

**Saturday, October 29, 2022 ▫ Read Acts 15:23–35**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What did the assembly write (v23)? By whom did they send it (cf. v22)? From whom did they write it? To whom? Where? How did it start? What was the occasion of the letter—what had some done (v24)? With what effect on their souls? Saying what? Even though what had not been done? How had the letter been decided upon (v25)? With what type of men is it being sent? With whom? What have Barnabas and Paul done (v26)? For What? Which chosen men are being sent (v27)? What will they do? Who, ultimately, has given this judgment (v28)? Through whom? What has He determined to do? What things are laid upon them? From what four things must they abstain (v29)? With what benefit if they do? How does the letter close? What is done to the four men in v30? To where do they come? Whom do they gather? What do they deliver? How does the multitude respond (v31)? What do we learn about Judas and Silas in v32? As preachers, what do they do to the brethren? With what? What do they do for how long (v33)? Then what is done with them? What do they bring back? From whom to whom? But who doesn't wish to go (v34)? Who also remain (v35)? Doing what two things? With whom else?*

**Who deliver the judgments of the church?** Acts 15:23–35 looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **while it is preachers who deliver judgments from synods, and exhort, and strengthen, and teach, and preach, yet ultimately it is the Holy Spirit Who is doing all these things in the church.**

This passage relates the writing, delivery, and reception of the decision of the first general synod.

**The writing of the letter.** The letter itself communicates the brotherhood of the entire church under Christ and the Spirit. Although the decision was made by the assembly of apostles and elders, the whole church has concurred (v22), and now the letter identifies itself as being from “the brethren” (v23) as much as from the apostles and elders. It is important for the members of the congregations in Antioch to know that this brotherly view of them has not just been “decided by the leadership” but embraced by the whole household of God.

This brother-recognition is even more strongly stated in identifying the letter's addressees as “the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.” All of the members of these churches are, of course, brethren. But the letter singles out the Gentiles as equally members of the family of God as the apostles themselves. They are demonstrating that the decision in the letter is not a concession for second-class Christians, but an acknowledgement that they have faith that is of the same status (cf. 2Pet 1:1).

By calling them “brethren,” the apostles and elders place themselves on a level not just with believers in Antioch but specifically with Gentile believers. This sends a strong message in light of the fact that this was all made necessary by those who had come from Jerusalem and “troubled them with words, unsettling their souls” (v24).

The letter relates, as we saw in v20, that they are to refrain especially from those things that participate in the idolatry of their Gentile neighbors and breaking of the Noahic covenant (v29). The order is slightly different here, but the big addition is that in doing this they will “practice [what is] good.” This is not a burden being laid upon them (v28) but an invitation to the service of Christ.

Finally, notice the phrase at the beginning of v28, “it seemed good to the Holy Spirit.” It's not that Paul and Barnabas won an argument, or even that a particular position won the day, but that the Holy Spirit has led His church into the truth. He brings them to the conclusion that is consistent with the rest of the Scriptures that He has produced (cf. 1Pet 1:11; 2Pet 1:20–21).

This means something frightful for assemblies where the Scriptures are not faithfully adhered to: rather than men serving under the power of the Spirit, men in those assemblies have themselves taken the reigns instead of the Spirit. But it means something wonderful for those congregations and presbyteries who follow the biblical prescription for Synods: what they are aiming to do is to be ruled and led by the Spirit.

**The delivery of the letter.** The delivery of the letter is a vital part of the Jerusalem church's affirmation of the joint council with Paul and Barnabas and others from the northern church. As they say in v24, the troublers had gone out unbidden and against Paul and Barnabas (cf. v2). Now, instead of being unbidden, Judas and Silas are “chosen,” which the letter itself emphasizes in v25. And instead of opposing Barnabas and Paul, they are “with” Barnabas and Paul.

Furthermore, the assembly heaps affection and admiration upon Barnabas and Paul. First, affection: they call Barnabas and Paul “beloved.” Then, admiration: “men who have risked their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This means much to the church in Jerusalem, where many had been martyred. It gives them a kinship with Barnabas and Paul and admiration for them.

