



The CHURCH Series

Part 12 - Missions

Introduction...

- We now pick up our journey from where we left two sessions.
- The Grace upon the Early Church began to take them everywhere beyond the confines of Jerusalem.
- The conversion of Cornelius opened the way for the mission to the Gentiles (non –Jews) to commence.
- This session will follow the Scriptures as they narrate the flow of the Spirit.



Introduction...

- *22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem,*
- *and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.*
- *23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.*
- *24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.*
Acts 11:22-24



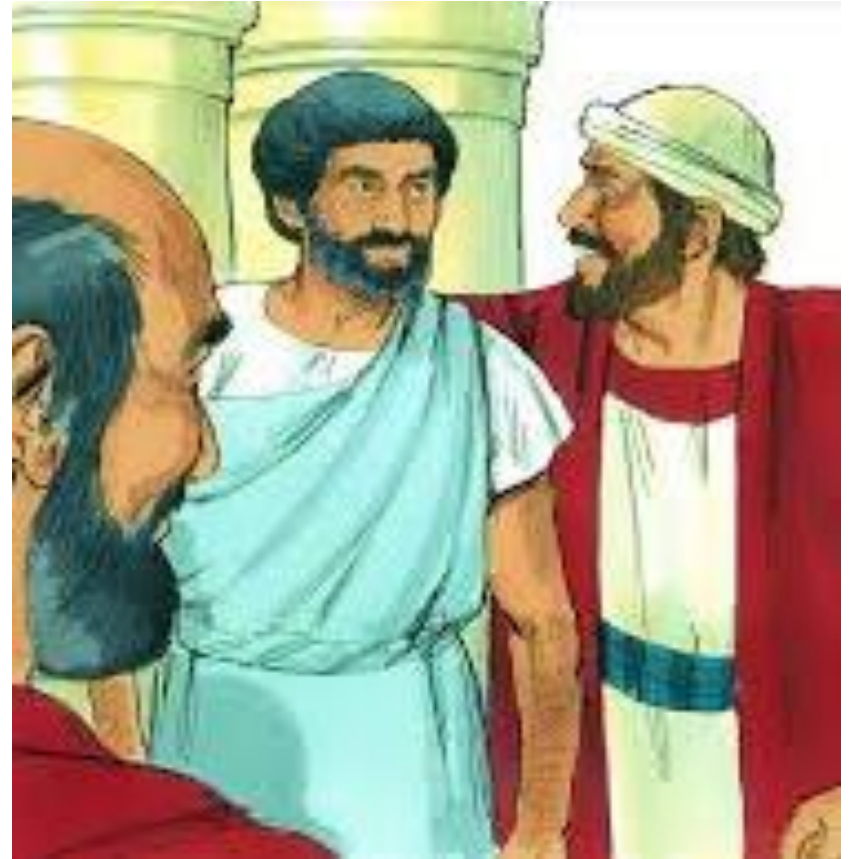
Introduction...

- *²⁵ Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.*
- *²⁶ And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch.*
- *So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people.*
- *And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.*
Acts 11:25-26
- PS: Bible analysts say the duration was 8-10 years between Acts 9:30 (When Saul leaves Jerusalem for Tarsus) and when Barnabas comes for him



To Seek Saul...

- Barnabas went to get Saul (Paul hadn't been called by that name yet).
- The key reason was that the new move of God amongst the Gentiles required a special type of Christian.
- Saul was Jewish but grew up within the Hellenistic culture of the day.
- It is like a Christian convert from Islam who grew up as a Muslim.
- She would be ideal to reach and help other Arabic speaking Christian converts from Islam.
- They spent time with these new believers (a whole year!). This was supposed to be a visit, and it turned into a relocation.
- The name 'Christian' was first coined in Antioch.
- Antioch (modern day Turkey) gave us Christianos the Greek term for Follower of Christ.



Agabus..

- *27 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.*
- *28 Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit*
- *that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.*
- *29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea.*
- *30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.*
Acts 11:27-30



Prophets...

- The Spirit is highlighting here the role of true Prophets.
- They prophesy and what they declare happens.
- They just 'pop up' and then seem to disappear throughout the Book of Acts.
- This shows the submissive role of real prophets who are not taking centre stage.
- Barnabas and Saul were a dynamic duo. They helped to collect the funds raised and took the donations to the Church in Judea.



