

to which they had come. Well, now, how did they come to it. There is no evidence that then the apostles declared, the apostles and the elders. So there is no suggestion, here, that the apostles were the ones who decided and the elders listened. On the other hand, to say that it is the counting of noses that decides, if my guess is that if you had had three-fourths of the body here who felt one way, and one fourth felt the other, and that one-fourth included the most prominent and most active leaders in the group, it would not say that it pleased the apostles. They would have taken a few more days to study the matter before they reached such a conclusion. They would have taken a few more days to study the matter and to pray about it, before they reached a conclusion in such a case. There is no evidence here of an overriding of a minority. But there is evidence that the body came to a conclusion that this was to be done.

(question) They made a decree, they wrote out a letter, and in chapter 16:4 it says that Paul and Barnabas gave the different churches the decree for to be kept, the same word kept, as is used where the rich young ruler says all these have I kept from my youth up. They did give a decree. But they gave a decree, not with the idea we have authority, to lord it over the church, but with the idea that we the representatives and leaders of the church are studying what the church says. And we are giving our decrees which has authority, not as coming from us but as coming from the Lord. But they did give a decree. I think Mr. Beck is pointing to a very important principle there, this would seem to warrant members of Christ's church, of a group of Christ's church, a large group or a small group, whatever size group it is, getting together as a body, or through their representatives to study an important problem and see what the Word of God says and then make a decision as to what attitude their church shall take on the matter. It does warrant that, but it doesn't warrant the leaders, or the elected representatives or the majority of the people in a group of Christ's church thinking that they can lord it over the others and tell the others what they ought to do on something which is not stated.