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We'll rise. As we come to hear the word of God read.

Acts 15 verses 1 through 22. These are God's words and certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren Unless you are circumcised to courting to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. Therefore When Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, They determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question.

So being sent on their way by the church, They passed through Phenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles and they caused great joy to all the brethren. When they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles, and the elders, and they reported all things that God had done with them.

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up saying it is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses. Now, the Apostles and elders came together to consider this matter, And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them men and brethren, You know, that a good while ago, God chose among us that by my mouth, the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

So God, who knows? The heart acknowledged them by giving the Holy Spirit. Just as he did to us, and made no distinction between us and then purifying their hearts. By faith. Now, therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples? Which neither are fathers nor we were able to bear.

But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, We shall be saved. And the same manner as they then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas. And Paul declaring, how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles. And after they had become silent James answered saying men and brethren.

Listen to me, Simon has declared how God at first visited, the Gentiles to take out of them, a people for his name. And with this, the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written After this, I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David which was fallen down.

I will rebuild its ruins and I will set it up so that the rest of mankind, may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who does all these things known to God from eternity are all his works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God.

But that way right to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled. And from blood, For Moses, has had throughout many generations. Those who preach him in every city being read in the synagogue because every Sabbath Then it pleased, the apostles and builders, with the whole church to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas namely Judas.

Who is also named Barsabus and Silas leading men among the brethren Amanda sends this reading of God's inspired in an errant work. Please visited.

The pastoral work, never stops for Paul and Barnabas. You remember that? They were ministering in Antioch back at the beginning of chapter 13. Now in the church that was at Antioch, that were certain prophets and teachers Barnabas Simeon who was called Niger Lucius. Son of Cyrene Menaeon who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch and Saul and it was in the midst of their ministry is preachers and teachers.

And fasting and praying as a ministered to the Lord and fasted verse. 2:13 chapter 13. The Holy Spirit said now separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them than having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them. They sent them away. And so, at the end of 14 of chapter 14, They return to Antioch.

They gather the church together, The report, all the good that God had done with them and that he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And so the ministry that the Holy Spirit had sent them out to do from the church in Antioch, the spirit had accomplished through them and then in verse 28 so they stayed there a long time with the disciples and as we'll see.

And next week's passage Lord willing. When they are sent off, they come to Antioch for 30 verse 31, they read the letter and there's rejoicing. And then verse 32, they settle back into The ministry and Judas and Silas participating for a time And Judas, and Silas themselves being prophets.

Also exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words, and after they had stayed there for a time, they were sent back with. Greetings from the brethren to the Apostles and verse 35. Paul and Barnabas. Also remained in Antioch teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also.

And so there's this ministry of the apostles which we have seen as of old, the ministry of elders, particularly after the oversight of service and material. Things is delegated to the deacons to the diaconate to the diaconate. There's this ministry of the word and preaching and teaching, and this ministry of Prayer.

But we've also seen that certain ministers, certain preachers maybe sent as missionaries and they go, and they do that work. And then they come back and they're back, preaching, and teaching. Well, one of the things that we find that belongs to the ministry of elders, This week in chapter 15 and we'll, We'll finish.

Really? What is one portion. But if you have an outline before you can see, there's a lot to do and what we have before us just for today, is this participation in sentence Now in God's good providence? This comes to us immediately following upon the appointing of elders in every church in the region.

At the end of the first missionary journey. As we heard last week in chapter 14, and verse 23. And so this arrangement, not only of a local session with a plurality of elders but elders in a region, having a ministry alongside one another. And that ministry by which the churches, collaborate or held accountable and so forth that you have the ongoing ministry of elders in the Presbytery in these regional associations of the elders from all of the churches, but then, sometimes it comes necessary.

Not just to have this standing ministry of a Presbytery, but this occasional, which is something that is occasioned by a particular event, or a particular question. Ministry of elders in a senate. And the way that this occasional or unique one off work for Paul and Barnabas and other elders from Antioch.

And then the apostles and elders in Jerusalem gathered together and a council that, you know, you may call us in it or a council or a general assembly. Those are just words that mean a wider. Gatherings The question that brings it up is is it necessary For Christians to be circumcised and to keep the traditions of Moses?

It's this question That has brought up by these men who volunteer themselves, people who volunteer themselves and don't recognize that it is the Holy Spirit, who is at work in his church and Christ who is at work in his church, by his Spirit, through the formal official, not just means offices that Christ has established a structures of the church.

