**Unstoppable - wk 26 – The Break Up**

**Acts is Jesus: The Sequel. Luke Vol 2 – The “what now?”**

**Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

**Roughly 20yrs since Jesus. P&B are serving back at Antioch.**

**The early church had their first church council to work out an issue and celebrate that God was saving the nations.**

**After the Council - Paul and Barnabas return to their home church - Acts 15:35 But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.**

**Paul and Barnabas / Barnabas and Paul - The dynamic duo**

**When Paul was born again – Barnabas was the primary person to accepted him, walked with him, and believe in him – became friends.**

**They served in the local church together and traveled together for years - long ship voyages, long walks, and treacherous hikes.**

**Long talks & lots of laughter, shared stories & shared victories. They worked together to see God change hearts and save souls.**

**Together they faced resistance and opposition, experienced torture and abuse - as they shared the Gospel of Jesus.**

**The first to take the gospel to Greece. The first to plant Gentile churches and make disciples in Europe.**

**Best friends, ministry partners - they were a dynamic duo.**

**But – they are about to have a falling out… (today a sad story)**

**Acts 15:36 Sometime later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.”**

**It’s been 2-3 years since the first trip. I’m feeling healthy and strong - let’s go back and check on them and encourage them. Let’s face the dangers together!**

**Shows the value of church health and Paul’s pastoral heart. This is most mission work.**

**(Let’s do it!) Acts 15:37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, (Let’s call up Mark to come!) 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.**

**John Mark was Barnabas cousin – Mark knew Jesus - listened firsthand to his teachings, was at his arrest. His home was where disciples gathered in Jerusalem. (Acts 12:12)**

**But in Acts 13 Mark was with them when they went on the first trip but left when they landed in Greece suddenly returned to Jerusalem.**

**We don’t know why? But we find out it really bothered Paul.**

**Acts 15:39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. (Strong words in the original – angry dispute - argued over it.)**

**Paul says no way, don’t trust him! Barry is adamant to include him! Sound familiar? Barney said this about Paul years earlier.**

**Acts 15:1-34 - Public conflict over Great issues - ends in peace.**

**How did they settle this conflict? Lot of talking, lot of listening. Lot of searching God’s Word - and led by the HS. But not here.**

**Year later**

**Acts 15:35-41 Private conflict over Personal issues - ends in brokenness.**

**This issue was between friends and personal. But we find out later had great implications.**

**Who was right? Both had different reasons. Luke did not take a side.**

**We don’t know who is right because there is a person not mentioned.**

**\*\* The person of the Holy Spirit. They were not led by the Spirit but by opinions. Which will often end in broken relationships.**

**They part ways. The Dynamic Duo is no more.**

**Possible map - Acts 15:39b Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas (leader and friend from Jerusalem) and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.**

**\* Barnabas (w/ Mark) went to Cyprus (where B was from)**

**\* Paul (w/ Silas) went to Cilicia – Galatia (where P was from)**

**This begins Paul’s 2nd mission journey.**

**This is the last mention of Barnabas in Acts.**

**Perhaps you have been in a situation like this or have seen this happen. Church splits – Christian friends part ways over opinions.**

**What an interesting and honest thing to include in Acts. Could have skipped it – glossed over. It reminds us that the people of the Bible were people with passions and opinions – and were not flawless.**

**Lesson from the Break Up – What can we learn from this?**

**A few things important to remember.**

**1. Though Christians worship the same LORD we don’t always agree on everything.**

**Last week – some things are debatable some things are not.**

**Paul and Barnabas did not question their faith or walk w/ Jesus, but they had strong opinions and differences on this.**

**Still happened today: Movies and TV / Drinking alcohol / Playing cards / Bible Versions / Women wearing pants / men wearing beards / Divorce / Home schooling / Mixed swimming / voting / contemporary music or hymns / Music volume / Christian rock / Long hair on men / Short hair on women / Women working outside the home / Birth control / going to dances / Halloween / women speakers / tongues / preaching style / Boycotting Disney.**

**These are heart felt differences that people feel passionate about.**

**Acts 15:39 They had a sharp disagreement… (bitter disagreement)**

**Both set in their opinion on this. Both convinced they were right.**

**We are to strive to stay as close to the scriptures as possible – but we will inevitably disagree on things.**

**Like in marriage they love each other, are committed – but are still 2 people with 2 ways at looking at things.**

**Paul was looking at ministry – this was not a vacation. We nearly died last time. We don’t need someone who will run when it gets hard.**

**Barnabas was looking at the person – We serve a God of grace. God never gave up on us. I know God can use him, give him another chance**

