

## Christ's Church Continues

Acts 15:30-41

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### I. Acceptance. Acts 15:30-31

Imagine the feeling that a first-century Gentile Christian had, being overwhelmed with the \_\_\_\_\_ from Christ, and knowing they were now part of God's family and community. **Romans 8:15**

- The word "**accepted**" means to be highly \_\_\_\_\_ and to pursue with grace, encircle with favor, and to honor with blessings.

**Beloved** literally means, "A person \_\_\_\_\_, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly, and to be well pleased with". **Ephesians 1:6**

### II. Exhortation. Acts 15:32-35

The Bible in Basic English translates **exhortation** as the power of comforting, and the NIV translates it as \_\_\_\_\_.

- The Bible rightly diagnoses the condition of man with a surgeon's precision and discerns our spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ because the Bible has the power to transform lives. **Hebrews 4:12**

The Bible can \_\_\_\_\_ the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, because the Bible is a discerner of our thoughts and the intentions of our hearts.

### III. A new contention. Acts 15:36-41

We all need encouragement, even during the times we \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord is empowering us to do the work of the ministry.

- Many commentators believe John Mark was \_\_\_\_\_ of the potential dangers of jail, death, or harm while traveling and meeting people who were opposed to the Gospel.

We find an awesome example of forgiveness and \_\_\_\_\_ in the biblical narrative in **2 Timothy** about Paul and John-Mark.

### IV. Practical Application.

"This statement (**Matthew 16:18**) of Jesus was a clear claim of \_\_\_\_\_ (**My church**). The church belongs to Jesus. This was also a claim to deity." (R.T. France)

1. The Bible brings believers \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Church should value solid teaching for \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Church should be \_\_\_\_\_ and strategic in ministry.
4. When disagreements happen, handle them with \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Surround yourself with \_\_\_\_\_ Christians.

### Small Group Discussion

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

1. Read **Acts 15:30**. What is the first thing Paul and Barnabas do when they arrive in Antioch? How big a priority is it for you to "gather with the church? Why?

**Ephesians 4:11-16, Proverbs 27:17, Hebrews 10:25**

2. Read **Acts 15:31**. How was the letter from Jerusalem received in Antioch? Why is acceptance such a big deal? Discuss what the words *accepted* and *beloved* mean as revealed from the sermon note sheet.

**Romans 8:15, Ephesians 1:6, Galatians 2:4**

3. Read **Acts 15:32-35**. Discuss the importance of exhortation, strengthening, and encouragement within the Church. How do we receive these things as Christians?

**Romans 12:6-8, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Ephesians 6:4, Hebrews 3:13**

4. Read **Acts 15:36-41**. Paul and Barnabas disagreed over whether or not they should include John Mark in the Second Missionary Journey. Why did Paul refuse to take him? Why did Barnabas think it was a good idea?

**Galatians 6:1, 1 Peter 5:10**

5. How does God use this disagreement for good? How would you describe this split between Paul and Barnabas? What do you think is a possible lesson we should learn when we disagree with other believers?

6. Did John Mark ever live up to Barnabas' expectations? 10. How does Paul react to John Mark's restoration to ministry?

**Colossians 4:10, Philemon 1:24, 2 Timothy 4:11**

7. Discuss the five points of the Practical Application of the Sermon.