



Sharp Disagreements Why Good Folks Can Part Ways

Acts 15:36-41

Intro: When disagreements arise, those on the other side are **not** the enemy! They are usually good folks with a different view.

From Partnership to Parting Ways . . .

1. Good folks, Good starts (v. 36)

[] Paul & Barnabas had a great 1st trip

2. Good folks, Good plans (v. 37)

[] Barnabas: *People need 2nd chances*

3. Good folks, Different views (v. 38)

[] Paul: *No. Projects don't need quitters.*

4. Good folks, Strong wills (v. 38)

[] Paul "*kept insisting*" he was right

5. Good folks, Sharp Disagreements (39)

[] Knives, Bricks, or Open windows?



6. Good folks, Sad Separations (39-41)

[] Barnabas went one way; Paul another

7. Good folks, Granting Grace (40-41)

[] Grace = *Undeserved* kindness

[] Grant parting **grace, not gossip** —
gossip is *verbal diarrhea!*

Overview

1. Good folks, Good Starts (v. 36) Paul's desire to check on the first missionary journey church plants reminds us of how Barnabas rescued, championed, mentored, and let Paul rise to leadership in a great start together.

2. Good folks, Good Plans (v. 37) Barnabas had a great plan, true to his "people focus" heart, to give John Mark a second chance to join them again and this time finish a tough missionary journey with them, though he "deserted" them during the first one.

3. Good folks, Different Views (v. 38) Paul had the opposite view, true to his "project focus" heart, to not allow a quitter to join them since they needed strong, trustworthy partners for tough journeys and missional projects. Second chances may be valid, but not in this case!

4. Good folks, Strong Wills (v. 38) Paul's strong will is clear as he "kept insisting" he was right (as in reflexive defensiveness, self-justification, and self-righteousness), which also implies Barnabas was doing likewise since it takes two to keep a conversation or argument going!

5. Good folks, Sharp Disagreements (39) A "sharp disagreement" (like the knives and bricks I wrote about last time) was the result-- usually in the form of accusations, blame-shifting, battle lines, and ultimatums -- as we see their imperfect humanity at play since they, and we, are all works in progress.

6. Good folks, Sad Splits (39-41) Two good men with a good start thus had a sad split as they each went their separate ways, rather than seeking third-party counsel, help, perspective, and guidance toward humility, heart-conversations, confession, resolution, forgiveness, and reconciliation -- which of course takes some time. Not one of their shining moments.

7. Good folks, Granting Grace (40-41) The story ends with God's people sending them off by granting them God's grace (undeserved kindness, rather than seemingly deserved justice), and the grace of refraining from gossip (verbal diarrhea) which would only serve to cause a greater stink in the wake of the heartbreaking events among people in grief.

Let's remember that we all have emotional baggage and blind spots that trigger us into strong reactions and perceptions in difficult times.

That's why we have a Savior who treats us with "grace upon grace," and yearns for us to extend it to others.

Acts 15:36-41

Second Missionary Journey

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "**Let us return** and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see how they are.*"

³⁷ **Barnabas wanted to take John**, called Mark, along with them also.

³⁸ **But Paul kept insisting** that they should not take him along who had deserted them ^{in Pamphylia} and had not gone with them to the work.

³⁹ And there occurred such a **sharp disagreement** that they **separated from one another**, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

⁴⁰ But Paul chose Silas and left, being **committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord**. ⁴¹ And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Notes