

## Paul's First Missionary Journey Part I

### *Taking the Gospel to Cyprus*

(Acts 13:1-12)

#### Introduction:

1. Luke will shift attention from the church at Jerusalem and focus on the church in Antioch (of Syria).
  - The church at Jerusalem was and continued to be what many refer to as the \_\_\_\_\_ capital of Christianity.
    - 1) It was while in Jerusalem that the Apostles received their instructions from Jesus. (Acts 1:1-11)
    - 2) The Apostles remained in Jerusalem (as instructed by Jesus) to appoint Judas' replacement and to await the promise of the Holy Spirit.
    - 3) The church at Jerusalem continued to be the source from which doctrine and sound teaching was dispensed.
    - 4) The church at Jerusalem continued in this manner for most of the first century.
  - The church in Antioch of Syria sort of became the hub of outreach to the Gentiles (They were first called **Christians** here).
    - 1) Paul began his \_\_\_\_\_ journeys from there
    - 2) It is referred to as Antioch of Syria because there were other cities called "Antioch" (i.e. Antioch of Pisidia)

2. There was good sound leadership that existed in the church at Antioch
- We are introduced to two new terms that began to be used within the leadership of the church:
    - 1) \_\_\_\_\_; which, like the Apostles declared or preached God's Word to the local assemblies. This "office" seemed to have evolved into what is later called an evangelist, or pastor-teacher. (Ephesians 4:12)
    - 2) \_\_\_\_\_; which, also like the Apostles dispensed clear understanding of Biblical truth. (I Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11, James 3:1)
  - There were five men identified as (pastors and teachers) within the local assembly there at Antioch.
    - 1) \_\_\_\_\_; who was a Cypriot Jew (a Levite from the island of Cyprus). He was well recognized not only in Antioch but also in Jerusalem. His Jewish name was Joseph and the Apostles named him Barnabas which means "Son of Encouragement".
    - 2) \_\_\_\_\_, who was also a Jew but was nicknamed "Niger" (from Latin).
    - 3) \_\_\_\_\_, who was from Cyrene in North Africa (Acts 11:20)
    - 4) \_\_\_\_\_, who had seemingly been raised with Herod Antipas (Herod the Tetrarch – the same Herod who beheaded John the Baptist and presided over Jesus' trial). This man (Manaen) became a disciple of Christ and Herod went where Judas Iscariot went!
    - 5) \_\_\_\_\_, who needs no real introduction

### The Call To Missionary Work (Acts 13:2-3)

1. Take note of what these 5 men were doing:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord
  - \_\_\_\_\_ which was intended as a sign of devotion
2. We are told that they (Paul and Barnabas) were “\_\_\_\_\_” by the Holy Spirit for a specific purpose.
  - We are not told here what the “specific purpose” was, but it is clear from the following passages that it was an assignment to preach the Gospel to those whom the Holy Spirit intended to hear it.
  - What did these 5 men do that showed they understood this to be the Lord’s will?
3. I like what John MacArthur in relation to this passage; “Spiritual men with effective spiritual ministry will see God extend their spiritual mission. God chooses for further ministry those already actively serving Him”. He goes on to say; **“An important feature in discerning God’s will for the future is to do His will in the present”**. (John MacArthur’s Commentary on Acts, Volume II page 6)

### First Stop – The island of Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12)

1. They left Antioch and headed to the seaport of Seleucia (See map of Paul’s First Missionary Journey) and from there they sailed to Cyprus.
  - A little information on the island of Cyprus:
    - 1) In the Old Testament it is referred to as the island of Kittim (for its inhabitants were descendants of Javan who descended from Japheth) - Genesis 10:4.
    - 2) Cyprus was home to \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 4:36)

