

The Sending Spirit

Acts 13.1-4

Acts 13:1-4 Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."³ Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.⁴ So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

Series: "Church in Antioch: The Church God Can Use"

CHURCH at ANTIOCH > MOTHER Church of Mission Movement

Christians RAN from Jerusalem > LOST their Homes, Not Testimony / ZEAL

GOOD NEWS of GREAT JOY to this 3rd Largest City in ROMAN EMPIRE

Where HELLENISTIC CULTURE & ROMAN EMPIRE met SYRIAN Desert

Found MESSIAH of ISRAEL > SAVIOR of WORLD – Antioch, Beijing, Kilauea

Church that FORMED There > New, Dynamic, Not Entrenched in Traditions

Did Not Fear CHANGE / Gossip the Gospel / Teachable / Generous / Growing

ANTIOCH WAS A CHURCH WHICH LOOKED BEYOND ITSELF

GOD took SMALL EFFORT of FEW Xtians: LAUNCH A WORLD MOVEMENT

MISSION OUTREACH STRUCTURE OF BOOK OF ACTS

Acts 1:8 Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

God uses Antioch Church to take GOSPEL to LAST STEP - ends of the earth

Ch 13 SCENE - ANTIOCH Church IN WORSHIP / AT THE POWER CENTER

DWELLING IN THE HEAVENLY PRESENCE OF LIVING, ALMIGHTY GOD

1. Worship in the Spirit / 2. Word of the Spirit / 3. Witnesses sent by Spirit

1. Worship in the Spirit

a. Fervent Worship v. 2 "While they were worshipping the Lord"

WAS MUCH MORE THAN AN EMPTY RITUAL / FEARFUL ENCOUNTER

DOMINANT THEME OF CHURCH IN ACTS - AWESOME EXPERIENCE

WHEN CHURCH GATHERED AFTER HARVEST OF SOULS, PENTECOST

Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

Acts 2:43

WHEN CRIPPLED BEGGAR WAS HEALED AT BEAUTIFUL TEMPLE GATE

they were filled with wonder and amazement Acts 3:10

WHEN CHURCH PRAYED after RELEASE OF PETER & JOHN from PRISON

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. Acts 4:31

Great fear seized the whole church Acts 5:11

the church...grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord Acts 9:31

SIMILAR EXPERIENCE Isaiah > Saw Lord seated on Throne, High & Exalted

POINT IS THAT WORSHIP DEMANDS OUR FULL ATTENTION / OUR BEST

COMING BEFORE GOD SHOULD NEVER BE TAKEN LIGHTLY

b. One in Fellowship

When HUMBLER Before GOD in WORSHIP > Focus on HIM, Service, Glory

NOT about US > He ALONE is WORTHY One > Center of WORSHIP & Work

5 DIFFERENT LEADERS AT ANTIOCH NAMED BY LUKE

NOT MEGACHURCH LED by SUPER PASTOR

NO CHURCH IN N.T. EVER LEAD BY ONE MAN > LEADERSHIP TEAM

"Most churches have one of two extremes in leadership, one man who dominates or a committee that stagnates, need team that motivates EVERY MEMBER TO SERVE IN CHRIST'S MINISTRY"

TEAM UNITED IN PRAYER, WORSHIP, AND SERVICE

ALL ON THE SAME PAGE OF GOD'S PLAYBOOK

"Barnabas" Joseph a Levite from Cyprus / SON OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Simeon called Niger = BLACK - a Black African

Many Think > Simon of Cyrene who carried the cross of Jesus in Gospels

"Lucius of Cyrene" from North Africa

"Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch)"

MEANING > Foster Brother or Intimate Friend

CAME FROM GOVERNMENT CIRCLES IN JERUSALEM

"Saul" Pharisee from Tarsus in Cilicia

MEN SYMBOLIZED ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN ANTIOCH

TRAGEDY OF AMERICAN CHURCH - Sunday morning at 11 a.m. is the most segregated hour in the week /
 HOUR WHEN XTIAN'S WORSHIP

WORKPLACE / SPORTS / POLITICS / ALL SHOW MUCH MORE UNITY

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF EACH LEADER WOULD BE OBVIOUS
 INSTEAD OF CRITICIZING - COMPLEMENT THEM WITH OTHER'S GIFTS

WE Need to CHERISH UNITY MORE than VICTORY

Avoid WIN / LOSE MENTALITY - I'M RIGHT, YOU MUST BE WRONG

Need to ASK What part of God's TRUTH CAN YOU SHARE WITH ME?

