

WINTER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2017-2018
THEME – GENUINE FAITH IS EVIDENCED BY OUR ACTIONS
UNIT I – FAITH IN CHRIST DEMONSTRATED BY THE EARLY SAINTS

“FAITH IN CHRIST DISCERNES THE GENUINE FROM THE COUNTERFEIT”



Sunday School Lesson No. 2 – December 10, 2017

PASTOR FRANK A. DAVIS, III ~ PASTOR-TEACHER

Lesson Text: Acts 13:1-12

Required Reading: Acts 13

Motto Text: Acts 13:2 (NLT), *“One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.’”*

Reliable Resources: Precepts for Living, UMI; Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Word Search 10 Electronic Library

Introduction

This week we move to our lesson from the Book of Acts in Chapter 13:1-12. We find ourselves in the midst of the Church at Antioch, Syria and according to the readings of Acts 11:18-26, God had greatly blessed the New Testament Community to flourish albeit through persecution. At Antioch, we see the extent of God’s will to reach the Gentiles with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Acts 1:8 tells us, *“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.”* What a picture of the loving power of God we see in the congregation of Antioch. It was not a closed congregation based on race, politics, or social status, but it was a picture of the will of Christ to go into all the world and make disciples according to His word. Romans 2:11 (NLT) says, *“For God does not show favoritism.”*

ANTICIPATED POWER POINTS:

- **The Setting of the Lesson.** Acts 13:1
- **The Sensitivity of the Lesson.** Acts 13:2-3
- **The Sharing of the Lesson.** Acts 13:4-12

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LESSON OUTLINE

One once asked a bank teller “how do you prepare yourself to know the difference between genuine and counterfeit money?” The response was, bank tellers are trained to know only real, genuine money. Therefore, when something other than genuine appears, it is immediately recognized. So it should be among the Saints of God. II Timothy 2:15 (NLT) says, *“Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.”*

I. The Setting of the Lesson. Acts 13:1

The Antioch church was led by a multi-cultured leadership team. This was a blessing to the people of their congregation, and should be a model for the Church today! ***“God is no respecter of persons”*** beloved. How the church suffers today because of the small-mindedness of quietly prejudiced human beings. What gifts are inactive, that could be used to carry out the mission of the Master! God help us to be honest and not use double standards to govern our lives. At the Church at Antioch were at least two men of Jewish descent (Barnabas and Saul) and two men of African descent (Simeon “The Black” and Lucius of Cyrene, North Africa). Also among the leaders was Manaen who was raised up with the Herods who were of royal blood. The setting at Antioch teaches us that God definitely used diversity in the leadership of His Church!

II. The Sensitivity of the Lesson. Acts 13:2-3

We also learn that while these men gave leadership to the Church, they were excellent examples of worship, fasting, and praying. Remember the teachings of Peter earlier concerning Church leaders in Acts 6:4, ***“But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”***

Beloved, because of their sensitivity, they were able to hear God’s voice and fully follow His leadership. We today have that same blessing when we walk according to His word. I Timothy 4:13-16, ***“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”*** John 14:26, ***“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”*** The Lord directed these godly leaders to set aside Saul and Barnabas for special missionary service, that they would go forth and share the Gospel to whom He would direct them. Why? Because they were genuine and not counterfeit leaders!

III. The Sharing of the Lesson. Acts 13:4-12

The sharing of God’s Gospel led to several missionary journeys as we read throughout the rest of the Book of Acts. Let us begin to travel with our missionaries, who were genuine and not counterfeit!

A. From Antioch to Seleucia. vs. 4a (An over land journey to the sea coast.)

B. From Seleucia to the Island of Cyprus. vs. 4b-12

1. They preached in Jewish synagogues in Salamis and John Mark joined their ranks as an apprentice!
2. They traveled over land to Paphos. Here they encountered their first real challenges of genuineness or counterfeited.
 - a. A sorcerer named Bar-jesus (Elymas). vs. 6, 8 (Counterfeit)
 - b. A seeker named Sergius Paulus. vs. 7 (Genuine)
 - c. Spirit of God in Saul (now using his Greek name, Paul). vs. 9-11(Genuine)
 - d. Salvation comes to the life of Sergius Paulus. vs. 13 (Genuine)

When this mission team from the Lord Jesus arrived, there was a counterfeit disciple of Satan in Paphos, strategically placed in the government, giving so-called wise council to the deputy. This counterfeit’s name was Bar-jesus, which meant “Son of Jesus.” Now we know that Jesus was pure, and did not have any children, but this deceiver who was also called Elymas, seems to have been masquerading as one of Christ’s disciples. The Bible is clear when it describes Satan as a counterfeit. He will do anything to hinder the spread of the Gospel, but the Spirit of Christ gave Paul the power of discernment, and he was able to expose Satan’s disciple by striking him blind! This act opened the eyes of the deputy, and enabled him to see the light of the Gospel of Christ and be saved. ***“I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.”*** Thank God that Paul became righteously indignant and did not allow Bar-jesus to practice deception!

CLOSING

Beloved, the mission continued and met with favor and folly, because the Gospel was the ultimate message and salvation was the ultimate end for the multitude. Jesus said in Matthew 16, ***“... upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*** Will you follow the mandate of the Master Jesus Christ and spread the Good News of the Gospel everywhere? The members of God’s New Testament Community did, and because they were obedient, we are reading about the transforming power of Christ’s salvation today. Acts 1:8, ***“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.”*** God is seeking those who will walk by the faith of the Son of God, and are able to discern the genuine from the counterfeit!

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LOOKING AHEAD:

December 17, 2017

Acts 14:8-11, 19-23

Please join us each Wednesday noon at Bibleway where Pastor Davis teaches the Sunday School lesson.

