

Acts 13.1-12

"The First Step toward the Ends of the Earth"

CHURCH at ANTIOCH > MOTHER Church of Mission

Xians ran from Jerusalem: Lost their Homes, Not Testimony / Zeal

Good News of Great JOY to 3rd Largest City in Roman Empire

Where Hellenistic Culture & ROMAN Empire met SYRIAN Desert

1.8 Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of earth."

God uses Antioch Church to take Gospel to Ends of the Earth

1. Sent by the Spirit

Ch 13 Antioch Church in WORSHIP > at POWER CENTER

v. 2 "While they were worshipping the Lord" – Not Empty Ritual

Lifting Praise to God – He reveals His PLANS to Them

v. 1 Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul

5 Different LEADERS @ Antioch > Team Ministry

"Better get 10 men for job than 1 man do work of 10 men" D.L. Moody

NO CHURCH IN N.T. EVER LEAD BY ONE MAN

"Most churches have one of two extremes in leadership, one man who dominates or a committee that stagnates, need team that motivates"

Risen Jesus called Paul: Apostle to Gentiles 9.15 "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

v. 2 "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul" > God called their BEST to GO!

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."

Gospel began in Quiet Rural Villages of PALESTINE

Acts > 40 different CITIES > GOOD NEWS confronted CITIES

More than 50% of World's Population live in Cities / MEGACITIES China more 200 Cities,

More than Million – Beijing 23 M, 3rd largest

COMMISSIONING AGENT? - BOTH Holy Spirit AND the Church

v. 3 "they...sent them off"

v. 4 "sent out by the Holy Spirit"

Inward Call to the Worker / Outward Confirmation by Church

Commissioning by the Church / Sending by Holy Spirit

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."

v. 4 down to Seleucia/COAST > they sailed to Cyprus: Barnabas' Home

v. 5 And they had John to assist them > COUSIN of Barnabas

Natural Bridges of Mission Travel – Family, Friends, Interests

Very Possible Xtians in Antioch FROM Cyprus > Divine Connections

Seminary Student > UGANDA invited Me & Classmates to See Home

Friend pastor in Beijing > Invited us move from KZ to serve in CHINA

Jack Snell he'll be Preaching here in 2 Weeks

Spirit-Leads across Familiar Bridges > 1st Mission Field Friends/Family

2. Speaking by the Spirit

v. 5 they arrived at Salamis – EAST End of Cyprus, Commercial Center

they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.

Strategy: Gospel to Jew FIRST > Messiah COME!

Back Row Often > Seekers, Gentiles – Believed One TRUE GOD > Jesus!

Inclusion of GENTILES, Not mean Exclusion of JEWS > One Ohana in X

v. 6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos

Traveled 90 miles across WEST End of Cyprus – CAPITAL

v. 6 came upon a certain magician, Jewish false prophet, Bar-Jesus

Point of Spear > God's Message > What is TRUTH

Brought News of CREATOR & His CHRIST to Cyprus

SATAN already On-Island – Named "Son of Jesus" – Many Counterfeits

Jesus Parable of Weed and Tares > Both Seeds, Little Plants, Look Alike
 One TRUE – Edible – Life-giving > Other tries to Strangle Life, Kill
 WEED Wrapped itself Around Rome's Top Official on Island Proconsul

Note about LUKE: Names, Places, Weather, Gov't – Never Proven Wrong
 Lots of Critics of God/Scripture tried to take Luke down > Still STANDS

v. 7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

Really INTELLIGENT > Wants Hear God > FEAR beginning WISDOM
 Risen Jesus ordered STEPS of Servants on 1st Mission to CYPRUS
 Meet Man who OPENS Doors – Top Roman Official - Seeking TRUTH

Missionary to Mexico - Cameron Townsend - Remote Indian village Wanted 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
 PEOPLE AND WAIT ON THE LORD

Saw Fountain of Clear Spring Water > drained Down Hill UNUSED

Encouraged Locals – Plant Gardens Nearby – Food Supply grew 2 X's

President Cardenas read Article in Paper > Drove to See what Going On!

Met Townsend asked "Can I translate Bible into Language?" Of Course!

Cameron Townsend & Lazaro Cardenas became Lifelong FRIENDS

Townsend founded Wycliffe Bible Translators – Eternal, Global Impact!

God NOT Only Demonstrated His TRUTH but also BLINDING POWER
 Some see Miracles > Distracted by SHINY OBJECT > SIMONY \$\$
 Miracles of God > AUTHENTICATE the Authority of GOD > WORD
 Sergius Paulus > HEARD the Word and SAW the Power of Word

v. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

ASTONISHED: Wisdom, Truth, Clarity, Justice, Power > WORD of God

End of Jesus's Sermon on Mount > Matthew: "when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes" (Mt 7.28,29)

Sergius is a representative of the needy Gentile communities Paul & Barnabas sent to evangelize. He had no connection to the synagogue, like the mass of the population with no religious connections...like the great mass of our world today with no contact with the Gospel or the Church...the Lord is sending us to them. Bruce Milne

Astonishing TEACHER > God become Man to Reveal God to Man

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth... No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. John 1.14,18

3. Seeing by the Spirit

⁸But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him ¹⁰and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ¹¹And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.

POWER Encounter – Light/Dark, Sight/Blindness, God/devil

Holy Spirit of Living God > Omnipotent – Unstoppable – Discerning

2 Different MEN – Magician of devil & Messenger of God

Elymas means SORCERER / Saul (Heb) Paulus (Greek) – 2 Names

NOT that Different > BOTH Served Satan > Fought TRUE God

BOTH Blinded by POWER of Living God – led by the HAND

Paul pronouncing JUDGMENT on his OLD SELF

God who BLINDS can also BLESS / Affliction > lead to Awakening

FINAL Chapter of Elymas' Story Not Recorded in Acts

HOPE – God who Broke & Blinded Saul > Extended Grace & Mercy

We know Saul's story had a Happy Ending > Invited to Trust TRUE God

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27.1,2

Congregational Prayer

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone in silence when it is laid on him; let him put his mouth in the dust — there may yet be hope; let him give his cheek to the one who strikes, and let him be filled with insults. For the Lord will not cast off forever, but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love"

(Lamentations 3.22-32)

Thank God for His Mercy and Grace

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1.6-10).

Acts 13.1-12 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. ²While 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." ³Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. ⁴So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. ⁶When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. ⁷He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him ¹⁰and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ¹¹And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. ¹²Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.