

Introduction

2019

- **show 2019**
- Welcome to the first Sunday of a new year!
- I hope your 2019 is off to a great Start
- Resolutions? Changes you hope to make? Things you want to improve?
- I think about that personally, and I think about it as it relates to the church
- Lots of books / seminars / conferences, etc
- ...
- What should our church look like going forward?
- What would I love to see here?

What should the church be?

- As I prayed about this, I thought of the church in Antioch
- Let's read a story from that church **Acts 13:1-3 (ESV)** *(1) Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. (2) While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (3) Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.*

Background

- Want to share with you to a story from the book of Acts - an incident that takes place in the church in Antioch
- This church was the first Gentile church that was started - these were not converts from Judaism, but people who heard the Gospel and believed (lots to share about this - but that's Sunday school)
- From this incident Paul and Barnabas begin the first missionary journey
- This passage is narrative, but there are three things that I see about that church

that I want to see more of in our church

- • **Note** I arranged these things not in the order in which they appear in our text, but in an order that shows their dependence

Message

Together for prayer

Together

- Church began in unity (see **Acts 2:4 (ESV)** (4) *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.*)
- Throughout the book of Acts you'll see coming together as one evidence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers
- Now more than ever its important that we're together
- Yet now - there's more of an attack / struggle / opposition against God's people coming together. We're busy, burnt out, etc.
- The biblical model of the church is a body - all the various parts working together
- The gifts work (more later) together
- Thinking about that next generation (or two) they value being together!
- **Point** the church is YOU! Dispel the notion that you have your life and the church is a separate thing of which you partake! You are the church
- **Second point** 2019 is brand new - are you willing to change to be more like the biblical church? If so - that starts with coming together

Not just to receive

- What were they doing? Worshipping the Lord, fasting
- Everyone had a part in what they were doing
- I've preached many times about "spectator Christianity" so I won't take time here - except to say you have a part to play when you're here!
- When we do come together - some minister, most receive
- Biblically we all minister (different gifts, different ways)
- We must come in 2019 ready to minister and be ministered to

Worship, fasting and prayer

- I see this as a gathering of believers - not a “church service” per se
- It appears they came together for the express purpose of seeking the Lord
- So grateful for the promise of the day
- They came together to seek the Lord
- I want us in 2019 to spend more time in worship and prayer and fasting!
- Seeking the Lord
- We’re up against an enemy who knows his time is short
- We have the power of prayer and the promises of God
- Spoke about *Effective Prayer* last week. That’s what I want us to do!

Ministering by the Spirit

The necessity of the Spirit

- I know I’ve said this repeatedly through the years, but church we need the Holy Spirit
- I don’t have time today to teach/preach through this - but our study in Acts (Sunday school) has again reminded me of our need for the Holy Spirit
- I told you these are in order
- One of the things I want us to come together to pray for is the infilling of the Holy Spirit
- **slide** I want to see 100% of the believers in our church filled with the Spirit!

We all have gifts

- I love this passage, because it shows the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the lives of the believers
- Some are mentioned by name
- Others are simply used ... see v2 “The Holy Spirit said...” - how did he speak? Though the message of tongues/interpretation or prophetic message!
- That person is not named - but because of their obedience - Paul begins a new phase in his ministry, churches are planted, scripture is written etc.
- We know the name of Paul - but there wouldn’t be a Paul w/o the Spirit using Barnabas
- Consider **1 Cor 12:8-11 (ESV)** (8) *For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, (9) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, (10) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to*

another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. (11) All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apports to each one individually as he wills.

The gifts work in the context of the body

- already spoken but reinforced here
- This is the Body of Christ
- His Spirit dwells in us
- When we come together His Spirit can minister to us
- When we come together His Spirit can minister thru us
- Much previous teaching on this

The gifts are divine, not man made

- I love how people step up and use their talents, etc to serve the Lord
- We need more people to minister with the Spirit's power - not just man made talent ability
- There is place for both!
- We have need of both!
- But Lord - we need your Spirit here!

The gifts differ in type/purpose

- Much teaching on this - but the Same Spirit gives different gifts
- In our main text: prophets, teachers - someone ministering in the Spirit etc
- In the secondary text: that's Paul's point!
- **Note** one is not better than the other!

The gifts must be given expression

- Finally they must be expressed
- The Spirit is not going to force you to use your gift
- You must choose to give it expression
- (See teaching in 1 Corinthians 12, 14 for more info - **1 cor 14:32 (ESV)** (32) *and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.*)

Point:

In 2019, I want to see every believer use their gifts

Active in fulfilling the great comission

Great commission

- See the outcome - Paul and Barnabas go spread the Gospel
- When the Spirit is working in the church - it will be focused on the lost!
- Remember **Matt 28:19-20 (ESV)** (19) *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*
- Time is near - harvest is plentiful, workers are few
- Let's be about His business in 2019
- **Note** Gentiles planting churches among the gentiles

Everyone involved

- Paul and Barnabas traveled
- The church supported them
- Great commitment, great results!

Closing

What will you do?

- I said near the beginning of the message that **YOU ARE THE CHURCH**
- A message like this comes down to a decision you make
- Do you want something different for ALC this year?
- Are you willing to be the change?

Wednesday the 9th

- We're going to come together Wednesday the 9th
- We are going to seek the Lord!
- Will you join us?