That's not something new. Wherever the Lord has had ordained called recognized installed elders. There have been those who do not like that. There are ordained and installed holders by the will of the Lord Jesus. And they take it upon themselves to have a parallel ministry and often a parallel.

Ministry turns into a counter ministry. And so, there are men who are not like Judas and Silas as we'll see, part of the solution ends up, being that the Senate. And and then the church in Jerusalem in response to the decision of of the Synod chooses certain men to send with Barnabas and Paul these men in verse 1 chose themselves and they chose themselves because they didn't think that a particular doctrine that was there precious hobby.

Horse was being emphasized enough by the, the actual apostles and elders in Jerusalem. And that it was therefore being neglected in Antioch to which Barnabas had been sent and Barnabas had collected Paul to come administer there as well. And that is that you have to be circumcised and you have to keep the law of Moses Note that it's not just circumcision verse 1 unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses and that is clarified for us.

When when Paul and Barnabas, and the others from Antioch are reporting in verse 4, and then some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed these are believers, but they're fairisaic. Believers. Therefore probably very familiar with Paul. They rise up saying it is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

In other words, these are men who are not recognizing that. There's one covenant of grace that goes from the garden from the promise of the sea to would crush. The serpent's head That is in various administrations under the promise of the seed until Noah and then renewed with Noah and all of his seed that includes all of you as Lord helping us we'll hear not too many minutes from now.

And and then is progresses in a new administration with Abraham and new administration. With with Moses. And then the promised forever king from the line of David and then the anticipation of the, of the New Covenant and the period of the exile and following the exile looking for that salvation, which Simeon.

And as old age rejoices to have seen and is glad to depart because the one to whom all of these different administrations was pointing the Lord Jesus comes and He presides over his own administration of the Covenant of grace. And so there are some things that that belong to the covenant of grace, generally trusting and the Lord Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins.

And God to destroy the works of the devil, and God to, to bring blessing over against the curse that we deserve. And then there are particular things to particular, administrations of the Covenant of great. They didn't understand all this stuff. It's complex, some of you here have been exposed to a little bit or maybe more than a little bit of covenant theology.

And and you're enjoying this summary. Others of you have have never really studied covenant, theology at all, and it just sounds like a bunch of Bible word salad to you, perhaps, or maybe there's something about this, all whom the Lord, had intended to say forceiving in their life in their day, a promise of the Christ and having specific applications to that particular season of God's dealing, with men on earth and to which he chose that we would live appointing to us the time that we would live and our boundaries as we'll hear Paul say and an Athens in just a couple of chapters.

But these pharisaical believers, They didn't understand that. Moses was a servant in God's house as a slave and faithful Praise God by His grace. He sustained His people especially sustained his service but now the Lord Jesus is a son over God's house and so that whole new administration of the Covenant of grace and the implications it has for our worship that we this morning didn't have, you know, the, the sacrifice of of the morning lambs on the Sabbath day.

And, you know, those of us who are church. Officers are are thankful for the earthly simplicity but we ought to be all the more thankful for the heavenly glory of what we are doing now. That Jesus, the high priest has offered himself one's for all as the sacrifice and has consecrated in heaven by his blood, that worship that he leads from there, and which we join by faith.

And that we no longer have a bloody sign that has applied to half of the members of his visible church, but we have a sign of life and of actual cleansing that works and doesn't have to be repeated. And so rather than the pouring of the blood that we saw in Exodus chapter 24, we have the pouring of water rather than the cutting and death and blood in circumcision.

The sign of belonging to the covenant is a sign of the cleansing of the blood of Christ. And the pouring out of his spirit who is the one who operates in his church and the spirit, making the difference in the visible church from the rest of the world. Now he is the one so that even if you're a member of the church, who doesn't believe Hebrews chapter 6, you are still tasting of the world to come and of the heavenly gifts and gaining advantages of being among the people want to a member of the people among whom God.

The Holy Spirit is working in a way that he doesn't in the rest of the church. Wonderful. Glorious theology. But missing the greatness of the glory of Christ and how the scriptures fit together as a whole will lead us into other errors. And so these these men Rosales for the Word of God and there was zealous for the Covenant of grace, the Covenant, as they thought the mosaic covenant was the Covenant of Grace rather than an administration thereof they come and they lay something else.