WHAT WAYS HAVE I FAILED TO SEE THE TOTAL PICTURE?

MICHAEL GREEN "These 5 LEADERS embodied the quality of togetherness that they were seeking to inculcate in the congregation at large. It is incumbent on the leadership of every church to be like that. Avoiding the dominance of one man and the facelessness of a committee, Christian leadership should be both varied and united. It should model a plurality of leadership striving to outdo one another in love and service. Nobody in that leadership ministers without being ministered to."

2. Word of the Spirit

a. One Message "prophets and teachers" / FOCUS ON THE WORD OF GOD

MOST Vital ASPECT of CHURCH GOD CAN USE - MINISTRY of WORD

Shapes our SONGS – Directs our PRAYERS – Sanctifies our FELLOWSHIP

Illustrated in SACRAMENTS - Exposed and Applied in our SERMONS

Acts 11:26 THIS WAS FOCUS OF APOSTLE'S MINISTRY

So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

LOOKED LIKE LITTLE CHRIST'S AFTER A YEAR OF GROWING IN WORD

Spoken in Many Churches – Different NATIONS & DENOMINATIONS

UNITY when JESUS honored as LORD and SAVIOR

BIBLE is our LIGHT and STANDARD

"prophets and teachers"

LUKE DOES NOT EXPLAIN DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THESE MINISTRIES

NOR IF ALL 5 MEN HAD BOTH GIFTS OR ANY COMBINATION OF THEM

DID NOT CREATE THE MESSAGE / COMMUNICATED GOD'S MESSAGE
 DUTY was NOT to be CLEVER / BUT to be CAREFUL to GOD'S MEANING
 WORK was NOT to DISTORT MESSAGE / BUT DELIVER it FAITHFULLY

WORD of God > BASIS OF UNITY CHRIST PRAYS FOR

John 17:17,20,21 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth...I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

Psalms 68:11 The Lord announced the word, and great was the company of those who proclaimed it:

b. Many Messengers CHURCH is to form CHRISTIANS NOT CLONES
 OUR CREATIVE GOD NOT MAKE ONE FLOWER - HE MADE THOUSANDS
 NOT 1 GENERIC BIRD – 1 BASIC COLOR – 1 STANDARD LANDSCAPE

IF GOD made SUCH DIVERSITY IN CREATION - PASSING AWAY

HOW MUCH MORE IS HE PLEASED BY DIVERSITY IN NEW CREATION

Apostle John's Photograph of FULLY REDEEMED CHURCH:

...a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. Revelation 7:9

REDEEMED SAINTS - DIVERSE nations, tribes, peoples, languages

UNIFIED IN THEIR PRAISE TO GOD AND TO THE LAMB

1) Different Styles "prophets and teachers"

2 VERY DIFFERENT WAYS OF APPROACHING THE WORK OF CHRIST

PROPHET - spontaneous, impulsive, fast moving / UNPREDICTABLE

RECEIVED DIRECT WORD FROM GOD - NEVER KNOW WHAT IS NEXT

TEACHER - methodical, predictable, slow moving

TEACHES AND EXPLAINS WORD ALREADY RECEIVED

CHURCH TODAY - "Charismatics" and "Conservatives "

CRITICIZE EACH OTHER - Charismatics: Conserv. are Dead & Lifeless

Conservatives: Charismaniacs are Shallow and Immature

WORK OF CHRIST NEEDS BOTH - Deep Roots and Fast Growth

EASY THING for ANTIOCH would have been 2 SEPARATE CHURCHES

Lord Jesus CALLS US to be YOKED TOGETHER UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP

BICF – 15 Pastors from at Least 10 Different Denominations – NOT SURE!