**Truth is - Even in ministry we won’t always get along.**

**Diff visions and different callings – different ideas and missions.**

**Different approaches and ministry philosophies.**

**We have to accept LW is not for everyone. Our approach and ministry vision are not for everyone. I get it. I might disagree if we part ways. But you are always welcome here.**

**2. People will let you down – but don’t give up on them.**

**This is probably why I side with Barnabas on tis one.**

**Barnabas (Joseph) “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36-37). He was true to his name and was determined to give mark another chance.**

**We tend to right people off – burn the bridges. Usually for honorable reasons. Maybe even right – don’t give up on them.**

**Matt 5:9 - Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

**This is what I want to be called.**

**Like Barnabas – be a son / daughter of encouragement.**

**I know it’s hard – but don’t give up on that person.**

**3. The ministry and mission of Jesus must always continue**

**They got frustrated parted ways, what happened? They kept preaching!**

**A "falling out" is no reason to stop serving the Lord!**

**Ministry is not built on people but on Jesus.**

**Well, I got hurt at that other church, that other pastor, the last time I volunteered, that last mission trip.**

**Christian - people will let you down – don’t give up on the mission of God. Don’t stop serving, going, leading.**

**4. We are never too mature to grow.**

**When this happened, Paul was a Christian for 16 yrs, been a pastor, teacher, now an apostle role – yet he was still growing.**

**(Speaking about knowing and seeking Christ) Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.**

**Forget your pride and mistakes – your failures. They are under the blood of Jesus. Strain forward!**

**Paul later writes - I imagine thinking back on his missteps - Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. / Romans 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**

**Paul - I could have done it differently – but you know what? God used my foolishness for his glory.**

**5. God’s sovereign hand is at work even in the midst of conflict**

**Even in our poor attitudes, negative responses, and bull headedness**

**There is no doubt God used this division to multiply His work**

**1 mission became 2 missions - strengthening the church**

**2 men became 4 men – soon to be even more. (1 team now 2)**

**The gospel is now advancing and reaching even more.**

**God used this division to multiply their ministry and the churches.**

**Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.**

**God uses even our dumb choices to accomplish His perfect will. God often uses conflict and disagreements to reveal His will and to humble and prepare us. Nothing is wasted with God.**

**Ephesians 1:11 - In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will…**

**God’s will is accomplished through His people and even sometimes in spite of His people.**

**It all worked out, but it’s never an excuse for pride & fleshly attitudes. They both had to get right with God and get right with each other.**

**6. In Christ - the goal is always reconciliation**

**Close friends, holidays, birthday, shared memories – they go separate ways - years pass. In Acts we are left with the end to a sad season.**

**Barnabas is never mentioned again in Acts, but years later both Barnabas and Mark show up in Paul’s letters.**

**What happened to Paul and Barnabas, and Paul and Mark /**

**Was there a private reconciliation? It seems so.**

**Paul and Barnabas? A few years later we read…**

**1 Cor 9:6 – Paul refers to him as an apostle and worthy of support.**

**Colossians 4:10 – Refers to him as a trusted minister and to be received.**

**Paul and Barnabas never worked together again. Separated by an opinion but bound together w/ a Zeal for the Gospel of Jesus.**

**We don’t know much beyond this. Limited.**

**Paul and Mark? We get a little more info…**

**Colossians 4:10-11 – My co-worker and a comfort to me**

**Philemon 24 - Mark is my fellow worker**

**2 Timothy 4:11 - In his last letter written while in jail - he says near the end – get and bring Mark with you he is helpful to me in my ministry.**

**He is not only a co-worker, but a friend and help in time of need. It’s my last days – I want Mark by my side. That’s healing. That’s what only God can do.**

**1 Peter 5:13 - Mark becomes very close to Peter – calling Mark his “son”**

**It was this relationship with Peter that resulted in the first gospel – the Gospel of mark. Barny was like - see, told you so**

* **Success is measured by how we finish - not how we start!**

**Anyone can start strong and fizzle out. And anyone can start with a stumble, struggle, and failures – and still finish strong.**

**How can we see this? How do we live this?**

**This section is specifically dealing with Christian relationships. We are in Christ. We serve Jesus. We re to be people of love, grace, and forgiveness. Stop replaying the hurt – replaying the past.**

**Phil 3:13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.**

* **You’ll never know the joy of present if you only have your eyes on the past.**

**The God of scriptures is a God of second chances - and 3rd, 4th, 7th and 70 X 70 chances. I am so thankful – God never gives up on me.**

**Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

**What Christian friend / family member do you need to forgive?**

**What event in your past are you allowing to haunt your future?**

**Next week an unexpected turn of events sends Paul in a new direction. He set out to do one thing and ended up somewhere else.**

**Acts 16:1 Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek. 2 The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. 4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.**