Carrying such a letter, Judas and Silas “will also report the same things by word of mouth.” The word for “report” is built on the word for “angel” or “messenger.” They will be able to see the sincerity of the letter in Judas and Silas's manner with Barnabas and Paul, and in Judas and Silas's countenance toward the Gentile believers in Antioch. As Judas and Silas read the letter, the gathering in Antioch can study them and know that this is true.

**The reception of the letter.** The delegation from Jerusalem arrives in Antioch, gathers the multitude together, and delivers the letter (v30). Now the multitude rejoices over its encouragement, and Judas and Silas add their own encouragement (“exhorted” in v32 is the verb form of the noun in v31). Not only have they gladdened them in v31, but now they strengthen them as well (v33).

By what means do they strengthen them? By means of “many words.” As “prophets also” their ministry, like that of Paul and Barnabas is “reaching and preaching the word of the Lord.” Christian ministry is first and foremost a ministry of the Word.

So they minister the Word long enough among them that they can now speak on behalf of the Antioch church, and are sent back to the apostles with greetings. The synod, its decision, its letter, and its mission have had the intended effect; there is peace and purity in the church!

How is your church participating in the Spirit's leading His church by way of synods? What are some of the theological questions before your synod? Whom do you pray is leading them? What do you pray will be the outcome? Besides the actual decisions, how may this be accomplished?

*Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving Your church both peace and purity. Thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit, and how He helps and uses the men whom You call and gift for the eldership. Please sustain our elders by Your grace, and grant that our synod would stick to Your Word. Grant that the way decisions are delivered and received would gladden and strengthen Christ's people, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP197 “Christian Unity” or TPH409 “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”**

**For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit [bit.ly/harpCHAH](http://bit.ly/harpCHAH)**

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

---

Acts 15 versus 18 through 35. These are God's words. Known to God from all from eternity or all his works. Therefore, I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write 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 synagogues, every Sabbath. Then it pleased, the apostles and elders with the whole church to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas namely Judas.

Who was also named Barcabus and Silas leading men among the brethren. They wrote this letter by them, The apostles, and the elders, and the brethren to the brethren who are of the Gentiles In Antioch, Syria, and Silicia. Greetings Since we have heard that some who went out from lust, have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls saying you must be circumcised and keep the law to whom we gave no such commandment.

It seemed good to us being assembled with one Accord to send, chosen men to you. With our beloved Barnabas and Paul men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent sent Judas and Silas who will also report the same things by word of mouth For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you.

No, greater burden than these necessary. Things that you obtain from things offered to idols from blood from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell. So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch. And when they had gathered the multitude together, They delivered the letter.

When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Now, 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. However it seemed good to Silas to remain there Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord with many others also.

So far the reading of God's inspired and an artwork.

So we have here the response of the council and we see it in these four parts, the content of the letter in versus 18 through 21 which we'll have repeated. Again, when we get to the letter itself, So the content of the letter, the writing of the letter, the delivery of the letter, And the reception of the letter.

Now, the content of the letter is based on covenant theology, James has summarized what Peter said and we suppose probably other parts of what has been said. And he's also confirmed that this main line of reasoning that was begun with Peter, is submitted to, and in agreement with the scriptures as we considered briefly last week from the book of Amos.

That David's house was as it were not a temple, but a tabernacle from which, or through, which or in which God Himself would dwell, not only with the Jews but also, with the, with the Gentiles that are remnant would come not only from along the Jewish people, but from all the nations.

And now gives this theological statement in verse 18 known to God from eternity or all his works. Now, that just doesn't just mean, God is aware of what he is going to do. It means God has planned. What he is going to do and that everything that God does as part of this one plan, this one purpose, This one covenant.

That begins not just in time. And certainly, it doesn't begin with Moses at Sinai, but it begins from eternity And then everything God has done, has been part of this plan to redeem for himself, a people in the Lord. Jesus Christ. What does sometimes called the covenant of redemption or the packed them?

Salutis, it's not a theological innovation manufactured in the 16th and 17th centuries. It's a truth that James announces in Acts 15 verse 18 known to God from eternity, are all his works. In other words, those things that belong to the Covenant Administration that they are in, should be put upon the Gentiles.