EASIER TO CUT ONE ANOTHER OFF / FORCE CONFORMITY

CHALLENGE TO REMAIN UNITED IN DIVERSITY IS WAY OF CHRIST

BOTTOM LINE: BELONG to E/OTHER - NEED E/OTHER - SERVE E/OTHER

1 Cor 12:21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

3. Witnesses sent by Spirit

a. Sacrifice

AS they drew CLOSE to JESUS in Worship > SPIRIT spoke to Church in Antioch

WORSHIP was Not just COMMUNION with GOD > Also CONVERSATION!

HEARTS SPARKED by Joyful WORSHIP Set AFLAME FOR MISSIONS

May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy
Psalm 67:3-4

HEAR His Word – SUBMIT to His WILL – ENGAGE in His WORK

ANNOUNCEMENT IMPACTED ENTIRE CHURCH

v. 2 "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul"

Same Purpose of LORD Jesus spoke before ASCENSION

Acts 1:8 and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

HE CALLS US TODAY LIKE HE CALLED ISAIAH / 700 yrs. before 1st Coming

Isa 6.8 I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

GOD HAD ALREADY CALLED PAUL TO BE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

Acts 9:15 the Lord said "This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.

NOW GOD ENLISTS BARNABAS as PARTNER in THIS MISSION

ANTIOCH still MISSION Field - NEWLY FOUNDED - ALSO MISSION BASE

easily have said, we have too much to do, cannot think of others

BICF > LANDING Place for Int'l's > LAUNCHING PAD for Global Workers

SHARING GOOD NEWS WAS WAY OF LIFE - GOSSIPED THE GOSPEL

KNEW EVERYONE IN ANTIOCH AND WHOLE WORLD NEEDS JESUS

THIS MADE THEM OPEN to HEAR MISSIONARY CALL OF HOLY SPIRIT

SACRIFICE -2 OF MOST GIFTED TEACHERS - OFF ON MAD EXCURSION

MICHAEL GREEN "Is there not an important lesson here? We shall be fired to evangelism in our own locality in proportion as we are willing to neglect our own needs and look to needier places overseas which we can support. It is the church which waters others that is herself watered. But how few churches seem to believe this."

NOTHING INVIGORATES Local CHURCH MORE than SENDING M's

WE then FEEL A DIRECT LINK TO THE NATIONS & WORLD MISSION

EXCUSES OFTEN GIVEN

"We give money to missions, isn't that enough?"

"We cannot send Bill, he is need to work in our church"

"Don't those other countries over there have their own religion?"

IF ANTIOCH MADE such EXCUSES - GOSPEL NEVER COME TO HAWAII

b. Cities

ANTIOCH 3rd LARGEST ROMAN CITY / 1/2 MILLION PEOPLE

VERY NATURE - CITY IS MADE UP OF MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE

different in cultures / races / background / tradition / philosophy / style

GOSPEL BEGAN IN QUIET RURAL VILLAGES OF PALESTINE

QUICKLY became an URBAN FAITH / GOOD NEWS CONFRONTED CITIES

BOOK OF ACTS IS ALMOST ENTIRELY URBAN - 40 different cities named

trace missionary journeys / lesson in ancient urban geography

WORLD GOD WANTS US TO REACH IS URBAN

More than 50% of World's Population live in Cities / MEGACITIES
 CHINA more than 200 Cities with More than MILLION – Beijing 23 M just 3rd!

c. Certainty

MISSIONARY THRUST WAS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1:8a you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;

COMMISSIONING AGENT? - BOTH Holy Spirit and the Church
 v 3 "they sent them off" v. 4 sent on their way by the Holy Spirit"
 v. 4 "sent off" = RELEASE / DISMISS

BALANCE - Spirit sent them, by telling Church to do so
 Church sent them, because told to do so by Spirit

BALANCE IS HEALTHY CORRECTIVE TO TWO OPPOSITE EXTREMES

INSTITUTIONALISM / INDIVIDUALISM

INDIVIDUALISM - Xtian "lead by God" w/out affirmation of Church

Last Year – Couple in mid 30's Well-Educated, Different Continents,
 Met > Within ONE Month – Both Convinced “God told us to be Married”
 Came Over to TELL US what GOD Said – Conversation STOPPER! AMEN!
 Several YELLOW Flags, Few RED Flags > Kept Silent because God Spoke
 Soon met Mr. & Mrs. MONTH after Wedding in Tears > Talking DIVORCE
 Can you HELP US NOW??

