

Church – The Beginnings, Part 35
Missions: Sent out by the Holy Spirit - Cyprus
Acts 13:1-12 | 07/02/2017
NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP
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Acts 13:1-4

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. ² As 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.” ³ Then, having FASTED and PRAYED, and LAID HANDS ON THEM, THEY SENT THEM AWAY.

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 [Mark] 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 [i.e. Sergius Paulus] called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to HEAR the WORD of God. ⁸ But ELYMAS the SORCERER (for so his name is translated) WITHSTOOD them, seeking to TURN the proconsul AWAY from THE FAITH. ⁹ Then Saul, who also is called Paul, [having just been] 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.

For Today’s Teaching, please go to: <https://wp1.NLFJI.org/302> (will be uploaded later)

For Background regarding the church of Antioch:

go to: <https://wp1.NLFJI.org/300> & <https://wp1.NLFJI.org/301>

What can we learn from this?:

1. **Barnabas, Saul and John Mark** (the writer of the Gospel of Mark) had the Prayerful support of the church of Antioch – They were Sent out and Directed by the Holy Spirit to go to Cyprus – the Island that **Barnabas is from** – his home “country” But, they did NOT have Financial or other kinds of “Mission Agency” support we have today.
2. **PREACHING: They did NOT WAIT → they started right way → Spread the Gospel**
They Preached/Proclaimed/Taught/Shared the Word of God – specifically that which relates to all the Messianic Prophecies of the Messiah of Israel, God’s Judgment regarding Sin, and God’s Remedy (His Salvation) in Jesus Christ (the Messiah), etc. They First went to all the Jews → The Synagogues. This was a Strategy

The Apostle Saul (Paul) said: “For I am not ashamed of the **GOSPEL of Christ**, for it is the **POWER of God** unto salvation for everyone who believes, for **the Jew first** and also for the Greek [i.e. the Gentile]. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:16-17

This is God’s Methodology → Reach the Jews First. THEN, the Jews Reach the Gentiles, then the church (Jews and/or Gentiles mixture) continues to reach the rest of humanity until Christ returns (ref. Romans 11 on how God intends to still reach the Jews).

3. **WARFARE:** Most Folks are **NOT** waiting for the Gospel to come to them. Most already have some sort of belief system and/or religion that “satisfies” them.

BAR-JESUS or ELYMAS – the Sorcerer or False Prophet ... similar to the Sorcerer that Philip encountered in Acts 8 - **Simon the Sorcerer** – “The Great Power of God”. In both cases these false prophets / sorcerers sought to keep people under a **Strong Delusion** – under their control and to inoculate them from the Gospel **BEFORE** it came to them.

That is **SATAN’s** Strategy with all the World Religions, regional religions, false beliefs, etc. They are always **enforced** by Family, Relational & Social Peer Pressure or even Cultural and Governmental Pressures. **The Fear of Death, Fear of Losing Status, Fear of Losing something** → are always the **Strategies** Satan uses (Heb. 2:14-15; 1 John 5:19). He uses Fear and Intimidation along with Addiction. It is **Spiritual Warfare**

Ephesians 6:10-20 - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the LORD and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench ALL the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **WORD** of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— ¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the GOSPEL, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I **MAY SPEAK BOLDLY**, as I ought to **SPEAK**.

(boldness → “If God is **FOR** us, who can be against us?” – Romans 8:31)

God And His Word → He is **More Powerful** than anything Satan can use to withstand the Gospel’s Advance. Truth always wins over and above Lies

The GOSPEL of CHRIST ONLY ADVANCES when the **PEOPLE of GOD** → **OBEY GOD:**

- a. When they **PRAY** (like in Ephesians 6:10-20 & Acts 4:23-31)
- b. When they **Preach/Teach/Proclaim/Share** the Word of God as Barnabas and Saul did in Acts 13:4-12 (also read Acts 4:23-31 – all the church did this, together)

The opposite is, also, True. When the People of God are fearful, afraid, **NOT Bold**, not committed to Personally Spreading the Gospel – Satan’s strategies and purposes win, always. The Question is – Are you **More Obedient** to God than **Fearful** of Satan’s Intimidations when it comes to Personally Spreading the Gospel? **Are you afraid?**

4. **FAITHFULLY OBEDIENT:** Notice – Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark **did NOT** wait around for some sort of mystical “**opportunity**” to pop-up in order to share the Gospel – they went out and **made the Opportunities happen**, in the Power of the Holy Spirit. It was **WHILE** they were Faithfully Spreading the Gospel that they were **INVITED** to Speak to Procounsul, Sergius Paulus (highly schooled, highly trained, intelligent, learned – maybe he would be a PhD, today).

Principle: When Being Faithfully Obedient to Christ – God will open-up more doors to Serve Him Faithfully. If you are faithful in the little, He will open doors for you to be faithful in much more (Luke 16:10; Matthew 25:14-29)

5. All Christians are **Called to Spread the Gospel** – the Apostles are our Examples.
It is **NOT** Specially Called “Super Christians” that Spread the Gospel.

We **not** supposed to just wait around for some sort of “opportunities” to pop-up ...
We are to be like the Apostles and Prayerfully create Gospel Opportunities in the
Power of the Holy Spirit. We need to be **Bold, Courageous, not fearful of humans.**

Acts was written as an example for us to see how the early church **OBEYED** Christ, in
the Power of the Holy Spirit → the Obedience of the Faith.

→ Loving God, Loving One Another, and Loving the Lost to Christ

Are you ready to the Turn the World Upside-down for Christ here on Johns Island?