THE MAN WHO WOULDN'T GO TO WORK
Acts 15:36-41

Introduction:
A. Many times we believe that Bible characters were either heros or devils
   1) They were perfect in the flesh and spirit
   2) They were unspeakably evil

B. Here we see one of two incidents that confirm the truth about "Bible men"
   1) Paul withstood Peter to his face  Gal. 2:11
   2) The "contention" of Paul and Barnabas  Vs. 39

C. This contention centered on a past incident in the lives of these three men.
   1) "Went not to the work"
   2) Acts 13:13
   3) Let us now study this incident

I. These Men Had Been At Work  Vs. 36
A. They had preached in many cities
   1) "Visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord"
   2) Hundreds of miles and days

B. The work had been difficult
   1) They had been "expelled"  13:50
   2) They had been stoned  14:19

II. These Men Proposed To Do More Work  Vs. 36
A. "Visit our brethren......and see how they do"
   1) "visit" = episkeptomai = "to look upon", "to look at, view", "to look after", hence, "to visit, with a view to help, relieve, or deliver"
   2) "and see how they are prospering"
B. They needed all the help they could get       Vs. 37
   1) John Mark was available
   2) Paul was not in favor of his company
   3) "determined" = bouleuomai = "to resolve in council", "to take council", "to consult"     It was settled!

III. The Man Who Wouldn't God To Work       Vs. 38
A. The man identified
   1) He had been trained well        Acts 12:12
   2) He had ministered         Acts 13:5
   3) He was related to Barnabas    Col. 4:10 - "Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas,".....
       "the cousin of Barnabas", ASV; "kinsman of Barnabas", KNOX

B. Paul's objection to the man       Vs. 38
   1) "departed" = aphiSTEMI = "to remove", "to place away from", "depart from", "desert", "to give up"
   2) "went not with them" = "and was not prepared to go on with them to the work"
   3) Acts 13:13 - "returned to Jerusalem"
   4) He had put his hand to the plough and turned back

IV. The Man Who Wouldn't Go To Work Created Problems For Others       Vs. 39
A. Fellowship was broken
   1) "contention" = paroxusmos = "a sharpening, hence, sharpening of a feeling or action, our word "paroxysm", "fit of anger"
   2) "departed asunder" = apochorizo = "to separate"
   3) One went one way and one the other.....Vs. 41, Both went to work!
   4) Two points of view, both are scriptural
      a. "We must be kind and forgive".....Barnabas
      b. "We must discipline and not accept failure in those who would serve Jesus".....Paul
B. The sin of contention

1) It is caused by pride. Prov. 13:10 - "only by pride cometh contention = but with the well advised is wisdom"

2) It always results in confusion and division, I Cor. 1:11".......that there are contentions among you"

3) It kindles strife, Prov. 26:21 - "As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife"

4) It wearies the soul, Prov. 27:15 - "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike"

V. The Man Went To Work Vs. 39

A. He became profitable

1) II Tim. 4:11 - "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry"

2) "profitable" = heuchrestos = "very useful", "very beneficial", "very good of its kind"

B. He became a fellow laborer Philemon 24 = "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers

1) "fellow labourer" = sunergos = "a working together with", "co-operating", "synergy"

C. He was to be received

1) Col. 4:10 = Aristarchus my fellow prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come to you, receive him;)

2) "receive" = dechomai = "to accept", "to embrace", "to receive hospitably", "admit", "approve"

VI. Some Lessons For God's People

A. God has called us to work

1) Every man is to labor

2) "why stand ye here all the day idle?"
B. We may stumble in our work
   1) "We have this treasure in earthen vessels"
   2) "If any man sin"

C. This may cause problems
   1) Our stumbling will offend others
   2) We do not, "live unto ourselves"

D. They can be solved
   1) God will forgive us
   2) He will use us