

Disagreement & Separation In Ministry

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God bless you,

Oluwatobi S. Adewuyi
Coordinator

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God bless you!

Topic:
DISAGREEMENT & SEPARATION IN MINISTRY
Bible Texts: Acts 15:36-41

Prayer

Father, we thank You for all You have done for us, we adore Your holy name for another wonderful privilege You have given us to be here at Your feet in order to learn Your ever sure word, Lord, we ask humbly that You'd teach us Your word and continue to prepare us for Your kingdom in Jesus Christ's name. Amen

There are many lessons the Holy Ghost wants to open our understanding today, of which requires a rapt attention. Please avoid distractions during this teaching and let the Lord inspire you.

Caution: Do not believe or say that this teaching does not concern you, follow it carefully and at the end you'd tell if it concerns you or not.

Someone should send the bible text in please

Paul and Barnabas, whose name is interpreted as "son of Nabas," were good companions working together

in ministry for a long time. They traveled to different places for the work of ministry, encountered serious challenges together, and did not separate, risking their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were able to win souls for the Lord in different cities.

There was a time they both had issues with certain men who came from Judea and taught the Gentile brethren that they must be circumcised after the manner of Moses. The Gentile brethren were those who were not Jews. Acts 15:1-2 KJV **And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. [2] When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.**

These two men, being God's approved ministers, knew the commandments of God and would not deviate from them but would rather defend it even in the midst of opposition. They were able to stand for the truth together, referring the issues to the council of elders in Jerusalem, which was believed to be the headquarters church.

Despite their strong partnership, Paul and Barnabas eventually had to separate due to a disagreement. After some days in Antioch, Paul suggested to Barnabas that they visit their brethren in every city where they had preached the word of the Lord to see how they were doing. Acts 15:36 KJV **And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.**

Their purpose was to see if the brethren were still standing in the doctrines of the Apostles or if they had deviated, to see if they were growing or had remained stagnant or even reclined. Paul emphasized the importance of visiting the places where they had preached, not where another had preached, as he did not want to build on another man's foundation. Romans 15:20 KJV **Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:**

The visit aimed to strengthen the brethren once more if needed. It is the responsibility of those who preach the gospel and win souls to follow up with them, to see how they fare in the faith. They must nurture those who accepted the word of life, praying for them and constantly checking on their spiritual well-being.

Are you with me please?

Looking into the account of what happened to these two men, there are some things we can learn from them, starting with the fact that Barnabas wanted to take Mark along with them in the ministry, which Paul rejected based on a single reason that he departed from them in Pamphylia. The reason John Mark departed from them was not stated, but it appears that he left based on his own discretion and not that he was released by the Apostle to depart. It must have been that he could not cope with the rigorous evangelistic work and he had to leave. He was to be their assistant in ministry due to the fact that he was young, but he left them and did not go with them in the work.

This time, for them to visit the cities where they worked, Barnabas, whose name interprets as son of encouragement, determined to take him along. John Mark was Barnabas' sister's son. It is mostly that Mark was put in his care and he was laid with the responsibility of taking care of him.

Acts 15:37-38 KJV: **And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. [38] But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who**

departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

There are some reasons he must have decided to take him along which are not expressly stated in the scriptures.

1. It might have been that since Mark was his nephew, the affection that he was related to him was there and he allowed the relationship between them to cloud his sense of judgment, for indeed Mark may not have been in the right position to follow them, for proofs to be lazy and undutiful.

This Paul saw in him and would not want anything that would make the work of the ministry slack in any way. It appears that Mark was unprofitable to his ministry at that point, for he later requested for him, saying that he is profitable to him in the ministry.

2. It could have been that Barnabas, being a son of encouragement, knew that Mark was not up to the task but still hoped in him that he would become useful if he was taken along and well disciplined.

This appears to be more true of Barnabas, for we later read of Mark being profitable even to Paul at the end of his ministry.

Looking into these two reasons, we see the character of two godly men that, though they were both filled with the Holy Ghost, yet their differences they could not reconcile and resolve, but they chose to go separate ways, not because of resentment, but to do what calls for peace. They both could not agree with each other, so they parted ways.

We can say that, though we are Christians, this does not mean that there will not be disagreements between us. It is just that we must take care not to make our differences become sin. The way both men viewed the issue was from different perspectives, but one thing was that they did not let their differences hinder the work of the Lord; in fact, it furthered it, for Barnabas took Mark and Paul took Silas, and they went different directions for the furtherance of the work of God.

Acts 15:39-41 KJV: **And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; [40] And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. [41] And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.**

If you are getting this teaching reply with, ***God's work will not die in my hands***

There are many lessons to learn from the account of these scriptures.

1. We learn that even the best of men can still find it hard to come to terms on some issues which are a result of their personal characters.

2. If a godly man is not careful, his relationship with people can cloud his sense of reasoning concerning what is right and wrong, which can affect his ministry. Looking at Barnabas' ministry, we can say that the success he gained could not be compared to that of Paul, for we hardly read about his ministerial work today after he departed from Paul.

