

September 19, 2004 Summit PM

## The Antioch Church

### Introduction

A. Text Acts 13:1-3

B. **True statement** - Some people make things happen, others watch things happen, while still others are left wondering what happened.

1. This is **true of both individuals & of churches**
2. Some churches are dynamic, aggressively reaching out & impacting the world.
3. Are others that know God is moving in other churches, yet wondering why they are not experiencing His power.
4. Still others are barely existing - impacting only their members social lives.

C. In Acts 11 **introduced to a church that God used to make things happen - Antioch**

1. Vs.21 - had an impressive beginning
2. Vs.27-30 - they showed their love & concern for the needy in Judea.

D. **I want to examine this church - What made it strong**

1. We are approaching a new year - goals & programs planned
2. What ought we be focusing on to be a strong effective church in our world ?

E. Pray

### I. Antioch Was A Spirit Filled Church

A. **This is seen in both it's leaders & members**

#### 1. Leaders

- a. Acts 11:24 - Barnabas was filled with the Spirit
- b. Acts 13:9 - Paul was also filled with the Spirit

#### 2. Congregation

- a. Acts 13:2 - as worship & fast - Spirit manifest Himself
- b. Acts 13:4 - sent Paul & Barnabas on way by the Spirit

#### 3. **Realize that God has always put a premium on spiritual leadership**

- a. **When selecting** - had to be godly focused men
  - 1) Acts 6:3 - men known to be full of the Spirit & wisdom
  - 2) 1 Tim.3:1-13 - emphasis on spiritual qualifications
- b. **Must be more than just a warm body - physically capable**
- c. **Reason** - as goes leadership - so goes the church
- d. Church to be Spirit filled - her leaders must be spirit filled men

B. **What are some of the marks of a Spirit filled church ?**

#### 1. **See them walking in obedience to the will of God**

- a. Prophet predicted famine - **immediate response** to help
- b. **Immediately send them** - no grumbling

#### 2. **See their emphasis on ministry & prayer - Acts 13:2**

- a. **Leaders focused on spiritual responsibilities**
  - 1) Ministering to Lord & fasting
  - 2) Not just focused on shallow activities & programs

**b. Emphasis on fasting & prayer**

- 1) **Not commanded to, yet Jesus expected us to fast**
- 2) Frequently connected with passionate prayer
  - a) Neh.1:4 - when concerned for his homeland
  - b) Ps.35:13 - David did for those hurting & sick
  - c) Dan.9:3 - Daniel did when seeking an answer
  - d) Mt.17:21 - evil never expelled unless fast & pray
- c. Concerned about spiritual - set aside food; concentrate on prayer

**C. Result - God extend their spiritual mission**

1. **Principle # 1** - God uses those already involved
  - a. Rarely see God take an idle Christian & send on mission
  - b. God uses those already deeply involved – Mt.25 – talents
2. **Principle # 2** - Involvement in God's will in present is the means of discerning God's will in the future – Jn.8:31,32
  - a. If unwilling to do His will now - don't expect further revelation
  - b. Because already involved - God calls them to further ministry

**II. Make Application**

**A. Our focus for the future needs be - personally being filled with the Spirit**

1. **Not just the leaders - all of us**
  - a. Never be effective for God without total submission to His Spirit
  - b. He won't force us - we must be submissive
2. **How are we filled with the Spirit ?**
  - a. **Personal decision to allow Him to fill us - Eph.5:18**
    - 1) Stop resisting - be obedient to His call
    - 2) Moment by moment submission to His control
  - b. **Let the word of God dwell in you richly - be committed to**
    - 1) Compare Eph.5:18 & Col.3:15
    - 2) Both have the same results
    3. Read, meditate, memorize - daily be in the word
  - c. **Allow Him to permeate your very being – obey Him**
    - 1) Spirit moved Jesus into wilderness
    - 2) All we think, say & do should reflect His presence in life

**B. Make our ministry be focused on God not people.**

1. **Church is much more than a social club with activities & programs**
  - a. Social clubs have activities & programs - do a good job
  - b. Our function is much more than just programs & activities
  - c. We are here to bring glory to God  
(Done through our lives & good works)
  - d. Yet focus is much more than programs & activities
2. **Whatever we do - make it an act of worship - adoration of God**
  - a. Scripture
    - 1) Rom.12:1 - living sacrifice - our spiritual act of worship
    - 2) Heb.13:15,16 - such sacrifices please God
  - b. **Like Macedonians - give yourself 1<sup>st</sup> to God - then to others**
    - 1) Whatever your task - Youth, Seniors, Needy, Teaching

2) Do it as a sacrifice to God - offering to Him

**Conclusion**

**A. We can be an effective church**

1. What makes a church be effective is being totally submissive to God's Spirit
2. Being involved in programs & activities are good - but not sufficient
3. We must be allowing God's Spirit to fill us - permeate us fully

**B. That happens only as we willingly submit to Him**