

The Outcome

The Immediate Resolution

- Sharp disagreement does not necessarily imply anger or sin
 - It means that they both were firmly committed to their positions
 - It also means that they were unable to arrive at a compromise
- That they separated from each other does not refer to their fellowship
 - There is no suggestion that they parted with any animosity
 - It simply means that they chose not to take a second journey together
- They each took a new partner in ministry
 - Barnabas took Mark and Paul chose Silas
 - They split the territory from their first journey, Barnabas going to Cyprus and Paul to Syria and Cilicia
 - This coordination supports that there was no acrimony in the split
 - God used the split to double this ministry to the church

The Rest of the Story

- Mark apparently matured into a valued Christian worker
- In his final letter, Paul specifically asked for Mark as a help in ministry (2 Timothy 4:11)
- God later used Mark to write one of the four Gospels in the Bible

Application

- Every believer is not meant for the same ministry (1 Corinthians 12:27-30)
- It shouldn't upset us when others are not as passionate about our ministry or as committed to our ministry as we are (1 Corinthians 12:17-20)
- We should encourage and support the ministries of others (so long as they are biblically consistent and serve the gospel) (1 Corinthians 12:21-22)

Paul and Barnabas Split

Acts 15:36-41

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The Character of the Men

Paul

- Paul was strong in faith
 - He claimed this about himself (2 Corinthians 5:7)
 - He was certain about his position in Christ (Romans 8:38-39)
 - He anticipated his eternal reward without doubt (2 Timothy 1:12)
- Paul was motivated by love
 - He had a great love for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:14)
 - He loved the church (Philippians 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:8)
 - He loved his countrymen, the Jews (Romans 9:3)
 - He loved the lost (1 Corinthians 9:19-22)
- Paul was committed to righteousness
 - He sacrificed everything to gain the righteousness of Christ (Philippians 3:8-9)
 - He agonized over any sin that remained in his life (Romans 7:24)
- Paul was relentless
 - He was unyielding in his own striving after Christ (Philippians 3:12-14)
 - He was driven to preach the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:23; Romans 1:16)
 - He was tireless in caring and praying for the church (2 Corinthians 11:28; Colossians 1:3)

Barnabas

- Barnabas was selfless
 - Luke used Barnabas as an example of selflessness (Acts 4:36-37)
 - Barnabas sought Saul's help even though Saul would likely overshadow him (Acts 11:25-26)
- Barnabas was faithful
 - He stood up for Saul when others rejected him (Acts 9:27)
 - The churches recognized his faithfulness by entrusting important tasks to him (Acts 11:22, 30)
- Barnabas's best-known characteristic was encouragement
 - The apostles nicknamed him "Son of Encouragement" (Acts 5:36)
 - It is easy to see how he encouraged others through his ministry
- Neither Paul nor Barnabas was motivated by self-interest, rivalry, or conceit
- While there is a great deal of overlap, there are differences in their gifts, goals, and approaches to ministry

The Disagreement

What They Agreed About

- The goal in evangelism is to make disciples (Matthew 28:19)
 - Disciples must first be evangelized (Romans 10:14)
 - But evangelism is not the end of disciple-making (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- They agreed to return and visit those they had evangelized
 - They had already returned once since their first visit (Acts 14:21)
 - They had strengthened, encouraged, and warned new believers (Acts 14:22)
 - They recognized that the work wasn't finished

What They Disagreed About

- Whether to take Mark with them
 - Mark had been a disciple for a long time
 - He was present when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14:51-52)
 - His mother was active in the early church (Acts 12:12)
 - He was Barnabas's cousin (Colossians 4:10)
 - He joined Paul and Barnabas to assist on their first journey (Acts 13:5)
 - He had withdrawn from them when they got to Pamphylia (Acts 13:13)

Paul's Position

- Paul thought it best not to take Mark with them
 - Paul was dedicated to caring for the new churches they had planted and continuing to preach the gospel to the lost
 - Jesus had specifically called Paul to *that* ministry (Romans 1:5-6)
 - Mark had not faithfully completed their first journey
 - Paul was unwilling to entrust any part of this second journey to Mark

Barnabas's Position

- Barnabas wanted to take Mark with them
 - Like Paul, Barnabas was dedicated to caring for the church
 - He no doubt recognized Mark as a part of the church (who, like the rest of the church, had not yet been perfected)
 - Barnabas saw ministry to the church and individual ministry to Mark as compatible
- Some suggest that Paul focused on the work and Barnabas on people
 - But for Paul and Barnabas, the work and the people are the same thing
 - Because of the differences in their gifts and goals, they viewed the work/people slightly differently