

“JERUSALEM MEETS ROME AND FINDS BABYLON: A STUDY IN CHURCH PURITY”

FALL 2022-SPRING 2023

November 30, 2022

“DISAGREEMENT: CHURCH LEADERS AND MEMBERS” Acts 15:36ff

I. PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DISAGREE

- A. *There is more than one way to do anything*
 - 1. *Some are more expensive than others*
 - 2. *Some are more effective than others*
 - 3. *Some save more time than others*
 - 4. *Some are just the way we were taught; they are simply cultural*
 - 5. *Some ways we will reject because we have done them before and failed or suffered some loss from it*
- B. *We have a “need” to be right; so right, in fact, that it becomes “my way or the highway”; pride*
- C. *Sometimes we simply have a prejudice toward a type of person, a person’s ethnicity, a person who has failed us, (pick a prejudice!)*
- D. *We are foolish at heart*
- E. *Sometimes it actually is a matter of right and wrong; how do we make that determination?*
- F. *We will set unreal expectations on someone and are disappointed when they fail by not living up to our expectations; we will be disagreeable with that person until a resolution can be reached*
- G. *Some conflicts arise from not minding our own business Pr 26:17*
 - ¶ *He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own Is like one who takes a dog by the ears. (NKJV)*

II. BECOMING A BELIEVER DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY CHANGE ALL OF OUR “OLD MAN” HABITS - THAT IS A PROCESS - CALL IT SANCTIFICATION

- A. *When we trust Christ, the Holy Spirit applies Christ’s death to us so that our old man is crucified with Him*
- B. *The Holy Spirit then birth’s a new man in us; this is being born again*

- C. *This new man comes with the righteousness of Christ and we will learn new habits as the Holy Spirit convicts us and teaches us.*
- D. *Though the old man is now dead the habits he trained the body with are still operable in us. Even though we are capable of anything we might have done before being born again, because of Christ's death we are no longer under condemnation. Romans 8:1*
- E. *We can still be quite disagreeable for the same reasons as before until we, by the grace of God, kill the deeds of the flesh. We will progressively change our habits by the Holy Spirit using putting off the old and putting on the new habits taught by the Spirit*
- F. *Example from our text, Acts 15:2, 7, 39*
 - 1. *Dispute and argumentation had been the normal ways for Jewish folk to discuss Scripture*
 - 2. *It was particularly the practice among the Pharisees; Paul had been trained as a Pharisee*
 - 3. *Arguing (reasoning) had been Paul's practice after being born again Acts 9:20-31*
 - 4. *He had a sharp disagreement with another born again man, his co-worker, Barnabas.*
 - 5. *It led to a separation from one another.*
 - 6. *Scripture has no record of a reconciliation between them; but neither does the Scripture contain record of them being so offended they did not speak to each other again. We do not know how they resolved those differences of opinion about the decision to take or leave Mark. It is conjecture that tells us they did reconcile.*
 - 7. *Did it need reconciliation? Or could they man up and understand they differed over a minor thing that did not require reconciliation? What could have happened that would have needed a reconciliation?*
 - 8. *Some say they must have reconciled since Paul writes about Barnabas and specifically asked for John Mark to be sent to him Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phm 1:24*

III. WHAT IS TO BE THE PRACTICE AMONG GROUPS OF BELIEVERS

- A. *Anticipate the possibility of conflict and do all you can to avoid it*
- B. *Consider the issue about which you are approaching conflict*
 - 1. *Check your own heart for pride and the need to be heard*

2. *Is it really important enough to have a conflict? Will this issue be important next year? Next month? Next week? Tomorrow?*
3. *Is the matter a doctrinal issue, a truth issue?*
4. *Is the matter a safety issue?*
5. *Is the matter an efficiency issue? Can you reveal it without conflict? Is your heart free enough to allow the less efficient way to be done?*
6. *Will anyone be hurt by doing the thing in conflict? Will anyone be hurt by the conflict?*
7. *Will the issue pass the Romans 14 muster?*
8. *Does someone have an issue against you? Matt 5:23-24*
9. *Has someone sinned against you? Matt 18:15*
10. *Are you dealing with a divisive brother? Titus 3:10-11*
11. *Is the issue simply a foolish dispute? Is it important?*
Titus 3:9
12. *Can the issue pass the Phil 2:1-4 test?*
13. *Is the person with whom you are entering this conflict simply hard-hearted? Do not argue but pray!*
2 Tim 2:24-26