



APRIL, 2024

Acts 15: Relationship Wisdom

Introductory Statement: We continue our study of the Actions of the Holy Spirit in and through the lives of the Apostles, as directed by Jesus, the Christ. Oftentimes the Power Gifts (working of miracles, gifts of healing, faith) are the gifts most highlighted when studying this book. Yet, we understand that there are multiple 'gifts' which the Holy Spirit uses, as He wills, to empower our Lord's disciples toward revealing more of the Kingdom of God and His Character in the earth. In this chapter we note the Gifts of Knowing (word of knowledge, word of wisdom, and discerning of spirits) in action and how these are used to help the church.

Summary Points:

- What are the main relationship issues in this chapter?
- Who are the main characters and why are they significant?
- What are some main inhibitors to successful relationships (with God and others)?
- What do you do when you have relationship issues?
- What does God require to have relationship with Him?

Objectives: As a result of our time of study today each Believer in JESUS will better grasp the intention of this scripture passage and understand ways to personally apply these truths in daily living.

THE WADE

- **Background**

- Barnabas and Saul (Paul)
 - Barnabas (son of encouragement)–
 - Given name: Joseph
 - Perhaps a Prophet also (Exhortation, Edification, Comfort)
 - Family line: Levite, residing in Cyprus
 - Land Owner (Acts 4:32-37)
 - Sent by the Church in Jerusalem to oversee the events happening in Antioch
 - Recruited Saul to come serve at the Church in Antioch (Acts 11:22-24)
 - Saul (Paul)
 - Given name Saul
 - Former murderer and persecutor of the Church
 - Family line: Pharisee, tribe of Benjamin, from Tarsus
 - Personal encounter with Jesus while on the road of Damascus to harass Christians. This encounter changed Paul and his life. (Acts 9:1-6)
 - Joint Ministry (Acts 13:1-3)
 - Prior to this instance, Barnabus had brought Paul to Jerusalem and vouched for Paul's ministry. (Acts 9:26-28)
 - Serving in the local assembly at Antioch (Acts 11:25-26)
 - Commissioned as Apostles (one who is 'sent'; Paul's confirmation [Acts 9:15-16])
 - Participated in the Jerusalem Council concerning false doctrines of salvation
 - Traveled as companions on 1 missionary journey
 - Separated because of a disagreement
- Judaizers (Acts 15:1-3) RO
 - Jewish men who wanted to add the doctrine of works to the tenants of salvation Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)
- Council at Jerusalem

- Apostles and Elders residing in Jerusalem (home base)
 - Those who had been with Jesus and received first-hand training/instruction
 - Older/Wise leaders in the community who had received salvation through Jesus, the Christ Acts 6:1-4 (NLT)
 - Responsible to listen and provide solutions for issues
- **The Issue**
 - Is Salvation found in Faith in Jesus Christ alone?

THE SWIM

- **Man tends to continuously ‘add to’ the FATHER’s requirements for relationship with HIM and with others.**
 - When passing on to Eve the Father’s instructions about what was permissible in the garden of Eden, Adam added to the initial instruction.
 - Original Instruction Genesis 2:15-16 (NLT)
 - Final Implementation
Genesis 3: 1-3 (NLT)
 - The Pharisees had raised their traditions to the same level as God’s commandments.
 - God’s Command – Honor Your Father and Mother that your days on earth will be long. Exodus 20:12 (NLT)
 - Final Implementation
Matthew 15:1-6 (NLT)
 - Jesus declared that whoever Believes in Him (the Son of God) will have eternal life; those who continue in His instructions are His disciples.
 - Original Instruction
John 3:16-17 (NLT)
 - John 8:31 (NLT)

- The Judaizers and some Believers who were Pharisees emphatically declared adherence to the Law of Moses in addition to belief in Jesus for salvation.
 - Acts 15:1-2
 - Acts 15:4-6
- Circumcision (cutting away of the flesh) emphasized an outward sign of covenant relationship with God, but God requires a heart circumcision which manifests outwardly.
 - Colossians 2:11-12 (NLT)
 - Ephesians 2:11-17 (NLT)
- **Somehow the creation, man, tends to think he knows better than the Creator, God, about having and maintaining a relationship with HIM.**

THE TREAD

- Wisdom's Response for Relationship
 - Wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge to a situation. The Word of Wisdom empowered by the Holy Spirit provides the ability to speak into or gain insight on handling situations that far exceed your own knowledge or ability.
 - The Apostles and Elders were men of prayer and they came together James 1:5
 - Peter – Adding to God's work is an act of challenging HIM and the work HE has done
Acts 15: 8-11 (NLT)
 - James – We didn't send those who are bringing you trouble. It seems good to the Holy Spirit to do these things...
Acts 15:28-29 (NLT)
 - This is an overflow of your relationship with HIM; it is not a requirement to have a relationship with HIM
 - The church at Antioch rejoiced over the Wise response toward Relationship Acts 15:31 (NLT)

- Where was the Relationship Wisdom for Paul and Barnabus?
 - Paul and Barnabus had been on 1 missionary journey
 - The Holy Spirit instructed, through His prophets, to set them apart for the work to which I have called them (Acts 13)
 - Paul suggested a return to the cities where they had preached, but a relationship disagreement produced a cessation of their immediate, joint, ministry to visit the cities of new converts

Acts 15:36-41 (NLT)

- John-Mark (author of Gospel of Mark), Barnabas' cousin, had left (abandoned) the pair of them while they were on their first missionary journey
 - Paul didn't trust John-Mark's commitment
 - Barnabas, the mentor, was content to groom the young man
- Was separation the best option in the moment?
 - Did they stop to pray?
 - Did they seek counsel?
 - Although their ministries continued fruitfully, was this Father's best for them?
 - Was the sole missionary journey the Father's original intention?
 - Sometimes man wants to make a good thing the God thing
 - Did other elements preclude even greater joint accomplishments for the Kingdom
 - We don't see where they disagreement festered angry thoughts (1 Corinthians 9:6, 2 Timothy 4:11)

THE SHORE

- ❖ Our Heavenly Father is all about relationship with His creation, with man being the priority Matthew 22:35-38 (NLT)
- ❖ Accordingly, He is concerned about man's relationship with one another. Matthew 22:39 (NLT)
- ❖ Are you seeking Him for wisdom toward your relationship with Him? He has the Answer
 - Are you bearing under the weight of things that Jesus never asked you to do?
 - Are you struggling to please Him under the weight of pleasing someone else?
- ❖ Are you seeking Him for counsel in your relationships with others? He has the Answer.
 - Are you tempted to throw in the towel on something without consulting Him?
- ❖ Won't you receive Jesus today?