And those things that applied only to Moses should not be put upon the Gentiles. And so, he left, he selects things from God's moral law and from the Covenant with Noah. Why? Because the covenant would know was made would between him and his descendants Now who are descendants of Noah.

And if I was to tell you and you were to respond to accurately all descendants of Noah, raise your hand. All of you should raise your hand. We're all descendants of Noah. And so there's this submission to God and his authority and his plan of redemption, the Covenant that he has covenanted first within himself and then has carried out in various administrations of the covenant of grace.

And even by the Covenant of works, that was necessary for the Covenant of grace to be instituted in its place. And so it says therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God. They're turning to God is not some strange thing that Gentiles are doing or some accident of a mistake made by Peter or Paul or partnivas.

They're turning to God is part of these works of God that he and planned to do before the world began. And so James is saying, we should pay attention to our Bibles because as God was working in creation, and through Noah and Abraham and through, Moses and through David, whom he's just mentioned in verses 16 and 17 and all of these stages of God's work.

It's all part of one whole adhesive plant. And as he said, we do not find what to do with the Gentiles at Sinai, Look in our Bibles and we see what God has told us about His work throughout the ages. And so he says, we should not trouble them but we should write them to.

These are not things that trouble them. Now, These are things that are the the terms of their God, the obligations that their god lays upon them. You write them to abstain from things polluted by idols, second commandment from sexual immorality, seventh commandment and is important. Of course, he could have put a lot of other things in from the moral law here, couldn't he?

But these are, especially the ones that are going to be hard for you. If you live in a gentile culture where the pagan temple and the sexual immorality, that takes place there and the sexual immorality, that takes place other places consistently with what is done at their pagan temple and the, the parties and feasts, and the social gatherings with the meat that has been offered to the idols there.

That's the, that's the, so the center of their society. That's what makes other people feel about you. That you are normal and a good neighbor and a respectable fella and want to be your friend. And he's saying, you know, don't worry so much but, you know, trying to make friends with the Jews by doing things that God has not

commanded you to do.

There are things that God has commanded. You to do that are very hard because those specific things that in your specific place and your specific time, the law of God is going to be hard for you to follow. That's going to make you a stranger to the world and they will hate you because you are not like them and you are not of them.

And so there's this. There's been this bizarre desire in the church, I guess it's not bizarre because it comes from the flesh and we all should expect it, but there's been a rising. You should say it. That way desire in the churches ever since this seeker friendly idea began and the second half of the 20th century that the world should be comfortable with us and about us, well, the world is not going to be comfortable with those who abstain from things polluted by idols.

And from sexual immorality, enlisting derby into konium and antioxia. And then as the Gospel continues to go, especially in places like Ephesus and Corinth and Rome itself. And so the Lord is the one who's put those things on them. And then he quotes also or name specifically also a couple things that are from the Noahic covenant with Noah and is offspring.

Things strangled is actually a subcategory of things with their blood in them. One way to get out of properly draining the animal that you kill is by not cutting it at all. And so you you kill up by strangling it and and you That way, you know, when you butcher it you can leave maybe the head intact or whatever it is.

It's something that is not properly prepared as the idea, not just not properly killed, but not properly prepared. And this is part of worshiping the creature rather than the created thing. They believed not only that the animal was alive because of its blood, They believed that the animals. Life force was in its blood.

So that if you drank of the blood of the animal, or if there was a few intentionally left, the blood of the animal, in the meat that you would be able to obtain the life force of the animal in that way. And you hear it even today. People and God forgive me.

I have jokingly not referred to actual animals as my spirit animal, but

Use the phrase spirit animal to describe someone who is imitating or seems to be acting like one or another, but they, They think of certain animals as their spirit animal. Just like, there are still people who follow the stars and know, you know what? Their astrological sign is. And they do those things.

There are people who take stretching exercises. Give them animal names based on what they think the stretching exercise looks like. And then they start describing characteristics that they think belong to those animals and how you can obtain those characteristics by doing those stretching exercises, all of these ridiculous and wicked things that come from suppressing.