PERSONAL CHOICE IS NOT TO BE DENIED -
 ONLY SAFE & HEALTHY IN RELATION to the SPIRIT Spirit-led CHURCH
 people make so many decisions w/ no Pastoral counsel or covering
 Believers and Leaders in Antioch – CLEARLY Confirmed CALL of Holy Spirit

INSTITUTIONALISM - all decisions made by Church w/out Holy Spirit
 Responsibility of Church to be Spirit led in all its decisions

GOD IS AT WORK IN US SO THAT WE MIGHT WORK

Philippians 2:12-13 continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

BALANCED MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Inward Call to the Worker

Outward Confirmation by Church

Commissioning by the Church

Sending by Holy Spirit

MODERN MISSION BOARD: SENDING Agency - EXPEDITES Work of Church

Mission Board should NOT receive Candidate without Honest Recommendation

From their PASTORS and ELDERS

PAUL & BARNABAS DID ALL THIS WITH NO MODERN CONVENIENCES

NO SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY / NO HUGE BUDGET

EMPOWERED AND EQUIPPED BY AN AWESOME GOD "all God had done"

TO WHOM MUCH HAS BEEN GIVEN / MUCH WILL BE REQUIRED

SONG OF WORSHIP IS A MISSIONARY BALLAD

Antioch: IN WORSHIP THE HOLY SPIRIT EXTENDED MISSIONARY CALL

MISSIONS BEGINS AND ENDS IN WORSHIP

JOHN PIPER "Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever."

WORSHIP IS THE GOAL OF MISSIONS

WE want to See the NATIONS ENTER the WHITE-HOT ENJOYMENT OF GOD

WE WANT TO SEE GOD GLORIFIED AND THE NATIONS MADE GLAD

WORSHIP IS THE FUEL OF MISSIONS

passion for God in worship precedes the preaching of the Gospel

We will COMMEND WHAT We CHERISH
 WE WILL CALL THE NATIONS TO BE GLAD
 When WE OURSELVES REJOICE IN THE LORD

As we're TRULY FILLED with SPIRIT > We will INSTINCTIVELY Tell Others

Psalm 97:1 The LORD reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice.

Psalm 67:3-4 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy

Missionary to Mexico - Cameron Townsend - Remote Indian village
 WANTED TO TRANSLATE BIBLE into LANGUAGE of POOR INDIAN TRIBE
 Gov't Officer "As long as I am in office, the Bible will never be translated into the Indian languages - it would
 only upset them"
 TOWNSEND PRAYED - SUPPORTERS PRAYED - DOOR NEVER OPENED
 DECIDED TO LIVE AMONG THESE PEOPLE AND WAIT ON THE LORD
 discovered a fountain of clear spring water sprang up in town
 water simply ran down the hill unused

TOWNSEND Encouraged PEOPLE, PLANT GARDENS around THIS SPRING
 SOON GREW 2X's AS MUCH FOOD - ECONOMY GREW

Townsend wrote article about this for small Mexican paper

Article eventually seen by President of Mexico

SHOCKED! GRINGO LIVED WHERE Few MEXICAN WOULD EVEN LIVE
 PRESIDENT: LIMOUSINE, MOTORCADE DROVE TO SEE TOWNSEND

PRES. TO TOWNSEND "Of course, you can translate the Scriptures"

BEGAN - Lifetime friendship Townsend + President Cardenas

AND work of Wycliffe Bible Translators

CHURCH HAD A MISSIONARY BANQUET

DEACON ASKED TO SIT NEXT TO AFRICAN WHO CAME TO ATTEND

DID NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO AFRICAN

Chicken dinner was served / as they ate Deacon said to African

"Chomp, Chomp, good huh?"

Later they were served a delicious cup of coffee

Deacon said, "Glug, glug, good huh?"

SPEAKER for NIGHT INTRODUCED - HAPPENED to be this AFRICAN MAN HELD DEGREE FROM
 OXFORD AND SPOKE IN IMPECCABLE ENGLISH

after the meeting African found the Deacon and said to him

"Blab, blab, good huh?"