Barnabas and...

- *25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry,*
- *and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.*
Acts 12:25.
- I really think this verse belongs in Chapter 13 rather than the end of Chapter 12.
- It picks up from where we left off end of Chapter 11.
- This is where the 'cameras' switch almost permanently to Paul the Apostle.
- Lets start with Chapter 13....



Barnabas and...

- *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers:*
- *Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.*
- *²As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said,*
- *“Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”*
- *³Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.*
Acts 13:1-3



Antioch...

- Chapter 13 switches the camera's lens to the Gentiles.
- You could say that the chapters 1-12 mirrored the Lord's command of taking the Gospel to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria
- While from chapter 13, we have – “till the ends of the Earth”
- The first half of Acts had Peter as key leader whilst from here it's Paul who takes the lead to the Gentiles.
- The missionary journeys through Paul and others change the history and destiny of Western Civilisation.



Antioch...

- Chapter 13 is about 12 years after Paul's conversion.
- The opening verses show a multicultural leadership.
- They also show the role of prophets grounded in local community
- Some scholars believe with analytical reason that the Simeon here not only was African, (Niger means Black) but that He was probably from Niger-ia or From Africa.
- This short verse shows the interconnecting way the Gentile Nations related during Biblical times. Remember the African High Official of Acts 8:27 and the respectful way the Scriptures describe him.
- There was no clear 'senior pastor' and the scriptures are careful to lay out the mutual authoritative way the leaders related together.



Antioch...

- It's also interesting to note that the Bible lists Saul here as a TEACHER, not an Apostle.
- Which means that it was only after his commissioning and missionary release that the office of Apostle is conferred on him.
- Notice also that the Bible does not confer on anyone present the authority of Identifying and commissioning Saul
- It just says the Holy Spirit said.
- We can learn a lot from these short passages. All the ceremony and carnality that surrounds FATHERISM in the Church today would be eradicated
- If we related to each other with such humility and simplicity of spirit, the Church would be governed more by the Holy Spirit than men!



By the Spirit..

- *⁴ So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.*
- *⁵ And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant.*
- *⁶ Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus,*
- *⁷ who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.*



By the Spirit..

- Once again, we see that wording:
- “Being sent out by the Holy Spirit...”
- Obviously, it was one or two of the named prophets that spoke by the Spirit but the scriptures for some reason ascribe everything to the Holy Spirit.
- This keeps the Holy Spirit in the frame and the ego of men out!
- This whole thing is brought about by Prayer and FASTING.
- We could spend a lot of time comparing this whole scenario with what happens in Churches today!



Paphos...

- Salamis was the major capital of Cyprus. There they preached the Gospel.
- They started in the Synagogues as the best landing place.
- They travel many miles preaching before coming to Paphos which is about 100 miles from Salamis!
- Pro Consul in Roman legislative terms is a very Senior Rank. In fact his rank would have been above Pontus Pilate.
- According to scholars, Archaeology findings have apparently found both this man's name and title confirming that he was a real person.



Elymas...

- *⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) ^[b]withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.*
- *⁹ Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him*
- *¹⁰ and said, “O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?”*
- *¹¹ And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.”*
- *And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand.*
- *¹² Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.*



Elymas..

- The irony was that the obstruction is from a Jew who is supposed to be a representative of God!
- Saul is also called Paul...
- This is the introduction of his name.
- It's interesting that his Roman citizen's name is introduced at the same time he is about to convert another Roman called Paulus!
- Paul faces the occultic powers head on!
- He overcomes the spiritual opposition with authority and power!
- This is the first recorded miracle of Paul
- This supernatural ministry converts the High ranking official.



