

The Jerusalem Council

49 AD

**Paul's Letters and the Gospels had not yet been written.
Jesus, the Apostles, Mary and all the earliest followers of Jesus were Jewish.
However, an ever-increasing number of Gentiles were becoming Christian.**

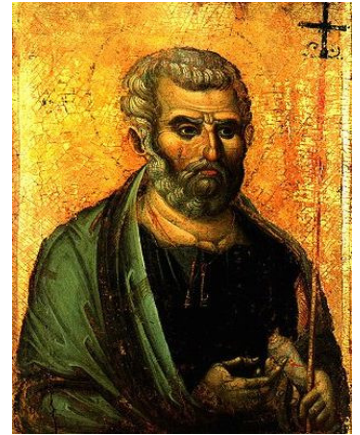
Barnabas and Paul



Paul, Barnabas, and others were sent to Jerusalem to consult the Apostles ... for a decision regarding the need for Gentiles to become Jewish and follow the Mosaic laws, such as circumcision and the dietary laws.

Peter: *“Brothers, you know ... God selected me ... to be the one whose life the Gentiles would hear the message of the Gospel and believe... God ‘grants them the Holy spirit as well as us.’” **

Icon of St. Peter



The Jerusalem Council moved the Church:

From

strict adherence to Mosaic Law



To

adherence to laws reflecting Christ

Gentiles as an outside group



Gentiles as integral to God's family

Conflicting messages regarding the needs to enter God's family



Unified Church teachings, consistent for all God's children

St. James



In an address to the to the Council at Jerusalem: *“Brothers, listen to me. Symeon has told you how God first concerned himself with taking from among the Gentiles a people to bear his name. The words of the prophets agree with this, where it says in Scripture, ‘Hereafter I will return and rebuild the fallen hut of David: from its ruins I will rebuild it and set it up again, so that all the rest of mankind and all the nations that bear my name may seek out the Lord. Thus says the Lord who accomplishes these things known to him from of old.’ It is my judgment therefore, that we ought not to cause God's Gentile converts any difficulties. We should merely write to them to abstain from anything contaminated by idols, from illicit sexual union, and from eating blood.” **

In a letter by the Apostles to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: *“... We have heard that some of our number without any instruction from us have upset you with their discussions (Requiring strict adherence to Mosaic law)... It is the decision of the Holy Spirit, and ours too, not to lay on you any burden beyond that is strictly necessary, ...” **

Result of the Jerusalem Council: *‘The Jerusalem “Council” freed the young Church from its Jewish roots and opened it up to the world apostolate then confronting it.’ ***

* Acts 15

** The Jerome Biblical Commentary 46:30