

SHINE Devotional

Week 39 – Lesson 1



Missionaries Are Sent By Churches to a Particular Place

Scripture reading Acts 11:22

“Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.”

As far as I can tell Barnabas is the very first missionary sent forth out of a local church to do a work in a particular city. Over the last several weeks, we have had the opportunity of meeting several missionaries at Liberty Baptist Church. Josh Lovegrove, 4 years ago, went to Ethiopia. His job was to learn the language and plant a church. One year ago, he planted a church in Ethiopia. They gave the Gospel to 20,000 homes. They have had over 500 people visit their church and 130 people made professions of faith in Jesus Christ. We also met Bill Patterson, who has traveled to Mongolia with his family and was used to translate the first New Testament in the Mongolian language. Before that, he was sent to Brazil where he helped translate the New Testament into Portuguese. Since then, over 70,000,000 New Testaments have been distributed throughout Brazil and other Portuguese speaking nations. Last week, we met Dr. Mike Patterson who has been on the mission field of Mexico for 47 years. Thousands of people have trusted Christ through his missionary endeavors. This past week, we met missionary Terry Unruh, who we help send to Sri Lanka. For over forty years, he has had the privilege to share the Gospel to Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist people.

Missionaries are sent by churches to particular places to do a work for God. In 1977, God used three local churches: Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, Baptist Temple of Burlington, North Carolina, and Gateway Baptist Church here in Las Vegas to send us to the northwest part of town to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sending missionaries includes giving to them. Why do we give to missionaries? Because missionaries deserve our support. When you give, you get involved in missions, and you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 39 – Lesson 2



Missionaries Advance the Work of God

Scripture reading Acts 11:23

“Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.”

There are very few missionaries today that go to a field that has not been somewhat prepared. Forty-three years ago when I came back to Las Vegas to begin Liberty Baptist Church, the pastor of Gateway Baptist Church took me to a mini storage house. A pastor named Gerald McCabe, upon leaving Las Vegas and closing his church, had left all his Sunday school materials, chairs, sound equipment, and a piano there. We were able to use these materials to begin Liberty Baptist Church. Not only that, when we began the church two families that had been involved in his ministry began to attend Liberty Baptist Church. What a joy it was to have them as a part of our new church plant! There is not an adequate amount of space in this devotional to tell the many stories I have heard from missionaries who were sent to a particular location and found soil that was already prepared, and sheep that were praying for a godly shepherd to lead them. When Barnabas got to Antioch, I am sure that he personally led many people to Jesus Christ. That is the primary work of a missionary. Beyond that, he also helps those who are saved to grow in Jesus Christ. Luke tells us that Barnabas was glad and exhorted or encouraged them all. One of the primary reasons we assemble together is to exhort one another (Hebrews 10:25).

When you get involved in sending missionaries to advance the work of God, you are involved in lost people getting saved and Christians being encouraged. When you get involved, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 39 – Lesson 3



Missionaries See the Need and Take the Lead

Scripture reading Acts 11:23

“Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.”

A missionary is used by God to explain God’s purpose to God’s people. Barnabas went to the new believers in Antioch and explained to them God’s purpose for their life. Do you understand why you are here on planet earth? In the 1990s a survey was taken among teenagers here in the United States. The question was asked, “What is the purpose of life?” Among those asked, 80% of the responses were that they believed their purpose in life was “sensual gratification.” Leave it to teenagers to be honest. Our culture lives to get rich, become famous, and enjoy life. The Bible teaches us that we were created for a greater purpose. God declares our purpose, *“...Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth”* (Genesis 1:26). God created man in His image and in His likeness so that the physical world would have a representation of Him. You and I, as believers, are here to represent God. Barnabas, as the first missionary, taught the believers their purpose.

Barnabas taught them to *“cleave to the Lord.”* It is very important that we realize our total dependance upon Jesus Christ. Paul said, *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not”* (Romans 7:18). When a person gets saved, he wants to do right, but he lives in flesh that wants to do wrong. A believer must be taught to cleave to the Lord, so that he can do what God wants him to do. That is why Paul said, *“...be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit”* (Ephesians 5:18). When a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit, he is cleaving to the Lord and in that position, he can overcome any obstacle. *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* (Philippians 4:13).

