

Estranged
Believers 4

Let the healing begin



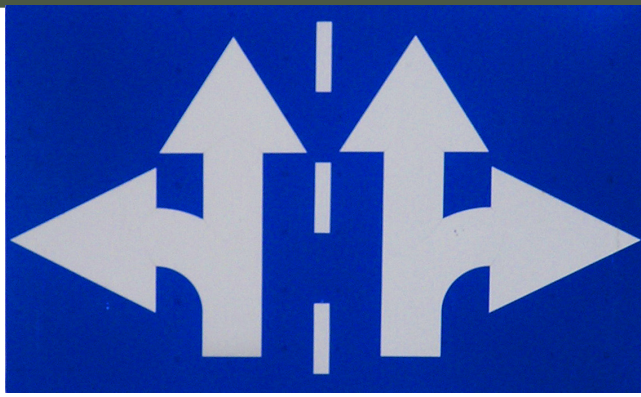
Acts 15:36-39 *After some time Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's return to each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are getting along." Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark. But Paul disagreed strongly, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not shared in their work. Their disagreement over this was so sharp that they separated. Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus. Paul chose Silas, and the believers sent them off, entrusting them to the Lord's grace.*

- When you leave familiar territory, it can be rough. Leaving friends, family, or fellowships because of differences can be a difficult adjustment to make. But when it's necessary, we must seek God for comfort in making the decision to part ways with believers.
- All partings are not pleasant, but we should seek to keep peace and leave people the right way. We should not make decisions based on anger or hurt feelings, but we should always make a rational decision and follow peace in the transition. **Prov. 15:18A**

wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

Stopping the bleeding

- If we keep our minds and hearts centered on the real reason for friends and fellowship, then we can always walk away from bad situations with peace and love surrounding our decision. **Is. 26:3** *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*
- Many times the devil seeks to cause us to focus on the people more than we are focused on the purpose. It should always be about the Kingdom of God and his righteousness so we can advance the Kingdom and not hurt our own resolve. **Matt. 6:33** *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
- Our end game should be Christ, and that will always accelerate our healing process. We will feel better when it's a God move versus an emotional decision based on fleshly desires and preferences. **Phil. 4:7** *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
- The best remedy for hurt is time. Time will heal wounds that counseling cannot even help. When you move slowly, in the graces of God, you will give yourself time to heal versus moving too quickly and then wishing you had done things differently. **Eccl. 8:5** *Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.*



If you want the best for you and your family, slow down and give yourself time to sort things out and make good, sound choices in the process.

5 Tips when separating yourself:

1. When you leave friends for the sake of differences, let God fill the void rather than immediately trying to replace them. ***Psa. 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.***
2. When leaving a fellowship, take time praying, having family bible study, and seeking God for direction before you try to find a replacement. You can give to online ministries that bless you or foundations that need help in the meantime. But don't rush this decision. ***Prov. 8:17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.***
3. Try to be cordial and pleasant but stay firm on your decision if it's what is best for you and your family. If you know that God is pleased with your decision, then stick with it no matter how tough it gets. ***James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.***
4. Keep your mouth off your old church or old friends that you separate from. If you are confident in your decision, then you don't have to make them look bad every time you are talking about it. ***Prov. 17:28 Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.***

5. The more you pray and study God's word, the more spiritual your mindset will be. The more you stay stagnant spiritually and lose touch with God, the more you will question your decision and not have peace. Stay close to God and you will feel better about Godly decisions. ***Col. 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.***

Summary - Our loyalty should always be unto God first! Then, our family, and then friendships and fellowships. We have to make sure our affections are on things above and not just things below. Once we do this, we can make better decisions when separating from people that are dangerous to our future. We all must heal from separating ourselves from what is familiar. We have history with people and fellowships, so it's very hard to move on when we are moving into unfamiliar territory. But if we keep our minds and hearts concerned with what God has put before us, we will be able to endure the hardship.

Mark 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

