

## Acts 15:13-41 Turning Point

**It has come to be known as Flight 93!**

A) The United airlines flight that took off from Newark NJ on September 11<sup>th</sup> Bound for San Fran

B) About 40 minutes into the flight it was hijacked by **Islamic Extremists**. Diverting it to Washington DC and the white house.

C) What would you do if you suddenly discovered your flight was hijacked by terrorists– who wanted to turn it into a flying missile? Would could you do?

D) Something that most of us never thought of is probably something most of us consider each time we **board a plane now**.

**Well, for several passengers Flight 93 became a turning Point –**

A) Having learned that this hijack was part of a planned assault on the USA that started with the Twin Towers

B) Several passengers led by a Born again Christian named **Todd Beamer** - decided to mount an assault against the hijackers in an attempt to regain control of the aircraft.

C) It **was a risk** that cost them their lives but in the process saved 1,000's as the plane crashed in a Pennsylvania field – killing everyone on board.

**What would you do if you came home from a business trip and found out that you had new neighbors –**

A) **Their teen age son or daughter** was trying to hijack your teen age son or daughter – by pulling them into compromise?

B) What kind of turning Point would that be in your family?

**C) Well, that is sort of the situation that Paul and Barnabas faced upon return from their first Missionary journey. Back to Antioch**

**This was a Church that they had founded and spent yrs teaching and discipling the believers – strengthening them in the Lord.**

**A) Largely Gentile Church.** – they return to find out that some guys had come down from Jerusalem and were trying to Hijack the Church.

**B) Telling these precious Gentile believers that if they really wanted to be saved they needed to be Circumcised!**

**1) Wow!!! IMAGINE - Gentiles – What ?**

**C) Now the guys who brought this message – were not Terrorist – who were out to destroy the Gentiles.**

**1) They were actually sincere well meaning believers in Jesus – who were in all sincerety pushing a dangerous and Destructive message.**

**D) That is why we saw in our study – last time that Paul and Barnabas said – no way this is not happening - - They rose up in Dispute.**

**1) Because Paul understood – that any time we try and add anything to our faith in Jesus AS A CRITERIA for being saved –**

**2) What we are saying is that the work of Christ on the Cross was not enough and that is a lie for the pit of Hell.**

**E) Jesus did not yell – Partial – Almost - - We're Close – NO FINISHED!**

**We saw in our Study last time – the Dispute became so intense that a meeting was called for in Jerusalem.**

**A) Paul and Barnabas and these other guys made their way to Jerusalem to meet with the Apostles.**

**B) We saw in V.6-9 Peter led the Charge – His call to share with the Gentiles – Saved just like us –**

*By Grace thru Faith*

**C) Then Paul and Barnabas shared about their experiences among the Gentiles and all that God was doing.**

**Then James took the Floor!** There was absolute silence now, for James was the Lord's earthly half-brother

A) He was a pillar of the church and the moderator of the assembly now considering an all-important dispute.

**B) He was called “James the Just” because he was so upright “James the Camel-Kneed” because he spent so much time in prayer.**

**C) I imagine that the hopes of the Pharisaic sect rocketed as James stood to speak.**

1) If anyone of the church leaders shared their Zeal and discipline it was JAMES.

D) Surely he would set Peter, Paul and Barnabas right.

1) They were undoubtedly surprised at the apostle's response, for James first showed how the conversion of Gentiles was in accord with the Old Testament Scriptures.

**RD V.13-18**

**Through this combination of passages taken largely from •Amos 9:11–12,**

**A) James was saying that according to the Old Testament prophets God's people would consist of two concentric groups.**

**B) At the core would be Israel (“•the tabernacle of David,•”), and gathered around them would be**

1) **the Gentiles (“•the rest of mankind,•”),** who would share the messianic blessings without becoming Jewish proselytes. •

**C) Thus, everything that was happening was just as the Scriptures prophesied.**

**James concluded with this Judgment:**

**19 Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, 20 but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."**

**A) Seeing God is doing what He prophesied.....**

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**B) James concluded "there are four things from which we should tell new believers to abstain"**

1)one of which dealt with morality, the remaining three with sensitivity.

**C)The moral issue was fornication. {sex outside marr)**

1)Like today – Sex was rampant in the Gentile culture and associated with everything.

