



How Disciples Handled Conflict

Brent Moody · Acts 15:1–35 · Series: **The Way Forward**

INTRODUCTION

- I want you to be grateful and thankful for not just your parents but also the effort of so many others to help you in your life and to help ground your faith.
- It's helpful for us to understand how they dealt with conflict and difficulties.

1 Confront Problems Directly

Acts 15:1–2

- Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.
- The way they deal with this conflict is important for us to see, the way they handle it is they directly confront the problem.
- They take the problem on there in the congregation that they're in, rather than going some other place.
- There is, as Luke says, no small dissension. That means there's lots of dissension.

2 Get the Community Together to Talk Through It

Acts 15:3–7

- This is not everybody from all churches all over the world convening to make a bunch of decisions about stuff. This is two regions that are having some issues that need to get worked out.
- They're bringing everyone together to work through this as a group.
- They allow a lot of debate to take place first. everybody gets a voice.
- But what we mostly need is people teaching truth. And this is what Paul and Barnabas are doing.

3 Fall Silent and Listen to the Testimony

Acts 15:7–12; Acts 11:18

- In Jerusalem, dialogue is encouraged. That's what we see in all the debating and in the discussion.
- But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.
- All the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul.
- It's not that they just stop talking and they don't listen. No, the point is they stop and they actually listen.

4 Look to Scripture for True Guidance

Acts 15:13–21; Leviticus 17; Leviticus 18

- What they do is they consider the circumstances and they use principles from Scripture to wisely deal with this scenario.
- No, it's not just the signs and the wonders, it's also right here in the Bible you claim to believe.
- All of this actually comes from what's called the holiness code in Leviticus 17 and 18.
- We're going to allow scripture to guide us and making a good decision on how this should work.

5 Communicate All That Carefully and Wisely

Acts 15:22–31

- And then they write this letter that explains the problem and the solution. First of all, they admit the problem.
- Some persons have gone out from us and troubled you, although we gave them no instruction.
- There's a lot of discernment in how they communicate this message.
- We want you to hear from the mouth of these two people who are from the church in Jerusalem that we are all in agreement.
- Confront problems directly. Get the community together to talk through it. Listen to facts, testimony, evidence. Look to Scripture for true guidance and judgments, discernment, and then communicate all that carefully and wisely.

6 We Can Disagree Greatly and Still Have Positive Results

Philemon 24; 2 Timothy 4:11

- We can actually disagree greatly and still have positive results and still continue solid kingdom work in the midst of that.
- Paul and Barnabas disagree sharply on their visions. And yet they go away and continue their work, even though it's separate.
- Sometimes we can disagree sharply on what is most needed. And we can both be right. And that's okay.

THE CHALLENGE

We are God's people working and fighting for God's kingdom. And that should be our humble attitude and the way that we approach things.

MY NOTES