Alongside the gospel. This is what This is. What necessitates this Senate because, what they are doing, they've made a mistake, but because they elected themselves to be teachers and overseers of the church. Right. This is, they weren't appointed by like those who were appointed by Paul and Barnabas. At the end of the missionary journey in 1423, they weren't appointed ordained.

Like these elders who are sitting in the council in the Senate in Jerusalem. They haven't been selected by the church court, they selected themselves. And and they not fulfilling this, this characteristic that we just heard about and God's providence. And first Timothy 3 able to teach having been instructed in the way all of the scriptures fit together.

And all the scriptures proclaim Christ, they come and they make this zealous application that deserve as hell. That's the way Galatians. 1 speaks about when it says anything that's set a set alongside the gospel. I'm translating it a little bit more literally than you're English. Translations are going to have there in Galatians.

Chapter 1, that if you hear a gospel alongside the one that the apostles themselves preach, the one that we now have in Scripture by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, let him be anathema, says the Apostle Paul which is and we say it reverently children. You must never say it lightly or irreverently. The apostle there in Galatians.

One is saying, let him go to hell. This statement that it is necessary for them to be circumcised, that it is necessary for them to keep the traditions of Moses is a statement that is demonic. It is from the devil that is worthy of hell. It takes the gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ, His righteousness and His sacrifice, which alone are necessary, and which are sufficient in themselves.

And it lays something else alongside and says, even if you have Jesus, you still need this other stuff in order to be saved and that's from hell. And so sometimes elders in the church have to do very unpopular things, especially with people who are self-appointed and they're always already.

Therefore have this anti-authoritarian bent and they feel like they are on a spiritual mission to counter what is deficient in the teaching of the leadership and Antioch and elders. Have to oppose them. Notice that it's part of Paul and Barnabas's duty in their office to have no small dissension and dispute with them and so that's what makes the Synod necessary.

So we'll see in the first place in a couple more places, the calling of this synod and how it was constituted, who was there. That all that we have described as or titled, the ordaining of the Senate, as another one of these attempts at alliteration. And then in the second place we'll see the operation of the Senate.

How did the Apostles and elders proceed and how did they come to make their decision? We have to remember that we're in the book of Acts here. This is that which by Luke's pen. The Holy Spirit has given us to establish for us, the foundation of his church to show us what the church looks like on earth.

And it doesn't look sinless, but what it looks like when the church on earth is being governed and led by Christ from heaven as He operates on earth by his spirit. Yeah. So this isn't a lesson in Presbyterianism, it is, but as a lesson in Presbyterianism because Presbyterianism is how the Holy Spirit leads us church plurality of elders in the local congregation Presbytery of Elders in the region, Synods of elders, to answer the significant questions and controversies of faith that arise.

It'll be very interesting when we get I think by God's grace to us when we get to the operation of the Synod, that these men, many of whom spoke immediately by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit at times in their lives, who are giving testimony of things that that the Holy Spirit directly did through them.

That yet the decision itself must be submitted to the scripture very helpful for us who don't live in the age of immediate revelation. We live in the age of the fulfillment of the Holy Spirit's work and the completion of that, which Christ had promised. Praise God. We call ourselves completionists, not cessationists.

So that it may be seen that. Those who hold the other doctrine are not the continuationists. They are the incompleteness know. The Bible is full. The Bible is complete. Praise God. But we don't live in the age of the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit. So, how are we to operate when we have a Senate?

Or when the Presbytery has to sit as a church court, Is it sometimes does or when the session has to sit as a church court in the local church as it sometimes does. So that's what we'll consider in the second place. The operation of the Senate and then in the last place as we consider the outcome of this question and we have done enough preview that hopefully you're already able to piece together that which is taught in that portion of the passage and the outcome of the Senate.

So you have this ordaining of the Senate. Now remember it's not just in Acts as a whole where the Holy Spirit is operating and it's not so much the acts of the apostles of Jesus Christ. If you can remember all the way back to the first sermon. It's the continuing act of Jesus Christ, because Luke, introduces the book saying that in his former volume, which is the gospel of Luke, he wrote of all that Jesus had begun to do unto teach with which is, of course, the implication that this is that which Jesus continues to do and to teach, by way of his church on the earth.

So, it's not just that as a whole, that Christ is operating in his church on earth, by his Holy Spirit. But we've had recent reminders that as the Apostles and elders are conducting their ministry. They are aware that they are doing it in submission to and with in the fellowship and submission to the Holy Spirit and fellowship with the Holy Spirit and dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit.