The truth and unrighteousness pushing down on the knowledge of the Creator and worshiping the creature, the created thing rather than the creator who is blessed forever and Noah. And his sons being those. The whose thoughts were evil from their youth. The Lord says this about them in chapter 8 when they are the only ones left not just in chapter 6 when the world is full of violence and so forth.

No end his sons are susceptible to looking for their life, their strength, their ability ever looking for all of their benefits and all of their abilities and the creature rather than the creator whose blessed forever. And so God gives them is when he gives them the animals as food.

He warns them against eating with the blood last. They should look to the animal. That was given for food by God, instead of to God who gave the animal for food and so this has application. Yes. As application to not drinking and eating blood. It's not the same as a rare steak.

A rare steak is one from which the blood has been drained. There's still a hematic fluid and the presence of a drop is not disobedience to the commandment the commandment it specifically by including the language of strangled here refers to a preparation that is designed to retain blood in order to get that from the animal.

But there are applications to the mindset for instance of evolution viewing in the creature, the origin and power of of our design, our ability, those sorts of things. That's not how God has created us. How God has sustained us and therefore inventing, something like that. As a form of worshiping the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever, I'm in.

And so the the pagans in all the cities of these Gentiles or the children of Noah who are not obeying the commandment of God, that was given to turn Noah from his sin and Noah's sons whom they all are from their sin and to the living. God now, he doesn't pick the things that make it hard for them to be among the Jews.

He picks at things, and that makes them stand out among their broader community. That Gentiles in part because God's people on earth are going to be different in that difference. Should be palpable and visible and displayed. And he points out that this was true, even under Moses verse 21 from Moses has had through many generations.

Those who preach him in every city being read in the synagogues in every Sabbath. And so they should expect that in this new administration of the Covenant of grace that God's people will be shown as different. And he's picked a few of those, Okay? So that's the content of the letter.

That's actually from last Lord, say mornings intended sermon which are going to have to complete by God's help tomorrow. And then there is the writing of the letter, notice that the apostles elders, and the whole church send chosen, men of their own company with Antioch ball and Barnabas. We'll talk about delivery of the letter in a moment, but it's the apostles elders and whole church.

Not just the whole church at Jerusalem pollen. Barnabas are being sent by this assembly, too. This is an assembly to which all of the congregations in all of the places. Even those congregations to whom the letters being sent. This is an assembly that represents and governs them. So the assembly is sending Judas, Silas, and Paul, and Barnabas.

And you see this, even in the letter itself, They wrote this letter by them, The apostles, the elders, and the brethren to the brethren. Who are the Gentiles? And Antioch Syrian Solisia. Greetings, since we have heard etc, it seemed good to us being assembled with one Accord to, to send, chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas.

And Paul Notice how they assembly speaks. The assembly does not say your beloved Barnabas and Paul says our beloved Barnabas and Paul Barnabas and Paul are recognized as members of this assembly and they are beloved of this assembly and they are not the assembly, doesn't just have affection for them.

Beloved Barnabas and Paul. But admiration men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord. Jesus Christ, nowhere had the enmity against the Gospel been, so, fierce a Jerusalem then at Jerusalem, where these great persecutions that arisen and Steven, and, and James, the brother of John, and, and others had been killed.

And so, when they said men who risked their lives for our Lord, Jesus Christ, they're recognizing a unity with them. If they fellowship, they are sharing in this deadly persecution. And so the the assembly that sends it is actually an assembly that includes their own delegates and that's important.

Some will read Genesis 15 that Genesis, I keep doing that Acts 15 and they'll say see the Jerusalem Church was the church that was over the other churches and that's God's design on earth. And now, the Roman church is the church, that is over the other churches. See, God is.

Episcopalian in his form of church government, whether you believe aromas on top or whether you believe Constantinople is on top or whether you believe the king of England is on top. That's you know, super weird. One of course. But, you know, men's hearts will devise anything against God but that's not what's being described here.

What's being described here is an assembly of elders? An apostles from all the churches that is sending it and notice that they are refer to those and antiochidia and Silicia as brethren. They have a faith of the same quality as the apostles and elders as Peter. We'll write, when he writes his letter.