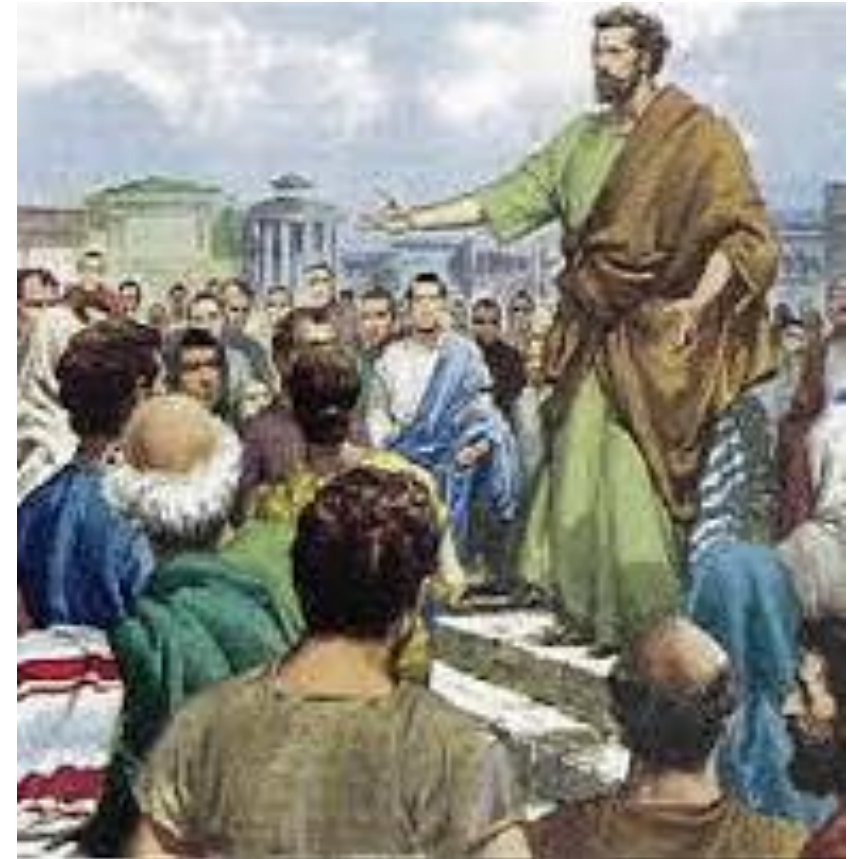
Paul and..

- *13 Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos,*
- *they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.*
- *14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia,*
- *and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.*
- *15 And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying,*
- *“Men and brethren, if you have any word of ^[c]exhortation for the people, say on.”*



Paul and..

- The scripture says Paul and his party
- This shows a shift in leadership of the group from Barnabas and Saul.
- The name change starts at Paphos.
- So, Saul becomes PAUL at Paphos after the high-ranking conversion and the miracle.
- John Mark leaves them at this point. We will come back to this at some other point because there is more to this simple statement.
- These movements from region to region is not a few hours but many many days and weeks and sometimes months.
- They arrive at another 'Antioch', this City is in Pisidia



Paul stood...

- *¹⁶ Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, “Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen:*
- *¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt,*
- *and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it.*
- *¹⁸ Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness.*
- *¹⁹ And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment.*



Paul...

- We have a first glimpse of Paul's brilliance in joining the Old Testament Scriptures to Christ.
- The preaching of the Gospel was always pointing to the crucified Christ and His resurrection.
- When you look closely at the structure and narrative of Paul's sermon, you see the focus landing on Christ and His resurrection.
- If Pastors and Leaders today kept the Gospel as the focus, we would have more Christ centric believers and many more Disciples



Paul and Barnabas

- *42 So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.*
- *43 Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas,*
- *who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.*



Paul and Barnabas...

- The sermon or preaching produced great results.
- The hearts of these Jews and men was impacted by Truth!
- The Gentiles were begging Paul and Barnabas to come and share these words with their community.
- It appears that the Jews were preached to first.
- The Gentiles were ears dropping on the sermon!



Paul and Barnabas...

- *44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God.*
- *45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.*
- *46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first;*
- *but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.*



Envy...

- The crowds gathered to hear the word of life.
- The Jews now became jealous because of the crowds that gathered
- They were filled with envy and started contradicting the message!
- This is an age old problem
- Men are always comparing the numbers of people attending meetings
- People are always using crowds as the yardstick



Envy....

- 47 For so the Lord has commanded us:
- ‘I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,
That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”
- 48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord.
- And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.
- 49 And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region.



Envy...

- *50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city,*
- *raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their region.*
- *51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and came to Iconium.*
- *52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.*



Rejoice...!!

- When you are in the will of God, you will find those whom you are sent to.
- God has people ready to give their lives to Christ in every region; our job is to find them and preach to them.
- Not everyone is going to listen to you!
- Do not be distracted by those who reject your message.
- Focus on those who are ready to receive the Word of God from your lips.
- Next Session – Mission to Galatia

