

**When Brethren Disagree**  
Acts 15:1-35

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Disagreements are sure to come in church work.
  - 1. Some disagreements involve things which don't matter.
  - 2. Some disagreements, however, involve more serious matters.
- B. Scripture condemns disagreements.
  - 1. We are to be of the "same mind" and "same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).
  - 2. "Contention" is a "work of the flesh" (Gal. 5:20).
  - 3. Therefore, how should we deal with disagreements?
- B. A disagreement arose while Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch (v. 1).
  - 1. Some men came from Judea saying that one must be circumcised to be saved.
  - 2. That these men came from Judea gave them credence among these brethren.
  - 3. We need to examine the things to which these brethren listened to settle this disagreement.

TO THE SOURCE, vv. 2-5.

- A. Paul and Barnabas tried to find out what was going on.
  - 1. They had no small dissension with these men.
  - 2. The church sent them and some other men to Jerusalem--the church at Antioch wanted to find out if they really needed to be circumcised.
  - 3. Paul and Barnabas told all ~~that~~ God had done through them.
  - 4. Some Pharisees arose and said that one must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses.
- B. Paul and Barnabas did not act on rumor--they went to Jerusalem to see if these men had apostolic authority.
- C. We cannot act on rumor.
  - 1. We need to find out what really is going on.
  - 2. We need to clarify to make sure there really is a disagreement.

TO SOUND JUDGMENT, vv. 6-12.

- A. When the church came together, wise men spoke.
  - 1. Peter spoke first, vv. 6-11.
    - a. God chose that the Gentiles should hear the truth through his mouth.
    - b. God gave them the Holy Spirit.
    - c. God made no distinction between Jews and Gentiles.
    - d. God doesn't require the yoke of the Mosaical Code be placed on the Gentiles.
    - e. God will save Gentiles and Jews alike through faith.
  - 2. Paul and Barnabas spoke second--they told all that God had done through them, v. 12.
- B. We, too, need to listen to the counsel of wise men.
  - 1. Because Rehoboam refused to listen to wise counsel, he split the kingdom (1 Ki. 12:4-24).
  - 2. Yet, if we listen to wise counsel, we will do well.
    - a. Pr. 12:15.
    - b. Eccl. 4:13.

TO SCRIPTURE, vv. 13-21.

- A. James, the Lord's brother, stood up and appealed to the authority of Scripture.
  - 1. He reminded them that Peter told how God accepted the Gentiles.
  - 2. He quoted the words of Amos as the truth of Peter's statement (vv. 16-17).
  - 3. Since God had spoken through Amos, there wasn't any need to trouble the

Gentiles any further.

B. We, too, need to listen to Scripture.

1. We must speak what Scripture says (1 Pet. 4:11).
2. We must speak what Scripture says, because it originated with God (2 Pet. 1:21).
3. We must speak what Scripture says, because man has no right to speak anything else (Gal. 1:6-9).

. TO A SENSE OF DUTY, vv. 22-29.

A. The church at Jerusalem sent two men with a letter to Antioch.

1. The letter told the Antioch Christians that they had not authorized these men to teach circumcision, v. 25.
  - a. The men had went from the church in Jerusalem.
  - b. But, they didn't have authority to bind circumcision.
2. The letter told them that they should stay away from certain pagan practices--it's likely that this was to help ease tensions between Jewish and Gentile Christians..

B. When we are involved in a controversy, we, too, need to clear things up.

. CONCLUSION.

- A. Disagreements in God's work must be resolved. Scripture outlines a way for those disagreements to be resolved.
- B. Do you need to resolve your sin problem?