And he writes to those who have like, precious faith as his own, or when he specifically addresses elders, in 1st, Peter 5, and he refers to himself as their fellow elder, there is before God, not a hierarchy of men, but one man. The Lord Jesus Christ to whom each one who believes is united in faith and whose faith has the same value, because Jesus is the value of that faith.

And so, that should enter into how we think of our brothers and sisters in the church. That neither of ourselves think of ourselves as exalted, over others. And neither neither do we think that we are second-class believers? But we have humility about ourselves and the steam for Christ and therefore esteem for our brethren who are united to Christ.

And notice that they apply this word brethren not to all the members of the churches in Antioch Syria and Silicia. Although that would have been appropriate for all the members as it would be fine but they specifically single out the Gentiles. Now, it's gonna be very difficult for the Jewish members of those congregations to continue, refusing to treat as brethren the Gentile members of those congregations when the Jewish apostles and the Jewish elders and the Jewish members of the congregation in Jerusalem, refer to their Gentile brethren.

As brethren Notice. Also that, in addition to telling them that theology that they had heard was wrong, they make a big deal out of a in verse 24. The fact that they had given no such commandment to those people to go there. But then, in Genesis 25, it seemed good to us being assembled with one accord to send, chosen men to you.

And so they're saying, you know, when you want to understand how good church in Jerusalem thinks about you don't remember, the people who came to you that we didn't send remember Judas and Silas Remember the ones that we sent remember the way they looked at, you Remember the way they talk to, you Remember the word, they preached to you.

And here the love of Christ in the preaching of Christ and on the faces in the preaching of Christ and on the faces of of these men, as they interacted with you and know that that love of Christ is from us to. It is a necessary part of the way, the Lord Jesus leads His church.

That there be those who are recognized as the elders as the overseers as the ones who are genuinely ordained and sent and it is necessary. That believers who are not of those offices. Do not represent themselves as speaking for the church and said they pick these men to send with them.

And then they acknowledge that they're doing this. Not because this was what a bunch of men came up with, but that they're submitting to the Holy Spirit. Who is the one who works in such assemblies. Verse 28 for it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us. Now, they're not saying that, you know, the Holy Spirit in consultation with us decided this thing, they're saying the Holy Spirit is the one who operates through assemblies like this.

And since the Holy Spirit is the one who has operated through this assembly, we are in submission to the Holy Spirit and not just handing down a decision, but participating wholeheartedly by sending men in a way that will communicate the same the affection for you that this theology that the Spirit has determined in the assembly, says that we should have for you.

And so the last part of that is to lay up on you, no greater burden than these necessary things. In other words, these are the things that the Holy Spirit has said are necessary in the Bible and That takes away this reading of things with blood and strangled verse 29.

I think has Perhaps a better order than that, which James at first proposed, there's perfecting of language that's there are and in various assemblies of elders in Christ's Church. But these are necessary things. So you can't read from blood and from things strangled as accommodations for the Jews. You know.

Just we don't. Yes, so we don't upset them too much. That's not the concern of the assembly. The concern of the assembly is what does the Holy Spirit? Say It's necessary. And these are the things that are necessary so much better to read from blood and things strangled. As part of the Noaic covenant knowing that from all eternity God knows his works.

So they decide to to send the letter by these men. And this way in order to communicate, even in the manner, in which they send a letter, the affection that they have for their brothers and sisters, as brothers and sisters in Christ, and so that instructs us, doesn't it.

That when we are trying to think about how to act in the congregation and act with those who are members in good standing of Christ's Church, We're not just to follow a certain set of rules, but we should seek how to show honor, show affection, even when they are wrong about things or even when they are less mature, and especially when they are attacking us, if we are to love our enemies in the world, how much more are we to love our enemies in the church?

Which is actually the, the context of Romans 12, which we won't take the time to get into. Now it's We've just been a long family worship lesson, but you should be seeking to show affection and respect and and love in the church even. And especially with those who with whom it is most difficult and so we get the reception, they're sent off, they come to Antioch verse 30.

