

EXPOSITORY SERMON SERIES ON THE BOOK OF ACTS, #40
Section Three, “The Foreign Emphasis,” Part One
“Paul is a Pioneer for the Continuation of the Church,” #9
“Paul Exclaims the Christ- The First Missionary Journey,” Part Three
“The Completion of the First Missionary Journey,” #3
“The Confrontation of Godly Workers,” 15:32-41
Dr. Greg Tyree, BBC, PM, February 6, 2005

INTRODUCTION:

Speed Leas, in *Mastering Conflict and Controversy*, states that there are five levels of conflict.

1. Level One: Predicaments. Here, no one is “blamed.” The focus is on the problem.
2. Level Two: Disagreement. Here, parties are concerned (in addition to the problem) about self-protection.
3. Level Three: Contest. Here, parties want to get their way. They want to win! There are at least four dimensions to this level.
 - a. Dichotomizing (seeing things as right and wrong).
 - b. Universalizing (making broad generalizations, i.e. “everybody,” “nobody,” or “never”).
 - c. Magnification (assuming the other party has evil motives).
 - d. Fixation on Feelings (focusing on feelings rather than facts).
4. Level Four: Fight/Flight. Here, the major objective is to break the relationship. Now the problem is not the problem, the relationship is.
5. Level Five: Intractable. Here, people believe that the opposition is so evil, they must be punished or destroyed.

SneakPreview: While we may need to have contingency plans, God always works from “Plan A.” He never has to change His plans because His plans are perfect, even when He works them out through imperfect people.

PROPOSITION: We shall consider three aspects of the confrontation of godly leaders that would ultimately result in a greater spreading of the Gospel.

I. CONSIDER THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM. Vss. 32-35.

- A. The Calm is Seen in the **Confirmation** of the Prophets. Vs. 32.
- B. The Calm is Seen in the **Commission** of the People. Vs. 33.
- C. The Calm is Seen in the **Continuation** of the Preachers. Vss. 34, 35.

LifePoint One: Affirmation and consolation come in two forms: words, and THE Word. Use both.

II. CONSIDER THE CAUSE THAT BEGAN A STRIFE. Vss. 36, 37.

A. A **Purpose** for the Second Missionary Journey is Suggested. Vs. 36.

B. A **Partner** for the Second Missionary Journey is Selected. Vs. 37.

LifePoint Two: When we refuse to let go of the past and offer forgiveness, confrontation is inevitable. Unity requires a “clean slate.”

III. CONSIDER THE CONFRONTATION THAT BEGOT A SEPARATION.
Vss. 38-41.

A. The Impetus for the Confrontation is **Revealed**. Vs. 38.

B. The Intensity of the Confrontation is **Resounding**. Vs. 39a.

C. The Implications of the Confrontation are **Remarkable**. Vss. 39b-41.

LifePoint Three: People do not easily forget when we “let them down,” so unity requires that we “prove” ourselves to regain credibility, and along with credibility, trust.

APPLICATION: We have learned the following truths:

1. Disagreements happen even among the most spiritual Christians.
2. Disagreements are often based on poor information.
3. Conflict is not always bad.
4. Conflicts should be resolved.

PowerPoint: Many people equate division with defeat. In God’s economy, however, division, when caused by a stand for what is right, can actually promote the Gospel.