

Acts 15:36-41 NIV **Disagreement Between Paul and Barnabas**

³⁶ Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, ³⁸ 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. ³⁹ They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

THE MESSAGE SAYS:

Barnabas wanted to take John along, the John nicknamed Mark. But Paul wouldn't have him; he wasn't about to take along a quitter who, as soon as the going got tough, had jumped ship on them in Pamphylia. Tempers flared, and they ended up going their separate ways. The Message

LAUNCH

When was the last time you had a major row with someone. In what ways did you handle it well and in what ways did you handle it badly?

DISCOVERY

Who would you side with in this argument – Paul or Barnabus? Why?

Even the most Godly people have massive rows. Why do you think this is?

'Paroxysmos' which is the Greek word for this type of strong sharp row gives us our English word – paroxysm. Paroxysm is defined as 'an outburst of strong emotion'. Is such an outburst appropriate Christian behaviour? Why or why not?

If such paroxysm outbursts are not appropriate, how come Jesus is allowed his in John 2: 14-16

Luke carefully ensures that in the telling of this short account, no blame is attributed to either of the two combatants. Why do you think this is? Why does our English culture love to pin the blame on to all sorts of people? What are the major disadvantages of doing this?

Three things we do in a conflict are: fantasise (imagine what the other party is thinking), personalise (think everything is about us) and demonise (we are 100% good/right and they are 100% evil/wrong).

Do these conflict traits ring true for you?

If so what can you do to reduce/minimize them?

Bill Hybels suggests that the church does not argue too much but too little ie stuff needs to be out in the open quicker. Do you agree or disagree?

APPLICATION

Pray not that we do less conflict but that we handle conflict better. Also pray for anyone that struggles with anger.