They gather the multitude together, The deliver the letter. And when they had read it, they and it's not certain whether this is Paul Barnabas the elders that had gone with them and Judas and Silas, or whether it's the congregation or both. It's probably both They rejoiced over Ritz encouragement.

If the they is the congregation they rejoiced over the encouragement that came from the letter, from the apostles, from the assembly to them if the day is Paul and Barnabas and Judas and Silas, etc, Then it's they saw how much the letter had encouraged the congregation and they were rejoicing over that Or that they as everyone and their rejoicing over both which is probably the best way to read this But there is joy and strengthening and help.

When we realize that although there is still sin in the church that the Holy Spirit is working in this church and the Holy Spirit is working in this church. According to a plan that began in God from all eternity. And so we rejoice over the fact that God himself is the one who is at work in his church and we bless His name for it.

And then when we have the working out of right doctrine and unity and peace, come through that working out of right doctrine, although this wouldn't be a comprehensive unity in peace. If you read the rest of the New Testament, you find out that the Judaizers didn't say, well, that's been decided.

We're happy with the decision. You know, the end. No, they're still going to be a problem. They're going to be upset, but right? Doctrine was decided upon and those who were agreed on, it had their hearts united where it showed affection for one another as a result of it.

And this was a celebration not of what man had done but what God had done. So that's how it was received and that's how we should respond especially whenever God gives Reformation and revival because those you know, Reformation is what brings true unity and peace in the church. Unity and peace.

Do not come from ignoring theological differences, Unity, and peace. Come from rejoicing over theological advance because it's given by God to join His church in one mind. And so that's the response to the letter. And then you notice that Judas and Silas in addition to delivering the letter they minister and strengthen the brethren further and they stay there for a time.

And the unity is extended because they're sent back to the apostles from the brethren in Antioch, with greetings, now from Antioch to Jerusalem. And so there's a, there's a, an increase in the bond between these two churches that would not have existed of this. These Judaizers hadn't come down unbitten to Antioch.

But now there's a much stronger bond in fellowship that has come as a result of the trouble. And of the way the Lord resolves, the trouble that is in his church. Praise God. Now, verse 34 isn't part of the Greek text that. So then used in the church throughout the ages it gets to our English or this particular English translation by way of Jerome's Latin where Jerome had included a minor variant and drums Latin became the basis for Erasmus's, Greek text Testament, which is the one that is behind the King James and the New King James, we don't need to get into all that.

Just know that it's not majority text reading. They're perhaps explaining how silent trying to explain how Silas got back to Antioch in order to leave with Paul, but but that's it's not necessary for Silas to remain there. In order for that to happen, He could take the greetings back to Jerusalem.

And once he's delivered, those come back to Antioch where he had been preaching lately, etc, but Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch, teaching, and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also. And so the church is strengthened not just by having formed and conducted this assembly to answer the question but by making good application of the theology that the Holy Spirit has shown them and has established in his church.

And so uniting his churches by further Reformation and progress of doctrine. I'm praise God. We should seek the same from him in prayer and in our study and in our labor and know that it's not just elders and assemblies that seek purity in peace. Every one of us when we take our vows as church members, we bow to see seek pursue the purity and peace of the congregation of which we are a member.

Let's pray, Father. Thank you for this portion of your word, pray that you would help us as we think about it. And as we prepare to sit under its preaching, in the holy assembly of the Lord's day, that these things that we have heard here as an active worship.

That these things that we have understood, we would understand even better that your spirit would write them upon our hearts. And to use, use them to conform us to Christ. We pray, Lord for our session, our Presbytery, our Senate, that these church courts would conduct themselves. The way that this assembly this Senate in Acts 15 did, and we pray that you would help us whenever things are determined from your word.

And these assemblies of elders that we would wholeheartedly receive and respond to you, not just in letter. But in spirit that which your Holy Spirit determines and declares help us Lord. In in a day, when often decisions are not made in the same way, help us know how to submit to and respond in those things.

Especially that are obviously biblical. Give us right hearts of and than help us to follow your word no matter what. In other things, do give Reformation purification of worship reformation of doctrine and practice. We ask in Christ's name, amen.