Remember back in chapter 13 and verse 2 as they minister to the Holy Spirit and fasted the holies are as the minister to the Lord and fasted. The Holy Spirit said and we wondered out loud or at least I did and many of you with me. How did the Holy Spirit say this?

And yet, we have a clue to how the Holy Spirit speaks. Because one of the things that we'll find when we come to the operation of the Senate, is that after there is this disputing which we don't get a lot of inks build on in verse 7. But then, this testimony of Paul theologizing really, this.

Doctrinal testimony of not Paul Peter and then this testimony of Paul and Barnabas about what the Lord has done. And this review of that which has been said and analysis from scripture by James that when we come to next week's passage, they're going to say in verse 28 and the letter for it.

Seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you. No greater burden than these necessary things. And so this is one of the ways that the Holy Spirit speaks Not always by immediate revelation. Not all not necessarily in chapter 13 and verse 2, by those who are fasting and praying hearing and audible voice are one of them being full of the Holy Spirit and addressing the other ones When we operate Christ's church in the way in Christ's church, in the way that his word says, we may have confidence that it's the Holy Spirit who has brought us into the submission to the Scriptures and that it is the Holy Spirit who is leading the church of Jesus Christ Christ leading the church on earth by his spirit.

So they said it seemed good to the Holy Spirit in verse 28. What does that mean? Well, it means we had a senate and there was arguing and then there was some theology from Peter and there was testimony from Paul and Barnabas and then there was scripture analysis and, and taking everything else that had been said and seeing that it did indeed follow and submit to the Word of God.

Rightly opened rightly applied that. The Holy Spirit is the one who has produced this decision. That's wonderful. That's very comforting. It helps us in the same way as we've as we've noted several times recently in First Peter 5 that when you humble yourself under the authority that Christ has placed in his church.

You're not a humbling yourself under their hands. You're humbling yourself under the mighty hand of God and you're not casting your cares upon the men, whom the Lord uses as under shepherds. You're casting your cares upon the Lord, because he cares for you, and that's a precious verse and it comes in the context of biblical church government.

So, why are you Presbyterian? Well, because I trust in the Lord and that's how the Lord leads his church. And I humble myself under his mighty hand and I cast my cares upon him, and that's how we do it. According to the Bible. It's not, you know, just a man-made title that ends up on signs outside of churches.

It's a vital real way that the Holy Spirit operates in his church. So as we consider what local sessions are like and the reality of Christ being the one who ordains the ministry of Presbyteries in a region, We did that last week. We're also considering that answering a question or controversy of faith as like these arise and they do arise that a synod for addressing that problem of elders from multiple Presbyteries coming together to consider those to consider the question.

As the end of verse 2 says, and that verse 6 says, came together to consider this matter that this is how Christ how Christ leads his church and helps us because we don't. None of us have a perfect and full understanding of the scriptures. And so it begins with following instruction like we're having in the second serial reading these weeks.

And first Timothy 3, recognizing the elders that Christ calls by the grace that Christ has worked in their lives. So that when we get to a place where you have elders gathered from, not just multiple churches in a region, but from multiple regions in a Synod that you're getting there because you're following Jesus and how he runs his church.

And so we're trusting in him and is a well, why isn't everyone Presbyterian? And Part of the answer is, we need more Reformation. This is one of the reasons why of in God's good providence. The ARP still calls itself a Senate because we're hoping, they're going to be other Senates.

We just have one at the moment, but as God does again, a great work like he did in the 1500s where he brought many back back to his word and his spirit was poured out and many were saved and some places more and some places less, but much purification of the worship of God.

And of the theology of the gospel took place and and then a little bit more in Scotland and in the 1600s and that took although they were all minority continued to this day, the faithful to be a minority and a little bit more in the Netherlands in the 1600s.

And that didn't take There, but we're hoping in the Lord that he who has taught these things. In his word, will continue to work in his churches. And as we are sanctified and as others are sanctified, the Lord will grow. All of his churches and maybe we'll not use the title Presbyterian, Maybe there will be enough purification of doctrine that it will just be implicitly understood.

That churches are governed Presbyterianly and we'll be able to say, you know, the Hopewell Church in Caleyaka are the Hopewell congregation in Kaleoka and be the, you know, the church has Middle Tennessee or the church in Middle Tennessee, to collectively. We're not married to the word, but we are married to the Lord.