**God condemns sex outside of marriage because he designed Sex – he knows that there is both a physical and spiritual connection in the sexual relationship.**

**A)The two becoming one is not just physically – it spiritually and emotionally as well.**

**B)That connection is supposed to be reserved for the marriage relationship – ONE PERSON your whole life**

1)The World loves to lesson that connection – NBD  
**NO BIG DEAL**

**C)People who engage in sex with multiple partners, are giving away a**

**part of themselves never get back.**

**1) Sort of like peeling the layers away on an onion –  
Very little left.**

**D) Look at Hollywood – Promiscuity is rampant – once vibrant stars –  
Shallow Shell of a person.**

**E) But what about those who say – we are not sleeping around – we are  
going to get married someday.**

**1) Still Entering into a oneness they are not ready for.  
There is not that commitment.**

**Statistics inside and outside of the Church are staggering 50% of couples  
who co-habituate or who engage in sexual immorality before marriage**

**That marriage will end in Divorce.**

**50% chance of making it**

**Usually it is the guys – who are the aggressors**

**A) Demonstrating – as a leader – you lack self control and that you don't  
have much regard for your own relationship with Christ or your future  
spouse.**

**B) Sin hurts our relationship with God!**

**1) Young Brothers remember she is God's daughter before she is your  
girlfriend or future spouse.**

**C) Many young girls who gave in – before marriage carry the guilt long  
into their marriage.**

**1) So God forbade Fornication – obvious reasons STD's**

**But Why the other three restrictions?**

**A) The issue here was Sensitivity – V.21 puts it into prescriptive.**

**“ For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in**

every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

**B) In other words, Jewish communities existed in nearly every city, Synagogues – 10 Jewish males.**

1) Some of these Jewish pp were also converting to Christ. –

C) The Gentiles needed to be sensitive to the customs and practices – that were a part of the Jewish Heritage

### **Food offered to idols:**

**A) Idolatry was common practice in Gentile culture –**

**B) Animal would be Sacrificed – part of the animal would be offered to the pagan god.**

1) But the best cut meat would be taken and sold in these out door market places.- great price.

C) The Jews were really sensitive to anything having to do with idols – **Commanded – abstain idols .....**

2) As a nation they suffered a lot because of Idolatry

### **BABYLON**

D) SO the Jews stayed away from meat bought at these out door market places – connection w/ idols

**But the Gentile believers saw it differently – An idol is just a piece of wood or Stone – Only One God.**

A) So it really doesn't matter to me – if part of the animal was sacrificed to an idol – idol is nothing.

**B) Paul would address this thinking in 1 Cor 8-10 subject of Christian liberty.**

**C)He would say – You are right – and Idol is nothing**

**1)But because the conscience of your Jewish brother is weaker in this area.**

**D)Therefore – If you are having a Jewish brother over for dinner – and you bought meat from the out door market – don't tell Him. – Stumble him {spit**

**E)And Jewish brother – sensitive – Don't ask where it came from. –Just enjoy. **Drug house/ or Car****

**Jew To the Gentile – brother – be sensitive – even to the point of forfeiting your liberty – so as not to make your Jewish brother – stumble.**

**A)Clincher – **Stumbling each other we are** – sinning against Christ! – His Body**

**B)Goes for gossip – dishonest business practices**

**1)Abusive speech – Sinning against the body**

**C)Things strangled and things containing blood both dealt with the proper draining of blood from meat.**

**1)Part of the Jewish dietary laws.**

**This was a monumental decision in the History of the Church- a real turning point. **LANDSCAPE.....****

**A)Two Huge complementary principles for grace-filled living are derived from this:**

**B)First: *as those under grace we are not to place non-Biblical requirements of others.***

**1)specifically, those that come from secondary cultural traditions.**

**C)In that day this meant not forcing a Jewish lifestyle on Gentiles.**

1) Today this means we are not to make areas of our lifestyle that are not spelled out in Scripture the norm for others if they are to be “**good**” **Christians**.

**D) Dress/ Dancing/ Music/ Drink or not Drink etc**

1) If we put any of these things on others as necessary requirement to be a **Good Christian** we repeat the sin of the Judaizers!

E) **the unbeliever** – looks on those Christians are uptight about everything

**The Second principle is this: Because we are all under grace –all saved the same way – same standing in Christ**

A) We will gladly be sensitive to each other because our **#1 governing principle apart from the word** is love.

**B) In a heart of love we gladly forfeit or restrict our freedom for the sake of others!**

**C) So this was a Major turning point in the Church – the purity of the Gospel was protected and a Criteria was established – as well as a Practice**

**Freedom would be exercised with Sensitivity.**

**V.22-31 The Decision was written up and delivered to the Gentile believers in Antioch.**

**30 So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. 31 When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement.**

**A) Why were they so encouraged?**

1) The letter imposed some dietary restrictions. Why were they happy about that?

**B)A letter that a coed wrote to her parents humorously points out the reason.**

**Dear Mom and Dad,**

Just thought I'd drop you a note to clue you in on my plans. I have fallen in love with a guy called Jim. He quit high school after grade eleven to get married. About a year ago he got a divorce.

We have been going steady for two months and plan to get married in the fall. At any rate, I dropped out of school last week, although I'd like to finish college sometime in the future.