3. It is good to hope for a change in others, as Barnabas hoped that Mark would get better someday, and he was right. He did not give up on him but chose to disciple him and train him into what God wanted him to be.

4. Any contrast or contention between God's children should not hinder the work of the ministry; it should be to the advantage of advancing God's Kingdom.

5. Those whom we see as currently unprofitable to us can turn out to be the most profitable to us later in life, as Mark was later requested by Paul because he found him to be profitable to him in ministry.

6. When we choose to work for the Lord, we must put in all our best into it, not be lazy, and should not depart from our post like Mark, who left Paul and Barnabas at Pamphylia.

7. We must not allow resentment, bitterness, and hatred in our hearts as a result of any disagreement we have with our brethren. Paul wouldn't have sent for Mark, saying he was profitable to him in ministry if he had allowed hatred and bitterness in his heart. From what is said, it appears that he had no problem with Mark, just that he felt it was not right for him to follow them.

8. We should always seek to build others, for even if they do not profit us later, they may profit others who would make use of them to the glory of God.

9. Though the differences of men are many, there is only one doctrine of Christ. Even if we part ways because of our human differences, it must not be because of differences in doctrine. Those who have different doctrines than the sound doctrine should

not be worked with, as they would stand against the true doctrine. If Paul and Barnabas had parted ways because they had different doctrines, then Mark wouldn't have been profitable, and Paul would have rejected him. Therefore, they parted to preach the same doctrines.

Looking at all these, we can see that today there are many contentions going on in the body of Christ. If not well handled to the advancement of God's Kingdom, it will cause harm to the body of Christ. Many aim at pulling others down. These men departed and did not aim at talking down the ministry of the other. It proves a sense of maturity in Christ. Although Barnabas was the one that took Paul to the church at Jerusalem when he was a new convert and they were afraid of him, vouching for the reality of his faith and ministry.

Acts 9:26-27 KJV: And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. [27] But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

In this, Barnabas did not take glory in that, claiming that if it was not because of him, Paul wouldn't have been recognized by the church, thereby claiming superiority over Paul. There was no point he ever mentioned that he came to Christ before Paul, as such Paul had no right to dictate to him if they were to take Mark along or not. Unlike the way many do today in Christendom, they would keep saying, "if not for me, if not for me." These are immature sets of people concerning the faith.

Paul too never claimed to be more anointed than Barnabas. After all, he was an apostle of Christ, well-graced and outstanding. He performed great signs and wonders and worked powerfully in the miraculous. Paul never prided himself in all this, claiming that Barnabas had no rights to dictate to him concerning Mark, but they calmly departed. In all Paul's letters, we never read of him bad-mouthing Barnabas or railing at him because they departed. Not even for once did he do that. He focused on his ministry. Those who speak railing words against others because of disagreements between them are still babies. It is unfortunate to say that many men whom the world sees as great men of God today do such things just because they are pained and would not let go.

The major concern of true and mature servants of God is that God's glory should be known among men and that Christ's name should be proclaimed throughout the world. This was Paul's major concern when he said in Philippians 1:18 KJV, "**What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.**" When it was discovered that some were preaching out of envy and strife in order to add affliction to his bonds, he did not begin to lay curses on them but rejoiced because the name of Christ was proclaimed.

The concern of all true and mature ministers of God is not that people left their ministry but that they leave Christ.

Paul's issues with Mark were not because he left his ministry but because he proved to be an unprofitable minister. How many unprofitable ministers do we have today? Sadly, we have many today who envy others who are doing well in ministry because these men are profitable, whereas they too can become relevant only if they would not be slack in their duties but put in hard work and would give themselves to labor for the cause of God's Kingdom. As such, they are not profitable.

There is no man of God who would want to work with a person that is not profitable to him in ministry. Although it is important to build men, these are those who are willing to be built, not those who are unwilling in matters concerning the matters concerning the faith. When you position yourself as someone who is serious and focused on the work of the kingdom, you will become a vessel unto honor in the hands of God and relevant in the work of the Kingdom. Therefore, disagreement and separation are bound to happen. Let's handle them in mature ways to the glory of God and not seek to destroy others.

Invitation

If you know that you are still living in sin and you are ready to repent and begin to live your life in strict obedience to God so that you can overcome every sin in your life to make heaven, please place your right hand on your chest and say this prayer with your mouth.

Say,

"Lord Jesus, I accept You as my personal Lord and Savior. I believe that You died for me and took away my sins so that I will not face the penalty of them. I surrender my life to You today, and I make a decision to obey and follow You. Come into my life now and accept me as Your child. Thank You for saving me, in Jesus Christ's name I pray, Amen."

Congratulations, now you are saved. If you prayed this short prayer, please WhatsApp +2347067511039 and let me know that you have just been saved. I want to have a word with you. God bless you!

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