

A Heart after God

Acts 13: 13-23 [KJ]

“Now when Paul and his company loosed 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 unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

20 And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave their testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.

23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, **Jesus**”

2.

Acts 13

Gives us facts pertaining to the First Great Mission of Paul to the Gentiles

* This passage begins the most daring and challenging step ever taken by any organization in the history of the world

* The Christian church launched forth

* This church set about making a deliberate effort to carry the gospel to the whole world

The Antioch Church commissioned its first two missionaries for the deliberate purpose of going to meet the world's desperate need for Christ

* The first missionaries were members of a great church, a church that reached out to all

The greatness of the Antioch church

1. The Antioch church was God's choice to become the mission and evangelistic center of the world

[So we must keep close attention on her anointing]

* God was now ready to send His Word to the whole world

* Exemplified before the world was the first three phases of the great commission being launched

* The disciples of Christ had borne and left a witness in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria

* Now it was time for a witness to go into all the world, reaching out even to the uttermost part

“Acts 1:8 (KJV)

“8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”

2.

Jesus assigned the believer's great task—the great commission

Note

A. The believer's equipping power was to be the Holy Spirit.

* The disciples had asked about the kingdom, the positions of leadership and authority Christ had promised

The point is critical and to be noted with all diligence

* They were to receive power, but not the power of this earth

* Their power was to be spiritual and supernatural

* It was to be the very power... of God Himself, of the Supreme Being of the universe, of His presence, of His Spirit

God's very own Spirit was to dwell within the heart and life of the believer
No greater power could ever be possessed by anyone

* This is clearly seen: [Acts 2] once the early disciples experienced the coming of God's Spirit into their being, they never again asked about earthly power

* Experiencing the presence and power of God within their lives was the summit, the supreme experience of their lives

But note a critical point:

The Holy Spirit comes upon believers as an equipping power

The major purpose for His coming is to equip the believer to carry out his task for God

Nothing else was ever needed - Nothing else can ever satisfy—not position or authority, recognition or fame - not if the person has truly received the Spirit of God into his heart and life.

1. The believer's equipping power was to be the Holy Spirit

2. The believer's task is the great task of witnessing for God

* This is the point Christ is making, a critical point

* It is time for...

- WITNESSING

- BEING WITNESSES TO CHRIST

Witnessing Christ, sharing the glorious salvation in Him, is the great task of the believer

“Acts 1:8 (KJV)

“8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”

The word "*you*"

* It is the believer who is to witness

* It is the believer who knows the truth of salvation

The words "*unto me*"

* Christ is the message, not a man's ideas, not even the idea of religion

* "Christ crucified" is the believer's testimony

The word "*witness*" (Greek, *martures* PWS: 4393)

* This is the same word as martyr

* The believer is to be so committed to reaching men that he is ready to die as a martyr if need be

The word "*witness*" is not a command

Rather, it is a natural result of the Holy Spirit within a person

* So is power

* The Lord says very simply that a *Spirit-filled person has power* and *becomes a witness* for Him throughout the world

* This is important, for it makes power and witnessing trademarks of Christian believers

* A genuine believer possesses both the Spirit and power in his life and becomes *by nature a witness for the Lord*

3. The believer's method: Jesus gives the method that the believer is to follow in his witness and spread of the gospel

* The believer is to witness where he is (Jerusalem) and move progressively outward (Judaea and Samaria) until he is having a part in reaching the uttermost part of the earth.

Every believer...is to go as far as he can personally go - is to give as sacrificially as he can for others to go - is to use and support every means he can to reach the world.

The believer is to witness where he is first, see to it that Christ is well known throughout his home and community before moving on

* But once Christ is well known, the believer is to move out, ever pressing outward from where he is

* His first witness is to be...in Jerusalem: where he is, his home and local community - in all Judaea: other communities and areas and cities and states. Note the words "all Judaea"

• In Samaria: other states and provinces where people are antagonistic. There was bitter hatred between the Jews and Samaritans.

What a difference world evangelization would experience if each believer would simply do what Christ says.

