If somebody isn't doing that, they must be one of they must be one of these Gentiles that received this letter. So it was abstained from these idols, really the meat offered to idols, but abstained from fornication, abstained from things strangled and abstained from blood. So in verse 22 it pleased the apostles and the elders with the whole church to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely Judas, surnamed barsabus and Silas chief men among the brethren. Now this is interesting to me too, because Silas ends up becoming really close with the apostle Paul, and by all accounts, this might have been his first real interaction with him this council, and then traveling back up with him. But Silas heart starts getting opened to this dispensation of grace message as they go on to this missionary journey in Acts chapter 16. But anyway, moving on from there, it says they wrote letters by them after this manner. So here's the letter the apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren, which are of the Gentiles and Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. For as much as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words. So he did acknowledge in this letter that they went out from them, and that they were troubled with the word subverting souls, saying, You must be circumcised and keep the law. Then he says this, to whom We gave no such commandment. Remember we started chapter chapter 15, verse one, that there was a group who was following saying, You must be circumcised after the manner of Moses, and put them under the law. Here, James is saying in this letter being sent out, we have not declared this to you Gentiles, which is very interesting, because any Gentile prior to this letter would have had to become a proselyte in order to get to God, and part of that process for the proselyte was circumcision. It's very interesting the way this letter is written. He says it seemed good unto us being assembled, with one accord, it makes sense. It's their their decision there to send chosen men with you unto our beloved, Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent, therefore, Judas and Silas, who have also tell you the same things by mouth. So it's not just these letters and Paul and Barnabas. We're sending representatives so that every word can be established. He says to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. And here's that same list of these, these few things that they had that you should abstain from meats offered to idols

and from blood and things strangled and from fornication, from which, if you keep yourselves, you shall do well. Fare you well. So that's the letter. That's the second time. Here was my here was James's response. This was his sentencing. This was the actual letter that was going out. It is very interesting. We look at three of these and we're like, yeah, this makes, this makes some sense from the Jewish standpoint. But the one thing really driven by behavior to the Gentiles dealt with sexual sin, it was fornication. There are several things on the 10 Commandments that don't make this list of four, but yet fornication does the damage that does to any group of people, any society, when there's rampant sexual activity outside of marriage. Little side note there, but finishing this up, verse 30. So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch, and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. They delivered this letter, which, when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation and Judas and Silas, being prophets, also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words and confirmed them. And after they had tarried there a space, then they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles. Notwithstanding it pleased Silas. Abide there still some roots being put there. And then lastly, verses 35 and 36 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also. So there was a season here. And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord and see how they do. To follow up with this letter to see how they're doing in the faith. And so after that, and after getting reports and whatnot, Paul then writes the letter of Galatians. So not too bad. I want to be done by 730 so three minutes, and I even chased a rabbit. So if anybody wants to talk a little bit further, we're going to start out in Galatians chapter one next week. I'm not promising we'll get real far, because, man, I got some you got two real issues, really heavy. The first nine verses alone, you could probably take several weeks, because we're either we'll probably spend half the week next week talking about this apostleship that Paul's going to defend, and then probably the rest of the the time we'll have together, really talking about the difference in the apostle but if that's too much information, I may break it up further, but that's really where we're going to go next week. So get ready. It's going to be a wild ride, but I'll be available afterwards to talk, but I'm going to close out in a word of prayer and say good night to our people who are on live stream, and thank you so much for paying attention tonight, Dear heavenly Father. We thank You for Your Word. We thank you for the fact, Lord, that we as in America today, as the body of Christ. We can do this without fear. We can open Your Word. We can send it out over the airwaves. Lord, we can send it out over the internet, and Lord, there is really no threat to us today. That may not always be the case, but Lord, if we ever get to that point, I pray that we'd be like Paul, who says, the authority, the words that will not move me will not change me, but the point is that the Gospel be preached to you, Lord, that we keep that gospel at the front of our mind, and he's going to talk a lot about that in chapter one, we'll look at next week. But the things we cannot should not compromise, even if they're not mainstream, even if people want to question tradition. Lord, I pray that we would never back away from the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that shed blood of Jesus on the cross, and that's receiving that gift by faith as the only means to salvation. Lord, I pray that that would always be at the forefront of our minds, Lord, and that we would never, ever give in to that and Lord, we just pray that you just be with the time together. I pray we'd all be strengthened. I pray we get some more people here, Lord, that want to grow and learn, as well as those online, Lord, and those who have been following this journey for a while. Lord, I pray that they would, they would be encouraged in the word and know that there are other believers that are studying alongside them. Lord, we thank you, and we just pray you be with us now in Jesus name amen, alright, you're dismissed or free to hang out and talk if you need to. You.