- 3) It was the third largest island in the Mediterranean (Sicily and Sardinia being larger).
  - 4) It was located close to the Syrian mainland (approx. 60 miles).
  - 5) It had two major cities; \_\_\_\_\_ (the chief sea port of the island) and \_\_\_\_\_ which was the capital.
- Why did they go to Cyprus?
    - 1) The obvious answer is that is where the Holy Spirit had led them.
    - 2) This being Barnabas' home would also make him comfortable with the surroundings and an ideal starting point for their outreach to the Gentile world. Although we are not told specifically, it is concluded by some that Barnabas was the probable leader at this time.
    - 3) There was also a large \_\_\_\_\_ population on the island.
2. Their first stop while on Cyprus was the town of Salamis (Acts 13:5)
    - Salamis was the largest city on the eastern side of the island
    - What did they do when they reached Salamis?
    - Why did they go to the synagogues?
    - We are not told the actual results of their ministry there in Salamis but the Gospel was presented none the less.

- We are also introduced to someone new and his name is \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 13:5)
  - 1) He was the cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10)
  - 2) His role seemed to be in some form of a “helper” which could have included any number of things (i.e. baptisms, instructing new converts etc.).
  
- 3. Their next stop while on Cyprus was the town of Paphos (Acts 13:6-12)
  - Paphos was 100 miles southwest of Salamis and the islands capital
  - They meet up with a Jewish sorcerer named Bar-Jesus
    - 1) The word sorcerer (*magos*) does not always carry the connotation of “wizardry” (as was the case with the Magi in Matthew 2:1, 7, 16) but in the case here, this man was every bit of a charlatan or fraudulent magician.
    - 2) Ironically his name meant \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3) He is also referred to by the nickname (Elymas) which most conclude is a Greek transliteration of the word magician.
  - They also met up with another man named Sergius Paulus which was by divine appointment.
    - 1) He was the Roman governor of Cyprus and Luke describes him as a man of \_\_\_\_\_.
    - 2) He probably had an interest in the philosophical and religious beliefs of Judaism (which would explain his relationship with Bar-Jesus), but he now found himself desiring to know more about the teachings that Barnabas and Saul brought to the island.

- How did Elymas feel about Paul and Barnabas being there? (Acts 13:8)
- What was the response of Elymas to the governors' request to know more about the Word of God?
- Let's examine Paul's response to Elymas: (Acts 13-9-11)
  - 1) First let's note that we now start to see Saul be referred to by his Roman name \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 2) Second; take note that it is Paul and not Barnabas who takes the lead roll in dealing with Elymas.
  - 3) Third; note how Paul addresses Elymas – What does he declare (about Elymas) that gets right to the heart of the problem?
  - 4) Fourth; note the results of opposing God – what happened to Elymas and in what way does it show the weakness of the evil one?
- What happened to Sergius Paulus?
  - 1) Luke tells us; "Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at the teaching of the Lord" (Acts 13:12)
  - 2) There are some "extra biblical sources" (historical writings) that suggest Sergius Paulus' daughter and his grandson also became followers of Christ.

### Closing Remarks:

1. In what ways do you see God's providence in Paul and Barnabas going to the island of Cyprus?
2. Note a couple of contrasts:
  - Contrast what transpired in Salamis to what transpired in Paphos?
    - 1) In **Salamis** Barnabas and Saul preached to the \_\_\_\_\_ in the synagogues and there were \_\_\_\_\_.
    - 2) In **Paphos** (although they met opposition from the devil); Paul and Barnabas were able to impact a \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Contrast the two people of the story:
    - 1) **Elymas**; a \_\_\_\_\_ who knew the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and yet is identified as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the devil.
    - 2) **Sergius Paulus**; a \_\_\_\_\_ who was \_\_\_\_\_ the blessings of God and yet by faith became a \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
3. From this point forward the primary leadership of the various missionary endeavors will shift toward Paul who will continue to blaze a trail into the Gentile world.
  - The impact that is made is enormous but the cost for Paul is extremely high!
  - What would have happened had Paul and Barnabas not answered the call to go?