Wednesday evening the Lord set in this place in a very powerful way

- * The Holy Ghost emphasized the importance of the Antioch Anointing
- * You see Antioch was a church that was Great – Great in the Lords work

The Antioch Church understood the Great Commission

Matthew 22:9

"Go ye [the church] therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage"

Matthew 28:19-20

"Go ye [the church] therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"

Acts 1:8

"But ye [the church] shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"

The Church in Antioch

Acts 13:1-4 (KJV)

**"1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.
3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus"**

The first missionaries were called while ministering and fasting

- * This is critical to see
- * The chosen men were faithful in their ministry right where they were
- * They were not waiting to serve when they reached the fields of the world; they were serving right then and there, right where they were
- * They did not overlook nor turn away from needs around them, in their own community – Home, City, Church

It was because of their *faithfulness* where they were that God knew He could trust these men to do greater things for Him

Acts 13:1-3 (KJV)

“Now there were *in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers;* as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away”

**Note: the Holy Spirit was not calling Paul and Barnabas to a life of witness
Every believer is called to be a witness for God**

- * The Holy Spirit was calling the men to a specific task, to a lifetime commitment to ministry

The call of the Holy Spirit comes at a specific time

- * There is *a definite time* when the Holy Spirit speaks to the believer's heart and mind, and the voice and will of God are unmistakable
- * The call of the Holy Spirit involves "work"—the work He has chosen for the believer to do

Now we see the anointing of the Antioch Church Prophetic Word – Teachers of the Word – Setting Forth Missionaries – Simply a Great Commission Church

Acts 13:6-10 (KJV)

“6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?”

*** Now I have taught you that any time a move of God sets forth you will find a time that False Prophets and Teachers come to the surface.**

The Lord's servants confronted a false prophet

*** If there were no false prophets, there would be no false teaching**

*** False teaching exists because of false prophets**

*** Therefore the servants of Christ will not only be confronting false teaching, they will be confronting the false prophet himself**

*** This is important to note, for it is usually much more difficult to confront a person than just an idea**

The false prophet and teacher is usually in rebellion and opposition against God; therefore some form of evil attack is almost sure to happen

* **The point is this:** The Lord's true servant will run across false prophets and teachers

* Therefore, *he must be walking in the Spirit*, relying upon His leadership and care and His presence and power in order to stand against false teachers and their teaching.

Matthew 7:15

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves"

Acts 13:7-8 (KJV)

"7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

* The Word tells us that Paul took authority over the Sorcerer

* This deputy of the country was under the influence of Elymas the sorcerer

* He was seeking to keep the leadership of the country from hearing Gods Word.

Acts 13:12-13 (KJV)

"12 Then the deputy, *when he saw what was done*, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem"

I would draw your attention today to these last verses I read as I opened

Acts 13:22-23

22 And *when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king*; to whom also he gave their testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, **a man after mine own heart**, which *shall fulfill all my will*.

23 *Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus"*

Paul had been in Paphos, the capital of the island Cyprus, he had been taking the lead as preached the Word of God

- * Paul made reference to the fact that the Lord set Saul into leadership
- * Paul made reference to the fact that the Lord removed Saul from leadership

Paul then made the statement that David had a heart after His own Heart

- * Paul launched right into his major thrust: the Savior is Jesus
- * The name Jesus is significant to the Jews
- * It means Savior, God will save

The Hebrew form is Joshua (yasha), which means Jehovah is salvation; He is the Savior

- * The idea is that of deliverance, of being saved from some terrible disaster that leads to perishing

Acts 13:22-23

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(CNN)

On Easter Sunday, the day before the explosion that would take his life, Joshua Napper got saved while attending church with his family, his mother said.

When he left her home in Ohio to go work in West Virginia's Upper Big Branch South Mine, Napper left behind letters for his girlfriend and small daughter.

According to his mother, Pam Napper, the letters told them, "If anything happens to me, I'll be looking down from heaven at you all." He told his girlfriend he loved her and asked that "my baby girl" be taken care of

Pam Napper said.

