



**Paul & Barnabas  
Part Ways**

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**Acts 15:36-41**

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Corbett Robertson - Sierra Community Church  
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<sup>36</sup> Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.”

<sup>37</sup> Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them.

<sup>38</sup> but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.

<sup>39</sup> They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company.

Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, <sup>40</sup> but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. <sup>41</sup> He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Acts 15:36-41. (NIV)

Paul and Barnabas agree they should visit the towns they preached to on their first missionary journey together

**WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?**

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From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where **John (Mark) left them** to return to Jerusalem.

Acts 13:13

**WHO IS RIGHT?**

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- Paul's priority is the mission

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- Barnabas priority is grace and a second chance for Mark

**WHAT DOES GOD DO WITH THEIR DISAGREEMENT?**

Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, <sup>40</sup> but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. <sup>41</sup> He went through Syria and Cilicia, **strengthening the churches**

Acts 15:39-41

**1. Grace will often mean missional flexibility**

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In relationships and ministry, there is often more than one right answer to the problems we face together. It is possible to accomplish the same goal with different approaches.

**2. Separation doesn't have to mean disunity**

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Sometimes we have too idealistic a view of the church and church leaders. When some church or church leader disappoints us, we're tempted to question the power of the gospel and give up on the Christian faith. But God wants us to be biblical realists. So he takes the needle of Acts 15 and pops the bubble of unhealthy idealism. He doesn't do it to make us disillusioned or cynical. He does it to help us learn to cope with the challenges of living in a sin-cursed world.

John Piper

**3. Reject animosity and trust God's process**

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Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:3

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.

Romans 12:10

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:18

**Community Group Questions:**

1. What is your one takeaway from this story?
2. Do you agree more with Paul or Barnabas on Mark?
3. Where do you need to confess/reject animosity in your heart?