And that's why, That's why we rejoice that he gives us this instruction. The synod was necessitated as we said by this question and his question that couldn't be dealt with locally in

part because men had gone out of Judea. But who then constituted this Senate? Well, the church or perhaps the Presbytery, the implication in Antioch is that there are such a multitude that perhaps these are multiple congregations, or maybe just the one, but the church in Antioch determines that Paul and Barnabas in certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem.

And the implication is the certain others are elders from Antioch because look at to whom they are going in verse 2. They are going to the Apostles and elders. This is very helpful to us because we see here in verse 2 that it's apostles and elders from Antioch, going to apostles and elders in Jerusalem, the apostles and elders.

In verse 6 have the same seat at the council as they come together to consider this matter. They have the same voice in the decision than it pleased. The apostles and elders. The whole church are not the ones who are expressing their approval. But the whole church is with them because of their submission to them And so you have equal seat, equal vote for apostles and elders.

Now that's that's helpful to us. Some of us have had been at Presbytery meetings or general assembly meetings. Where even those elders who do not vocationally preach and teach do not seem to have the same seat and do not seem to have the same voice. That's very unbiblical because the elders of the synod in Acts chapter 15 have the same seat and the same voice as the Apostles do.

And so that encourages us much. Because when when we are in 2022 and there are not apostles, Are we less-led from heaven by the Lord Jesus? Are we less lead by the Holy Spirit? Do we have less hope or confidence that the Lord would lead his church through the elders?

Know, because even halfway through the book of Acts, they had the same seat and the same voice Note that this wasn't a church visit, or a congregational gathering. It was the gathering of the Apostles and elders. This is as we would call it a church council or a church court.

And all of this reminds us teaches us that elders. Have a duty, not only in the local church and in the Presbytery, the regional church but also to the broader church, It was necessary. It was important to counter this false doctrine that had come unbidden from Jerusalem and had come to Antioch.

And so that was the ordaining of this event. Then we see the operation of the Senate. It's interesting that the much disputing in verse 7 is something of which the spirit does not give us many details. He gives us instead those aspects of the the discussion or the debate, by which the Holy Spirit gave to win the day.

And this is instructive for us because people dispute in different ways. As if you ever attend a Presbytery meeting, or a Synod meeting in, which there is a, a contentious question and you just listen to the ways men, talk Some, sadly in our age, many will get up and they'll talk about their feelings and they'll talk about what other people will think, or what the people in their church will think.

Or or what the the world will think. But there will be others who will present the connection of the question to who God is will. God has said what God promises to do. Christ is what Christ has done on the cross and we call that theological. But, you know, all theology is is, is rightly connecting to God and His Word to Christ and His gospel, whatever.



The current question is and there will be men. Praise God. Who will speak from Scripture and we'll speak about what God sees and the duty of of not just the church generally, but even the men in the room as they interact with God at the counsel and not just with one another.

And so the Spirit does not tell us much about the other disputing, but he does give us these three, three time. A little more detailed description of these three parts or aspects of the debate, which we have called, and, or tried to summarize under these three headings Theological interpretation of events and then theological consideration of their own actions and then corroboration from specific Scripture.

You have this theological interpretation of events and verses 7 through 9, and verse 12. When there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to the men and brethren, You know, that a good while ago. God chose among us that by my mouth, the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

And you remember Peter on on the roof and the angel who had appeared to the Centurion to Cornelius, and the vision that Peter had on the roof that that whole manner by which the Lord had underlined to the apostle that it was the Lord, who was doing this. So, Peter reminds them of what he had learned that, it was the Lord who had chosen that Cornelius would receive the gospel in that, Peter would be the one and Peter's mouth would be the one, the, the object from, with their by which the Lord addressed Cornelius with the gospel.

It's a reminder to us that our mouths. Don't belong to us. Our mouths. Belong to God. And so when the elders of the church are gathered to to consider a question, they're not trying to or they shouldn't be trying to seek their own agenda. They should try be trying to discern what the Lord wants to do with the Lord's people, or even as Peter describes it here with the Lord's mouths.

And so his ministry is attributed to God's choice. And then the fact that that ministry is one of preaching and hearing and believing it's all attributed to God's choice that by my mouth. The Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe and so he's reminding them. God has appointed the preaching of the gospel as, as the means of grace.

