

Galatians 1:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

Analysis

But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Paul specifies the limited scope of his Jerusalem contact. "But other of the apostles saw I none" (heteron de tōn apostolōn ouk eidon, ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον)—he met only two leaders: Peter (verse 18) and James. "Save James the Lord's brother" (ei mē Iakōbon ton adelphon tou kyriou, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου) identifies which James—not James son of Zebedee (beheaded Acts 12:2) but Jesus's half-brother.

James's designation as "the Lord's brother" is significant. Adelphos (ἀδελφός) means "brother"—whether biological sibling (supporting Mary's perpetual virginity opponents) or close relative/cousin (supporting defenders) is debated. James initially disbelieved Jesus (John 7:5), encountered risen Christ (1 Corinthians 15:7), became Jerusalem church leader (Acts 15:13, 21:18), wrote James's epistle, and led conservative Jewish-Christian faction.

Paul's point: he met only two Jerusalem leaders for fifteen days total—insufficient for comprehensive instruction. He saw no other apostles. The Judaizers couldn't claim Paul learned false gospel from Jerusalem because his contact was minimal and his teaching already developed. Acts 9:27 says Barnabas brought Paul "to the apostles" (plural), but Paul clarifies he met only two. This precision shows Paul carefully documented facts to defend his gospel's divine origin.

Historical Context

James's prominence grew after Peter left Jerusalem (Acts 12:17). By the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), James led conservative faction advocating continued Torah observance for Jewish Christians though not requiring it for Gentiles. His authority stemmed from Jesus's family connection and personal resurrection appearance. Hegesippus (second century) called James "the Just," known for extreme piety and prayer. Josephus records his martyrdom (AD 62) by stoning on Sanhedrin's order. James's conservatism made him respected by non-Christian Jews. The Judaizers likely claimed James's authority for their position. Paul's minimal contact with James and emphasis on independence undermines this claim while his later recognition by James (2:9) shows doctrinal agreement.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. When different church leaders or traditions claim biblical authority for contradictory positions, what determines truth?
2. What role should Jesus's family members' opinions have had in early church authority structures, and what does this teach about spiritual versus biological heritage?
3. Can Christians maintain unity while honestly acknowledging historical and theological differences within the body of Christ?

Interlinear Text

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|--------------|----------------|-------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------|-------|--------------|
| ἕτερον | δὲ | τῶν | ἀποστόλων | οὐκ | εἶδον | εἰ | μὴ | Ἰάκωβον |
| other | But | G3588 | of the apostles | none | saw I | G1487 | G3361 | James |
| G2087 | G1161 | | G652 | G3756 | G1492 | | | G2385 |
| τὸν | ἀδελφὸν | τοῦ | κυρίου | | | | | |
| G3588 | brother | G3588 | the Lord's | | | | | |
| | G80 | | G2962 | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 13:55 (Parallel theme): Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

Mark 6:3 (Parallel theme): Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Matthew 12:46 (Parallel theme): While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

1 Corinthians 9:5 (References Lord): Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

Matthew 10:3 (Parallel theme): Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

Jude 1:1 (Parallel theme): Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: