



## Lesson 15 – The Gospel Message in Antioch

Based on Acts 11:19-26; 13:1-3.

1) Where does our lesson begin today?

**Acts 11:19** Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and \_\_\_\_\_, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

After the disciples had been driven from Jerusalem by persecution, the gospel message spread rapidly through the regions lying beyond the limits of Palestine; and many small companies of believers were formed in important centers. Their labors were usually confined to the Hebrew and Greek Jews, large colonies of whom were at this time to be found in nearly all the cities of the world.

2) What happened in Antioch?

**Acts 11:20** And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord Jesus.

Among the places mentioned where the gospel was gladly received is Antioch, at that time the metropolis of Syria. The extensive commerce carried on from that populous center brought to the city many people of various nationalities. Besides, Antioch was favorably known as a resort for lovers of ease and pleasure, because of its healthful situation, its beautiful surroundings, and the wealth, culture, and refinement to be found there. In the days of the apostles, it had become a city of luxury and vice.

3) What was the result of their efforts?

**Acts 11:21** And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ unto the Lord.

4) Who came to help?

**Acts 11:22-24** Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth \_\_\_\_\_, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and \_\_\_\_\_ them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a \_\_\_\_\_ man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

Upon arrival in his new field of labor, Barnabas saw the work that had already been accomplished by divine grace.

5) Where was Paul at this time?

**Galatians 1:21** Afterwards I came into the regions of \_\_\_\_\_ and Cilicia;

The labors of Barnabas in Antioch were richly blessed, and many were added to the number of believers there. As the work developed, Barnabas felt the need of suitable help in order to advance in the opening providences of God, and he went to Tarsus to seek for Paul, who, after his departure from Jerusalem some time before, had been laboring in *“the regions of Syria and Cilicia,”* proclaiming *“the faith which once he destroyed.” Galatians 1:21, 23.*

6) Did Barnabas find him?

**Acts 11:25-26** Then departed Barnabas to \_\_\_\_\_, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called \_\_\_\_\_ first in Antioch.

It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians. The name was given them because Christ was the main theme of their preaching, their teaching, and their conversation. Continually they were recounting the incidents that had occurred during the days of His earthly ministry, when His disciples were blessed with His personal presence. Untiringly they dwelt upon His teachings and His miracles of



healing. With quivering lips and tearful eyes they spoke of His agony in the garden, His betrayal, trial, and execution, the forbearance and humility with which He had endured the contumely and torture imposed upon Him by His enemies, and the Godlike pity with which He had prayed for those who persecuted Him. His resurrection and ascension, and His work in heaven as the Mediator for fallen man, were topics on which they rejoiced to dwell.

7) What Did Peter say about being Christian?

**1 Peter 4:16** Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him \_\_\_\_\_ God on this behalf.

**1 Peter 4:14** If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

8) What did James have to say about it?

**James 2:7** Do not they blaspheme that \_\_\_\_\_ name by the which ye are called?

It was God who gave to them the name of Christian. This is a royal name, given to all who join themselves to Christ.

9) What is God willing to do for you?

**Philippians 2:13** For it is God which \_\_\_\_\_ in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The believers at Antioch realized that God was willing to work in their lives. Living, as they were, in the midst of a people who seemed to care but little for the things of eternal value, they sought to arrest the attention of the honest in heart, and to bear positive testimony concerning Him whom they loved and served. In their humble ministry they learned to depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit to make effective the word of life. And so, in the various walks of life, they daily bore testimony of their faith in Christ.

10) To what ministry was Paul called?

**Acts 26:18** To open their eyes, and to turn them from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

11) What had the angel told Ananias about Paul?

**Acts 9:15** But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen \_\_\_\_\_ unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

12) What did the angel tell Paul while he was in the Temple?

**Acts 22:21** And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the \_\_\_\_\_.

the Lord had given Paul his commission to enter the broad missionary field of the Gentile world. To prepare him for this extensive and difficult work, God had brought him into close connection with Himself and had opened before his enraptured vision views of the beauty and glory of heaven.

13) What was Paul to reveal?

**Romans 16:25** Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the \_\_\_\_\_, which was kept secret since the world began,

**Ephesians 1:9** Having made known unto us the \_\_\_\_\_ of his \_\_\_\_\_, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:



14) What was Paul's calling?

**Ephesians 3:7-9** Whereof I was made a \_\_\_\_\_, according to the gift of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men \_\_\_\_\_ what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

God had abundantly blessed the labors of Paul and Barnabas during the year they remained with the believers in Antioch. But neither of them had as yet been formally ordained to the gospel ministry. They had now reached a point in their Christian experience when God was about to entrust them with the carrying forward of a difficult missionary enterprise, in the prosecution of which they would need every advantage that could be obtained through the agency of the church.

15) What happened in Antioch that launched Paul and Barnabas into new ground?

**Acts 13:1-3** Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain \_\_\_\_\_ 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. As they ministered to the Lord, and \_\_\_\_\_, the Holy Ghost said, \_\_\_\_\_ me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Before being sent forth as missionaries to the heathen world, these apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus, they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority.

16) What did Paul call the barrier between Jews and Gentiles?

**Ephesians 2:14** For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of \_\_\_\_\_ between us;

God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in order that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry. Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel.

Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God.

17) How were they called?

**Acts 13:2** As they ministered to the Lord, and \_\_\_\_\_, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church, Christ's body, is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work.



While the light of the gospel was shining brightly at Antioch, an important work was continued by the apostles who had remained in Jerusalem. Every year, at the time of the festivals, many Jews from all lands came to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Some of these pilgrims were men of fervent piety and earnest students of the prophecies. They were looking and longing for the advent of the promised Messiah, the hope of Israel. While Jerusalem was filled with these strangers, the apostles preached Christ with unflinching courage, though they knew that in so doing they were placing their lives in constant jeopardy. The Spirit of God set its seal upon their labors; many converts to the faith were made; and these, returning to their homes in different parts of the world, scattered the seeds of truth through all nations and among all classes of society.

18) While Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch, what were the Disciples preaching in Jerusalem?

**2 Peter 1:3-4** According as his \_\_\_\_\_ hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be \_\_\_\_\_ of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

**Can you see that God the Gospel is for everyone?**

**Do you want to be a vessel of the Holy Spirit?**

**When is the time to share what you have?**

*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

**2 Peter 1:19**