

Paul



To Live is Christ

GREAT LIVES FROM GOD'S WORD

A Man of Spirit and Grace

PAUL



Profiles in Character from

C H A R L E S R.
S W I N D O L L



Paul



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When Controversy Comes

Controversy with the Judaizers



Acts 15:1-2

¹ Some men came down from Judea and *began* teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

Acts 15:1-2

² And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, *the brethren* determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

Controversy with the Judaizers



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➤ The issue: whether you could be saved apart from the Law of Moses.

Acts 15:3-6

³ Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.

Acts 15:3-6

⁴ When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

Acts 15:3-6

⁵ But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.”

Acts 15:3-6

⁶ The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.

Acts 15:12

¹² All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

Acts 15:22

²² Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

Acts 15:30-31

³⁰ So when they were sent away, they went down to Antioch; and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter.

³¹ When they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.

Controversy with the Judaizers



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➤ This was an issue Paul would have to discuss later also, for example in Galatians.

Galatians 1:6-9

⁶ I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

⁷ which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

Galatians 1:6-9

⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

Galatians 1:6-9

⁹ As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

Galatians 2:1-2

¹ Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.

Galatians 2:1-2

² It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *I did so* in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.

Galatians 5:2-4

² Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you.

Galatians 5:2-4

³ And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law.

Galatians 5:2-4

⁴ You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Controversy with Barnabas



Acts 15:36-41

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are.”

Acts 15:36-41

³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also.

³⁸ But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

Controversy with Barnabas



- The issue: whether to bring Mark again.

Acts 15:36-41

³⁹ And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

Acts 15:36-41

⁴⁰ But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

⁴¹ And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Controversy with Barnabas



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➤ They separated over the issue!

Controversy with Barnabas



➤ In time, Mark would win Paul's respect.

Colossians 4:10

¹⁰ Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and *also* Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him);

2 Timothy 4:9-11

⁹ Make every effort to come to me soon;

¹⁰ for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

2 Timothy 4:9-11

11 Only Luke is with me.

Pick up Mark and bring him with you,
for he is useful to me for service.

Lessons to Notice



1) Life will occasionally have controversy.

Romans 12:17-18

¹⁷ Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Lessons to Notice



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2) Let's be willing to stand boldly for what is right in God's eyes.

Romans 1:16

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Lessons to Notice



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3) The importance of second chances. People can grow in Christ!

Colossians 3:12-14

¹² So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

Colossians 3:12-14

¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Colossians 3:12-14

¹⁴ Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Lessons to Notice



4) Let's keep serving God,
even if things aren't perfect
with other people.