**On the next page the letter continued:**

Mom and Dad, I just want you to know that everything I have written so far in this letter is false. NONE of it is true.

But, Mom and Dad, it *is* true that I got a C- in French and flunked Math. And it *is* true that I am going to need some more money for my tuition payments.

**News that may not sound particularly good sounds terrific if seen from a different perspective.**

A)For the believers in Antioch, a few minor restrictions in relation to their Hebrew brothers was nothing compared to the reality of circumcision.

**B)Celebrating “Wonderful. “We don’t have to be circumcised. We don’t have to carry the heavy burden of legalism!”**

**Something else I see in this Chapter – learn from – This Chapter give us insight into how God guides his Church.**

**A)How God guides us as individual believers**

**B)SO for the remainder of our time this morning – I want to just quickly look at **5 ways outlined in the rest of this Chapter.****

**C)Study in and of itself – quick**

## **#1. God guides through church unanimity. V.25-27**

*25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth.*

### **A)Our Church leadership – Discuss – share – I usually share last – looking for confirmation.**

1)Not in unity – we pray wait – come back and talk some more. – Sometimes we don't move.

### **B)Personally – struggling with Doctrine – or wrestling with an issue of lifestyle.**

1)Study what has been the stance of the Church on that issue – throughout Church History.

### **C)So #1. God guides through church unanimity**

## **#2. God Guides Through the Gifts of the Spirit v.28**

*28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things*

### **When James stood up to speak – the HS was speaking thru him – others bore witness.**

**A)Again leaders meetings – Oscar – Bob – Staff Steve Trevor – Makes sense {Peace difuses**

**B)Personally God will use individual believers – speak truth – HS speaking thru them – Peace.**

## **#3 God Guides Through Desires We May Have Personally. V.32-34**

*32 Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words. 33 And after they had stayed there for a time, they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles. 34*

However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there.

### **Something ignited in Silas heart:**

**A) Phil in Costa Rica – Brad in Maui – now AUS**

**B) Makes sense God is not going to send a cowboy to Maui – SEND A SURFER – LIKES THE OCEAN**

**C) Moves thru our own personal desires.**

Psalm 37:4 declares, “Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.”

**I grew up a beach guy in So Cal. – Met this girl from Oregon. Trees – Ocean cold – rainy**

**A) Went to visit – Denise’s parents – I am idiot purposal - Didn’t ask – now going to meet.**

**B) Leaving Oregon – I hope they move – I don’t want to come back here again – too many trees**

**C) Delighting in the Lord – His will – desire to serve Him – go bigger need – Jon Courson.....**

1) Affection Grew

### **#4 God Guides Through Concerns We Feel Internally**

35 Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing."

**Paul said, “I’m curious about how the believers we saw five years ago are doing.”**

**A)The same thing happens today. Suddenly, a situation, a need, or an opportunity will tug on your heart.**

**B)The person next to you might not feel a thing—not because he’s insensitive or unspiritual, but because meeting that particular need is not his calling.**

**C)The way of the Lord is to guide us individually through concerns we feel internally.**

**D)God gives you a burden for something –**

**1)Something that is going to be hard –take time, sacrifice – and involves sharing the gospel.**

**2)Or blessing others**

**E)Know this: That is not the Devil – Devil prompts you to take easy way out – comfort – less impact.**

**So #4 God Guides Through Concerns We Feel Internally**

**#5 God Guides Through Interpersonal Difficulty.**

**RD V. 37-41**

**So Paul is feeling burdened to Go back to visit.**

**A)Barnabas – Son of encouragement says – lets take John Mark**

**B)We saw in Ch.13 John Mark flaked out – bailed**

**1)Not sure why – Shift in leadership – too hard – young immature – all of the above.**

**C) Barnabas – 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance – Paul – Paul is like no way!**

**This issue became a Sharp contention between these two godly men and servants of God.**

**A) They parted from each other – Paul took Silas and went one way – Barnabas took Mark ....another.**

**B) Result instead of one team – now two!**

**C) God doesn't tell us if one was right or wrong.  
Tells us it happened.**

**Reason in this thing called the family of God there will always be conflicts –personality and otherwise.**

**A) Times when – you just part – go one way that person goes another.**

**B) Paul and Barney loved each other**

**C) In the end – John Mark great story – Writes the gospel of Mark**

**D) Paul's final days – prison – Send John Mark he is useful for me.**

**Point = God loves us and wants to guide us – if we are willing to be led.**

**A) Your life {Turning Point**

**Church – direction  
Spirit speaking  
Personal desire  
Internal stir  
Interpersonal difficulty**

**B) Here today – **have not accepted Christ** – out of fellowship with God**

**C) Your TURNING POINT TODAY – GET RIGHT**

**D) Embrace Jesus – What do with my Son!**

Co-habitate