

## Rift

Acts 15:36-41; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11

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### A. Agree to Disagree (vs. 36-40):

1. Said – After teaching and preaching in Antioch Paul bid Barnabas to circle back to all of the cities where they had preached the Word.
  - a) Barnabas is a true man of God (Acts 11:24).
  - b) Paul was a man dedicated to the purposes of God (Philippians 3:7-16).
2. Visit the brethren - Paul and Barnabas themselves would examine or inspect those who had accepted Christ in all the cities they shared the gospel – Means to look accurately or diligently - For taking care of or nursing the sick.
3. Have – Paul and Barnabas wanted to see if those who accepted Christ remained very committed to their convictions.
4. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark (He was determined to do so) - Barnabas deliberately attempted, with no plan to stop trying and expressed his inner intent and commitment to bring along John Mark.
  - a) Mark (identified with the John Mark in Acts 12:12,25; 13:5,13; 15:37-39; see also 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13) is identified as Barnabas' cousin (KJV "nephew" is wrong), and reference is made to previous instructions that had been sent to the Colossians to the effect that they should welcome him if he visited them. There is no way of knowing in what form the instructions had been sent.
  - b) Barnabas certainly and correctly saw good raw material in his cousin Mark (cf. Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11; Phile. 24; 1 Peter 5:13). Paul later spoke of Barnabas in positive terms (1 Cor. 9:6; Col. 4:10). The Apostle Paul owed much to Barnabas, and it appears they remained friends despite their contention over Mark.
  - c) The account of Mark's desertion during the first journey (15:38) is found in 13:13. Despite Paul's negative feelings toward Mark at this point, Paul later found him to be useful for the ministry (cf. 2 Tim. 4:11). Cyprus (15:39; see note on Acts 13:4) was the native homeland of Barnabas (4:36).

5. Paul kept insisting – Paul persistently regarded what he had say as having solid valuable evidence in reference to John Mark’s inability to be effective on this mission trip.
  - a) Apparently, Paul is still upset about John Mark’s sudden departure during their initial journey to Asia Minor (see 13:13). He does not see John Mark as a suitable coworker for the kind of rigorous mission work, they will be engaging in.
  
6. Deserted, depart – Paul did persist in not bringing along John Mark because John Mark withdrew and was disloyal to them in Pamphylia. It is as if Paul is indicating that John Mark revolted against what Paul and Barnabas planned to do.
  - a) John Mark - 15:38 - Mark had turned back at Perga and did not go to Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. (NASU Bible Study notes)
  
7. Gone, come together – John Mark intentionally did not gather with Paul and Barnabas to even process whether he would go with them to Pamphylia. He willfully disagreed and left them. Therefore, Paul would say that he deserted them.
  
8. Gone with them to work – John Mark did not dedicate his whole Christian life’s work to being with Paul and Barnabas, constantly sharing the burden of the ministry with them.
  
9. Separated – Paul and Barnabas worked out how they would continue to serve God, but separately.
  - a) We cannot, however, suppose that Paul and Barnabas parted, like enemies, in anger and hatred. It is very likely that they made a deliberate and amicable arrangement to divide the region of their first mission between them, Paul taking the continental, and Barnabas the insular, part of the proposed visitation. At least we are certain of this, that the quarrel was overruled by Divine Providence to a good result. <sup>[1]</sup>
  - b) Paul owed more to Barnabas than to any other man. Barnabas was leaving the greatest spirit of the time and of all times. <sup>[2]</sup>

## **B. Maturity (2 Timothy 4:11):**

1. Pick up Mark – They are commanded to move John Mark from where he was, to where they were, to welcome him into fellowship with them.
  - a) During Paul’s first imprisonment, Mark was included in Paul’s

group (Col. 4:10; Phm 24). By the end of Paul's life, he came to admire Mark so much that he requested him to come to be with him during his final days (2 Tim. 4:11).

2. Bring; led – They are commanded, without force, to gently move John Mark from where he was and bring him to Paul.
3. Profitable; Useful – Paul commands them to bring John Mark because he had become very useful and productive for ministry development.
  - a) And Mark made good with Barnabas, with Peter (1 Peter 5:13) and finally with Paul (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11). <sup>[3]</sup>
  - b) He is useful to me – Paul had long ago changed his opinion of Mark (Colossians 4:10) because Mark had changed his conduct and had been effective in his ministry. Now Paul longs to have the man that he once scornfully rejected (Acts 15:37 ff). (From Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament. Copyright © 1985 by Broadman Press.)
4. Service – John Mark is needed because he can make a positive impact in providing compassionate love towards those in need and in preaching the gospel. Paul viewed John Mark as a productive force in communicating the gospel.

### **C. Back Together (Colossians 4:10):**

1. Receive – The believers need to get John Mark because he has proven to be faithful and trustworthy.
  - a) About 11 years elapsed before we hear of him again (Col 4:10 f; Philem 24). He is in Rome with Paul. The breach is healed. He is now one of the faithful few among Jewish Christians who stand by Paul. He is Paul's honored "fellow worker" and a great "comfort" to him.
2. Instructions – These are commands that Paul expects them to follow. Paul has this kind of confidence in Timothy.
3. If he comes to you – If John Mark makes it to the church of Colossians, they are commanded to accept him as a trustworthy servant of God.

- a) Mark evidently returned from his work with Barnabas and became associated with Peter (1 Pe 5:13). During Paul's first imprisonment, Mark was included in Paul's group (Col. 4:10; Phm. 24). By the end of Paul's life, he came to admire Mark so much that he requested him to come to be with him during his final days (2 Tim. 4:11). (NASU Bible Study notes)
4. Welcome; receive – They are commanded to be deliberate about making John Mark one of them.
- a) But now – about 12 years later – the difficulties seem to have been ironed out, because Paul, both here and in Phm 24 (sent at the same time to Philemon, who was in Colosse), sends Mark's greetings. About five years later, Paul even writes that Mark "is very helpful to me in ministry".
5. Welcome; receive – John Mark is now seen as an integral part of every aspect of church the ministry.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Lange, J. P., Schaff, P., Gotthard, V. L., Gerok, C., & Schaeffer, C. F. (2008). *A commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Acts* (p. 295). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>[2]</sup> Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ac 15:39). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

<sup>[3]</sup> Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ac 15:39). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.