

**“A Tale of Two Clashes”**  
**October 8, 2017**

**Acts 15**

**CORE:** Two highly opinionated conflicts arose. One brought wise resolve. The other caused a relationship to dissolve.

**1. The CLASH at ANTIOCH (15:1-21)**

*(Young rabbi asked older rabbi RE: the “tradition” during the reciting of the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9)—Sitting? Standing? “Nether.” “But they are yelling & fighting?!” “That is the tradition.”)*

**Background info:**

- **The Antioch church became “headquarters” for the Gentile mission (Acts 11 and 13).**
- **Note the difference between “went” (v.1) and “sent” (v. 3).** [*“Mission” w/o “submission” to godly authority is often unwise & misdirected.*] *Irony—“unsubmitted” men demanded others submit to circumcision!*

**Observations”**

- **Note key words describing the climate of the meeting: “The apostles and the elders met to consider this question.” (Acts 15:8); “the whole assembly became silent as they listened.” (15:12); “when they finished, James spoke” (15:13).**
- **The leaders, including some Pharisees (v.9), were willing to submit their traditional view of Scripture (i.e., “Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.”) to a fresh move of “the Holy Spirit” (15:8-9) and a greater understanding of prophetic scriptures (Acts 15:16-17; Amos 9:11,12).**
- **Listen to the wisdom of a prayer-bathed, humble-hearted seeking of the “mind of the Lord” together: See 15:18-21**

**NOTE:** This is one of the most powerful examples of submitting our OT convictions (and traditions) to the fresh revelation of the Holy Spirit.

**NOTE:** NT is not just about “forgiveness”—it’s about everyone experiencing the fullness of the HS—Who came in a limited way upon a few prophets & kings in the OT.

**NOTE:** Throughout Christian history—the “religious spirit” has discredited moves of God. (i.e., Jesus “has a devil” (Luke 11:14ff); The “Great Awakening”

(mid-1700s) was called “the great noise.” Azusa Street Revival (1906) was termed “the vomit of Satan”)

## 2. The CLASH of the APOSTLES (15:36-41)

### Background info:

- Paul & Barnabas were a powerful apostolic team (13:1-3; 14:23-28; 15:35)
- Yet, they were human—not perfect people.
- John Mark had abandoned them on a previous mission. (NOTE: Matter of life & death; success or failure. SEE Acts 14:19ff)
- Differing viewpoints:
  - Barnabas’ heart: “He *wanted* (i.e., to will something forcefully) to take John Mark with them.”
  - Paul’s mind: “Paul *did not think it was wise* (i.e., to keep insisting) to take him.”
- Differing convictions:
  - Paul- “Like a rotten tooth or a lame foot is reliance on an unfaithful man in times of trouble.” (Prov. 25:19)
  - Barnabas- “Bless the Lord...who forgives all our sins...redeems our life...crown us with love and compassion.” (Psalm 103:1-4)

### Observations:

- Some things obviously missing from the previous story—listening, meeting (*Lit- “to continue to face one another; refusing to turn your back & shut them out”*), seeking the Lord together, & willingness to find a compromise (*i.e., refusal to bend*).
- Though they painfully parted...you never hear of either one maligning the other.
- Years later, Paul requested John Mark “because he is helpful to me in my ministry.” (2 Tim. 4:11) (NOTE: Fruit of Barnabas’ ministry to Mark)

Receive grace for resilient flow with the Holy Spirit

Let go of hindering, lingering “snags” of past conflicts gone bad.