We can't decide that things that were useful to others and other places are necessarily what we should do. Preaching is God's appointed means here. Not not circumcision. That's the subtle implication there and then verse 8. So God who knows the heart. In other words, not just he knows what's in the heart but because it's God's relationship with their hearts that through the preaching of the word God gave their hearts life.

God gave their hearts faith And when God does that, he marks them off as holy as part of his church. God had already joined them to the church and he, testifies to that by the Spirit. So God, who knows the heart acknowledged to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us.

And you remember how Peter had responded at the time because there had not just been the faith in the heart that Peter can't see. But God had done and God, of course could see because he was the one who had done it, but God had also given them to speak in tongues and he had as as the scripture say there in chapter 10, in chapter 11, poured out his Holy Spirit and and Peter said look this is something God has done.

If God has poured out this, who are we to withhold? The water. The spirit has already come from God. Now, the water has to come from us, because this is what Jesus said that he baptized that he baptizes with the Spirit. Just as John had baptized with water and they were all of course also to baptize with water.

And so Peter's reminding them that we can't just go by what feels important to us. We have to understand properly what God is doing and respond to what God says for us to do in relation to what God does. So God acknowledge them. By giving them the Holy Spirit, He made.

No distinction between us and then purifying their hearts by faith. And remember, that's what Peter had heard. What God calls clean. You may not call unclean. And so there's Peter and Cornelius's house and the Cornelius and his household are there and they believed in the spirits have been poured out.

And they're already clean, didn't have to be circumcised to be made. Clean. They didn't have to start keeping this ceremonial law to be, to be made. Clean. The Lord had made them clean from the heart. It doesn't mean he made them sinless, but it means that by giving them life and faith to believe, he had already marked them spiritually as part of his church.

And so it was necessary for Peter to mark them Sacramentally or physically as part of his church. And so Peter. This basically saying here When I baptize them with water and response to the Lord, bringing them into his church by faith. And by his Spirit, all of the marking that was necessary was done.

God is the one who purified them. We have already recognized that circumcision isn't necessary Ceremonial law of Moses wasn't necessary. So there's this careful theological interpretation of what the Lord is doing. Now, he says now therefore why do you test God? And you can hear you can hear again his own experience at Cornelius's house working in here.

Remember that. Who can we who could we be that we could resist. God, he comes back to Jerusalem and he's having, he's having the same sort of problems that are here. There are, there are those who are upset that Peter had gone in and eaten with Gentiles and Peter saying, I don't just eat with them, you know, they're, they're believed.

I baptized them because I couldn't resist. God. And so resisting God in chapter 10 and 11 here is tied to testing God. Now you don't want to be. Obviously do your children. One who resists or tests God. And if we add anything to the Scriptures, We test God, It's not just that, you know, we will be wrong in our theological debates with our friends.

It's not just we may end up making more theological mistakes, that get worse and worse. Those things are true. But whenever we add to the scriptures misinterpret misapply, the scriptures a point ourselves as teachers as a scriptures, we are in the place or in danger of testing God. And so what they are what they are trying to do is rightly respond to and participate in what God is doing.

So he says, don't put a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we, we're able to bear. And so he's moved. Now from theologically interpreting, what happened before, to theologically interpreting, what happened at the Senate, What is happening at this entity saying, we have a choice, We're either going to participate with God and follow God and what God is doing or we are going to test God and resist God.

And so these traditions of Moses which were by the way traditions that the Holy Spirit himself had established but the Holy Spirit himself. Also now shows that he has set aside, There's a new priest and a new law. As Hebrews says, we can't do all of the covenant theology here, but it's the Holy Spirit who has set aside this traditions.

Never should the church have traditions that are from mere men and never should the church. Maintain even Bible traditions that the Holy Spirit himself has set aside. So theological

consideration of their own actions. Not only are they testing God, but are they acting consistently with the gospel? That is their own hope.

Here's one of the great reasons. Here's one of the great reasons never to add anything to the scripture is because we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved. Now when you understand that a simple worship on earth isn't glorious because it's simple.

You know, we're not like the spiritual worship equivalence of the Amish. Right? Where we think the simpler. It is the better it is. And we glory in the simplicity. No We're glorying in Christ. God Himself became a man to give himself as the sacrifice and offer himself as the righteousness.

And he himself leads the worship from heaven And so we don't doctor the worship on earth, because the glory of the worship, isn't something that can be seen with eyes or smelled with noses. Or, or It's not sensory The glory of the worship is Jesus himself in heaven. And what he, what he does from there.

