

Fact Sheet for “A Jar of Pears”
Acts 15:36-41

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11/24/2013

ESV ³⁶ ¶ **And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."**

³⁷ **Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.**

A little history...

SHARING RESOURCES (ACTS 4:36-37)

SAUL BELIEVES IN JESUS CHRIST (ACTS 9:27)

THE GENTILES WERE BECOMING CHRISTIANS (ACTS 11:22, 26)

AN FAMINE OFFERING FOR THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (ACTS 11:29-30)

PETER IS FREED FROM PRISON (ACTS 12:12)

BARNABAS AND SAUL RETURNED FROM DELIVERING THE FAMINE OFFERING (ACTS 12:25)

ACTS 13 & 14 – 1ST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (ACTS 13:1-2, 13)

THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL (ACTS 15:1-35)

ACTS 15:36-18:22 – 2ND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

³⁹ **And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.**

⁴¹ **And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.**

Look closely at Acts 15:39

³⁹ **And there arose a sharp disagreement...**

This verb means “to spur,” “to stir to anger,” or passively “to be provoked, incensed.”

Used in a positive sense (“to spur”)... Hebrews 10:24

Paul in Athens... Acts 17:16

In Acts 15:39 there was a hot disagreement! Emotions were involved! Words were sharp! We don't know all the details, but this was an unpleasant conversation.

And... it seems that Paul later thought differently.

ESV **Colossians 4:10** ¶ **Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions-- if he comes to you, welcome him),**

ESV 2 Timothy 4:11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.

ESV Philemon 1:23-24 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you,²⁴ and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

Consider Paul's words to the church at Corinth...

ESV 1 Corinthians 13:4 ¶ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

"Irritable" is a translation of the exact verb, and verbal form, found in Acts 15:39.

Any of us can walk into a problem here, no matter how much scripture we know, no matter how long we've been Christians, no matter what ministry we have.

NAU Philippians 4:2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.

Consider the wisdom found in Jesus, who did not shy away from the tough conversations, but said things with grace.

ESV John 4:16-18 ¶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."¹⁷ The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

ESV John 4:29 "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"

Consider also some other comments in James...

ESV James 1:20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

ESV James 1:22-24 ¶ But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

Be careful of living out your Christianity like having a jar of pears but not opening them.