"He grabbed my hand and he said, 'Mom, I love you,' " she said. "I said, 'I love you too, Josh, I'll always love you.' "

Joshua Napper died in the mine Monday, along with his uncle, Timmy Davis, and his cousin, Corey Davis, Timmy Davis' son.

At least 22 others are dead following the explosion

Asked if she had any questions for Massey, however, she said no.

"I just know there were things there that weren't right," she said, but added her brother would never have endangered her son or his son if he believed the work was unsafe

"I think it was just a freak accident," she said. "I think something just happened. I don't really know"

She is grappling with losing three members of her family

"I've been in a coal miner family," she said. "This is not the only one we've lost. We've lost younger ones, too."

Such losses are part of life in a West Virginia mining family, she said.

"It's their living; that's how they make a living," she said. "That's just West Virginia, and when something bad happens, we come together."

God wants every one of His children to become a person after His Own heart.

Acts 13:22-23

22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave their testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.

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Three thousand years ago, God chose a young man named David to be the king of Israel.

- * Out of all the sons of Jesse, the favor of God landed on a boy named David
- * By the grace of God, David became the greatest king in the history of the nation of Israel

He also became an ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ

- * He is listed among the great heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11
- * During his life, he received great promises and remarkable blessings from the hand of God.

But, greatest of all, David became a man after God's Own heart

- * This was not David's own testimony, but this is the testimony of God [Acts 13:22]

David achieved in his life something that God wants each of His children to achieve

- * David achieved something that many of us fail to accomplish
- * David became a man after God's Own heart

Now, David was not perfect. In fact, he was far from it!

- * He failed, and he failed big, but he kept short accounts with God
- * He sinned, but he was quick to confess and he manifested genuine heart repentance.

David has much that he can teach us about obedience, faith and worship

1 Samuel 16:1 (KJV) “And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons”

This chapter opens with God reminding Samuel of the fact that He has rejected Saul as king of Israel

*** Saul was chosen as king because the people wanted to be like the other nations around them [1 Sam. 8:1-5]**

Up to that point, God had ruled the nation, raising up leaders as they were needed. This was how things operated all way from the time of Moses through the days of the Judges.

They were warned that elevating a man to the throne would bring political corruption and trouble, 1 Sam. 8:7-21.

When Saul was chosen to be their king, the people were elated. He was fine physical specimen, standing head and shoulders taller than anyone else in Israel, 1 Sam. 9:2.

While he may have been a giant among men, he was a spiritual pygmy!

Saul was a jealous man, who lived for the praises of the people.

He tended to overstep his boundaries and was guilty of gross disobedience to the commands of the Lord.

As a result, the Lord proved to Israel the dangers of a human king and God rejected Saul as the king of His people.

As a result of Saul's rebellion, God chooses a new king to rule over Israel.

He chooses a young man named David.

When God chooses David, He chooses an unlikely candidate for such a lofty and powerful office.

In God's choice of David as king, we are allowed to see something of the process God uses when He would choose someone to work for Him

**Who has a heart in this place for God?
God is looking for you and wants to place you!**

Conclusion

God rules in the affairs of men

*Napoleon, at the height of his career, is reported to have given this cynical answer to someone who asked if God was on the side of France:
"God is on the side that has the heaviest artillery"*

Then came the Battle of Waterloo, where Napoleon lost both the battle and his empire

Years later, in exile on the island of St. Helena, chastened and humbled, Napoleon is reported to have quoted the words of Thomas à Kempis: "Man proposes, God disposes." [1] This is the lesson of history and of the Bible!)

Acts 13:23

"...he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave their testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.

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God is still looking for people He can call and use for His glory

Can you honestly say that your life is ready and available?

Do you possess the kind of character God is looking for?

If you know there are problems in your walk with the Lord, I invite you to come to Him today.

I invite you to confess your sins to Him, receive His forgiveness and be made ready to be used by Him in His time. If you have a desire to be used of the Lord, I invite you to come to Him, renew your commitment to Him and present yourself to Him again this evening. If there are needs, He can and will meet them!