And so he's saying we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved. So we don't believe that our circumcision from before saved us. We don't believe even that our ongoing. Sanctification saves us. We believe that Christ saves us. And so, why would we try to implement something or burden them with something?

That is inconsistent both with our own, hope for our own souls, let alone. The hope that we might have for their souls. We were not saved by our Jewishness were saved, only by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so there's this. There's this theological consideration of their own actions.

Are they? Are they the participating in and submitting to what the Lord is doing? And what the Lord has instructed then and are there actions going to be consistent with both their own salvation, their own hope, and what God how God saves the Gentiles. God is saving the Gentiles through grace.

He says, Are they going to participate in grace alone? Or are they going to fuzzy up the alone part of grace alone? Is it going to sound like grace plus Well, the third way that the Senate operated was this corroboration from scripture. Oh, We forgot under the theological interpretation in verse 12.

You see, Barnabas and Paul when they're describing, what the Lord? What happened on their missionary journeys? They're not talking about what they did, but they're talking about what God had worked through them. Well, even after having all of this good theology and convincing testimony When James, let's start speaking in verse 13, Notice?

He waits for for silence, he answers, and he says men and brethren. Listen to me. He summarizes the theology that Peter has spoken, and then he reminds them that this is, This is confirmed by Amos nine, 11 and 12 after this, I will return and we'll rebuild the tabernacle of David.

I will read which is fallen down. I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up. They're great. Hope isn't it That the Lord would raise up a remnant from among God's people. So that the rest of mankind, may seek you the Lord even all the Gentiles who are called by my name.

And so there are those whom the Lord saves from among the Gentiles as well. And he refers to them as those who are called by his name, think we were, We will conclude At the end of verse

17, the outcome is, is tied to the next passage are going to summarize much of the decision that has made.

But just note that the decision is made on the basis of script Here are those who have apostles in their assembly and who are aware that the Holy Spirit is with them and helping them and leading them. And yet, they still submit the final decision to the written Word of God.

How much more must we submit? All of the decisions of the church to the written word of God and how we should grieve When assemblies, rather than submitting to Scripture. Move away from this aim at rightly understanding the scriptures. Because if Scripture submitted decisions are what it looks like.

When Jesus leads a church by his Spirit, Then what does it mean? When the decisions are made in the more pragmatic way, how will the people feel? How will the people respond? What will outsiders think and you start moving away from the right understanding of and application of the Word of God before the face of God.

And what that means is you now have something that calls itself a church but it's not being led by Jesus Christ from heaven. Something that calls itself a church But whatever else they say about the Holy Spirit and whatever nonsense, they drum up in their worshiper church life and blame it on the Holy Spirit.

They're not being led the way the Holy Spirit leads his church and so they use the words. But the reality is not Jesus. Leading it from heaven, The Spirit leading and empowering on earth. And you end up with you know self-appointed self-defined self-instructed theology and practice that comes from hell instead of from heaven.

And from Christ. And let's pray Our Father in heaven. Thank you for helping us and attending us by your Holy Spirit and the passage that As things that are difficult to understand. And even when we understand them and some ways in cases difficult to swallow, but you o God or merciful and your grace, You are the one who broad our hearts into submission to Christ.

Who broke our hearts of stone and replaced them with hearts of flesh. So we pray that your Holy Spirit would keep giving us like keep giving us understanding, help us to understand every portion of your word buy. And in the light of and the instruction of all the other parts of your word, we asked Lord.

Not only that, we would understand and accept, but that, you would give us that, which is described here that our elders in this congregation would operate in the way that Christ leads from heaven on earth by his Spirit. When we sit as a session and that our Presbytery of elders in our region would operate as described and instructed by your word, and oh, Lord, have mercy on our Senate and grant that as well.

And Lord not just for this part of your church. We thank you. That there are many other congregations, many other denominations, even those who uninstructedly. And no, not what they resist are proud to be non-denominational. There are many such congregations O Lord where you have yet and your mercy and patience caused the gospel of Christ to be preached and continued to give salvation as your spirit gives faith.

And we pray that each of these and us all together, your spirit would continue giving more understanding of your word, more reformation of our theology, and of our practice. And that you would bring in an age of the greater display of Christ's leading his church in heaven, and the greater experience of him doing so.

By the ministry of his spirit on earth. We ask Lord that, you would grant it here and everywhere and your own precious name. Lord Jesus. Amen.