

# "When Christians Disagree"

Steve Higginbotham

When Christians disagree...do not behave like Paul and Barnabas!

That advice might come as a surprise to some of you because you may have repeatedly heard that Paul and Barnabas provide a praiseworthy model for conflict resolution (Acts 15:36-41). It certainly is easy to find such praise heaped upon Paul and Barnabas for the way they handled their disagreement. Consider some of these brief quotes...

"[Paul and Barnabas give us] insight on how Christians are to relate to one another when there is a difficult disagreement."

"I, personally love how Paul and Barnabas handled the situation."

"We do not see any sin in the way Paul and Barnabas handled their conflict."

"Scripture does not say that either Paul or Barnabas was wrong."

"[The conflict between Paul and Barnabas] was an opening for the work of the Lord."

I could provide more quotes along the same line, but such is sufficient to demonstrate that many see the way Paul and Barnabas handled their conflict as a model to be emulated. However, I disagree with such a conclusion and ask you to consider the following reason.

In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul gives a description of biblical love. He sets forth boundaries, telling us what conduct and attitudes fall within the bounds of love and outside the bounds of love. Among the things Paul affirms love is not, is this statement: "Love is not provoked" (1 Corinthians 13:5). The word translated, "provoked" is the Greek word, "**paroxyno**" which means to provoke to anger. According to Paul, this action is outside the bounds of love.

Yet, according to Luke, the nature of the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas was a "**paroxysmos**" (i.e. a sharp contention, explosion of anger, exasperation). The difference between these two words used in 1 Corinthians 13 and Acts 15 is that one is in the verb form and the other is in the noun form. Therefore, what Paul and Barnabas did in Acts 15:39 was the very thing Paul told the Corinthians fell outside the bounds of biblical love in 1 Corinthians 13:5.

Grant it, one can argue that good resulted from their conflict. Both Paul and Barnabas went their separate ways, preaching the gospel, and thus reaching more people (Acts 15:39-41), but the ends do not justify the means (Romans 3:8). Grant it, with the passing of time, Paul also seems to have changed the way he felt about John Mark (2 Timothy 4:11), but that doesn't excuse his earlier conduct and the way he and Barnabas behaved.

Friends, Paul and Barnabas were great Christians, but they were also human, with all the accompanying frailties. While there are many recorded examples of admirable actions and attitudes from both of these great brothers, the way they handled their disagreement in Acts 15 is not one of them. Therefore, it's a mistake to hold up a shameful failure on the part of two much-loved brothers as an example worthy of our imitation.



# Welcome

TO  
KOUNTZE  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

Feb.

"Let the word of  
Christ dwell in you  
richly in all wisdom"  
*Colossians 3:16*

4<sup>th</sup>

## Meeting Times

Sunday Bible Class – 9:30

AM Worship – 10:30

PM Worship – 1:30

Wednesday Night Bible Class – 7:00

409.246.3872

kcofc@yahoo.com

kountzechurchofchrist.com

1035 N Pine St

Kountze, TX 77625

101.3 FM Radio

Kountze Church of Christ

Today's Lessons

AM.....Parable of the Good Samaritan  
PM.....Singing

Those to Serve

Greeters.....  
Announcements.....Bud Wolcott  
Song Leader.....  
Opening Prayer.....  
Communion Leader.....Steve Deatricks  
Sermon.....Corey Tackett  
Closing Prayer.....

NEXT Weeks Greeters.....

Announcements

- TODAY is our First-Sunday Fellowship! Please stay and fellowship. The Theme is TexMex
- February 23<sup>rd</sup> we will have a singing and time to fellowship at the Deatricks's house.
- There will be an L2L art party after first service on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February.

Records

Sunday AM.....51      Wednesday PM.....  
Sunday PM.....23      Contribution.....\$2706

Upcoming Events:

February

3<sup>rd</sup> – Budget Meeting  
23<sup>rd</sup> – Singing (Deatricks's)  
25<sup>th</sup> – L2L Art Party

March

15<sup>th</sup> – Family Game Night

Visitors,

You are welcome and wanted. We are glad you made the decision to be with us.

If you have any questions or needs, please reach out to any of our members and we'll be more than happy to help you.

If you're looking for a Church home, we'd love the opportunity to study with you and have you join our congregation's family.

Prayer Requests and Updates

Members:

Ed & Linda Bumstead.	Ruth Young
Gaylon Williams.	Carolyn & Newal Yarbrough
Fred Johnson	-
Shirly Morris	-
Tommy Williams	-

Family and Friends:

Tony Wright	Glen Burks	James Welch
Mary Ann Hatton	Sandra Golden	
Ella Thomas	Jaunita Hatton	
Charles Wright	Danny Roberts	