Barnabas went to Antioch, saw the grace of God, and was glad. He saw the need in the believers, explained God’s purpose, and taught them to cleave to God. This is what missionaries do. Therefore, missionaries deserve our support. That is why when you support missionaries, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 39 – Lesson 4



Missionaries Must Be Good Men

Scripture reading Acts 11:24

“For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.”

I have met many missionaries. Some were good and some were bad. The only ones that truly succeed are those who are good. Barnabas was a good man. Not good in his own righteousness, but as a believer. He had learned to surrender daily to the direction of the Holy Spirit in his life.

What does it mean to be a good man?

1. He is doctrinally pure. It is important that we as a church examine those who want us to support them as missionaries. We must know what they believe doctrinally. We want to support people who love the Lord Jesus Christ, recognize that He is God, believe the Bible to be the absolute Word of God. Believe salvation is by grace through faith alone, and believe Jesus was virgin born. They must believe that He lived and died to pay the penalty of our sins, was buried, and three days later rose from the dead so we can have eternal life through Him. Doctrinal purity also includes the doctrines of Christ, His second coming, belief of an eternal heaven for those who trust Him, and an eternal hell for those who deny.
2. He is morally pure. A good man must love people and abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). He is a man who is faithful to one woman, his wife. God’s plan is one man, for one woman, for one lifetime (1 Timothy 3:2).
3. He is full of the Holy Ghost. This indicates that he is a soulwinner (Acts 1:8). He displays the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). He is full of faith. He is obedient to the Word of God the leadership of the Holy Spirit and follows the direction of His Word.

Good men make good missionaries. Good missionaries deserve our support. When you support missionaries, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 39 – Lesson 5



Missionaries Must Be Willing to Meet People Where They Are

Scripture reading Acts 11:25

“Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:”

Barnabas choose to leave Jerusalem and travel to Antioch. There, he found both lost people and new believers. He met them where they were and helped them grow closer to Christ. Saul of Tarsus was one of the most controversial figures in his day. He had proven himself, yet, he was still separated from the vast majority of Christians. Remember, it was Barnabas who introduced Paul to the apostles. *“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus”* (Acts 9:26-27). Now it was his desire to lead Saul to a ministry of shepherding.

Missionaries will meet people from every kind of background. Our friend, Navi Bola in Fiji, is now a pastor. In his family there was cannibalism. He is now a preacher of the Gospel. If you are involved in the mission field, you will deal with everyone from drug dealers to policemen, and from kings to paupers. You will deal with people who are in the best of health and others who are dying in the hospitals. Missionaries are willing to meet people where they are and lead them to Christ. That is why missionaries deserve your support. When you support missionaries, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 39 – Lesson 6



Missionaries Teach Believers to Be Christians

Scripture reading Acts 11:26

“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 Christians first in Antioch.”

The word *Christian* means “little Christ” or “Christ like”. When someone gets saved, they are like newborn babies they do not automatically look like Christ. They have everything in them they need for spiritual life, but they need to come to maturity. They need to be developed into disciples. The more time we spend with Jesus Christ, the more we become like Him. The Bible says about Barnabas and Saul that they stayed in Antioch for one full year and *“taught much people”*. This is what missionaries do. The Bible also says they assembled with the church. They literally gathered together with the assembly. When they assembled together, Barnabas and Saul taught them truth of the Word of God. This wasn’t some doctrinal abstract truth; it was doctrine that affected their lives. These disciples learn how to walk in the Spirit. They learned the principles of surrendering to Christ. As they learned these principles, their lives were transformed by the indwelling, controlling Holy Spirit of God. The outside world observed this transformation in these believers, and they called them “little Christ” or “Christ like”. That is what a missionary does. He leads people to Jesus Christ and trains them to serve Him. Missionaries teach the believers to be Christians. When believers act and live like Christ, their lives will impact others and entire communities can be transformed.

We support missionaries and send them to reach the lost and to teach believers to be Christians. That is why missionaries deserve our support. I encourage you to get involved in faith promise missions. When you do, you, as a believer, will SHINE.