
SERMON OUTLINE

How God Works in Conflict between Christians Acts 15:36-41

- I. Conflict: Paul and Barnabas disagreed about taking Mark along to visit the churches (Acts 15:36-38).
 - A. They agreed about the ministry purpose (36).
 - B. They disagreed about the ministry method (37-38).

Understanding Issues in Christian conflicts

- Philosophy of ministry – Mark left the first time after Paul began direct ministry to Gentiles (Acts 13:6-13) Barnabas had resisted Gentile fellowship before (Galatians 2:11).
- Relationships – Mark was Barnabas' cousin (Col. 4:10).
- Personality – Barnabas was patient and relationship-driven. Paul was assertive and accomplishment-driven.

- II. Outcome: Paul and Barnabas took different ministry partners and trips (Acts 15:39-41).
 - A. They disagreed without bearing grudges (39a).
 - B. God used two trips to do more than one (39b-41).
- III. How God used the conflict over time – Mark became Paul's useful co-worker (Philemon 24; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11).
 - A. God used Barnabas to develop Mark in ways Paul could not.
 - B. God directed Paul and Silas to go farther than Mark may have been ready to go.

Lessons about conflicts with Christians

1. Grace: Disagreements need not cause bitterness.
2. Purpose-driven: Focus on spiritual unity not "winning."
3. Broad-minded: Realize different perspectives have merit.
4. Trust: God does good things through wrongful conflict.
5. Humility: Don't assume good outcomes prove us right.
6. Time: Time not only heals, but may reveal God's plan.