

## **RESOLVING CONFLICT IN MISSIONARY EVANGELISM**

One well-known conflict in missionary evangelism in the New Testament was between Barnabas and Paul as they prepared for a second Missionary Evangelism Trip (M.E.T).

We will examine our lesson text regarding resolving this conflict in preparation for the second M.E.T by the following four homiletical points.

- **Desertion** (Acts.15:36-38) John Mark on 1<sup>st</sup> M.E.T (Acts 13:13)
  - Paul and Barnabas had unrealistic expectations.
- **Disagreement** (Acts.15:39a) Sharp contention (paroxusmos/ paroxysm)
  - Polarized and separation.
- **Decision** (Acts.15:39b-40a) Two lead mature missionaries.
  - Chose team mates and mission fields.
- **Deployment** (Acts.15:40b-41) Two missionary teams
  - Sent by the church rather than one of the teams.

**This lesson will study four aspects of Resolving Conflict in Missionary Evangelism.**

### **1. Barnabas and Paul were both in agreement that a second MET was important to “strengthen (episterizo/ p.a.ptc) the established churches” of their 1<sup>st</sup> MET (Acts 13-14; 14:22; 15:41; 18:23)**

(Acts.15:36) “Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.”

It was decided that Barnabas and John Mark would engage in island mission to strengthen the churches.

(Acts 15:39b) “Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus”.

And Paul and Silas would engage in a land mission of their 1<sup>st</sup> MET

(Acts.15:40-41) “But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches”.

### **2. On Barnabas and John Mark’s Island mission of Cyprus, two major cities were converted and churches establishes: Salamis and Paphos (Acts 13:4-13).**

Some Christians had travelled there after the persecution of Acts 8:1 as missionaries as well as to Antioch of Syria (Acts 11:19-23). The Apostolic Church of Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch and this led to Barnabas bringing Paul to Antioch (Act 11:21-26) and the 1st MET (Act 13-14).

It is a **small world inside the Church** of Jesus Christ. This doctrinal principle is the same as these two missionary teams are sent out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> MET.

A synagogue had been established at seaport of Salamis (Acts 13:5; 11:19). Churches were established at the two seaport cities of Salamis and Paphos (map).

**3. Paul chose Silas as his missionary partner. He was a mature spiritual leader in the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem.**

Silas was a doctrinal emissary of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:22-35). Silas was a spiritually mature prophet (Acts 15:29, 32; 1 Pet. 5:12).

After visiting the Antioch church, “It seemed good to Silas to remain there.” (Acts 15:34)

This is how **God works** with a spiritually mature believer. **Note our lesson comes from Acts 15:36-41.** This was at the same time a second member for Paul’s missionary team was needed.

It is also interesting that Silas, like Paul, was a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37).

It gets even more interesting when on this 2<sup>nd</sup> MET, they allowed a young believer named Timothy to join their team in Lystra (Acts 16:1-5). Especially when you note that Lystra is next to Pamphylia where John Mark deserted (Acts 13:13) (map).

Paul will write back to the mission churches after the 2<sup>nd</sup> MET and will mention the team of Paul, Silas, and Timothy (2 Cor. 1:18-22; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1).

**Who is in charge?**

(2 Cor. 1:18-19) “But **God is faithful**, our word to you is not yes or no. For the Son of **God, Christ Jesus**, who preached among you by us – by **me and Silvanus and Timothy** – was not yes or no, **but yes in Him.**”

**4. What should be the church’s policy in helping resolve conflict regarding missionary evangelism trips? It should be – The Lord will be done!**

- **Selecting missionaries**
  - (Acts 13:1-3) “While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me Barnabas and Paul for the work to which I have called them.’”
- **Sending missionaries**
  - (Acts 15:39-40) – two missionary teams - “Being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.” (Acts 15:40b)
- **Settling doctrinal disputes**
  - (Acts 15:1, 5-11) – message and mechanics of salvation
    - (1 Cor. 15:3-4; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 2:8-9). “But we believe that we (Jews) are saved through the grace of Lord Jesus, in the same way as they (Gentiles) are also.” (Acts 15:11/ 15:24)
- **Supporting the Lord’s will**
  - (Acts 21:10-14) (Agabus’ prophesy) “And since he (Paul) would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, ‘**The will of the Lord be done!**’” (Acts 21:14)

The church always represents the Lord’s Will rather than man’s (John 1:12-13)  
**We must always choose the Lord’s side. (Col. 3:24; Rom. 12:1)**