

SHINE Devotional

Week 43 – Lesson 1



Get Involved Now!

Scripture reading Acts 13:1

“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets 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.”

The believer is not a brainless pawn in the hand of an almighty God without a will of his own or responsibility for his position, direction, or his effect on the world. God holds the believer responsible for the advancement of the kingdom of God. In this passage, we see men of God surrendered to the will of God, working in conjunction with the Holy Spirit of God, to advance the kingdom of God. They did this by introducing men and women to Christ, they received Him, and became children of God. Notice that these were men of varied backgrounds. They were different ethnically. There were different in their economic status. They were from different countries and different religious backgrounds. Yet, they were all heavily involved in doing the work of God. They are referred to as prophets and teachers. Throughout world history, God has directed His people to do His will and gave them the responsibility to accomplish His work on this planet.

In Acts 13, God’s people began to move forward by faith to reach the entire world with the Gospel. They understood the balance between God’s sovereignty and our human responsibility. God had sent the Holy Spirit into the world to convince all men they were sinners, that there was a righteous God, and judgment was coming. He had done His part, and it was their responsibility to do their part. They got involved. They were a church, which means they assembled together. Satan hates it when God’s people meet together. Satan will do everything he can to hinder God’s people from being in church. Satan hates the assembly. Satan always does what he can to divide, but God tells us that we should be *“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”* (Ephesians 4:3). God wanted them to be involved in His plan for evangelism through the local church. If you want to SHINE for Jesus in 2020, I encourage you to get involved in your local church and you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 43 – Lesson 2



Listen to the Word of God

Scripture reading Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

There is no way that a child of God will grow in His relationship with Jesus Christ without the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. The Bible teaches us in our passage that the church in Antioch did a great work for God. The reason they did was because they had prophets and teachers who were perpetually preaching and teaching the Word of God. The word *prophet* in the New Testament very simply means a proclaimer of God’s truth. A teacher is one who lends people into the depths of God’s Word. God wants us to grow in His Word. God wants the church collectively to grow and He wants you and I as individuals to grow.

The believers in Acts 13 did not have what we have today. We have the written Word of God. They had the Old Testament, but the New Testament was not then complete. Because of that, God was still speaking primarily through prophets. Throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament, God used gifted preachers and teachers to teach His people His Word. Because they heard the Word of God and walked in the confidence of His Word, they were able to move forward with God’s plan and accomplish much to advance the kingdom of God.

The more you as a believer are involved with the Word of God, the greater the impact it will have on you, your family, your church, and through you in your community and culture. For that reason, I encourage you to be in church as often as you can to hear the preaching and teaching of God’s Word. Get involved in an adult Bible study, where you can study the Word of God on a more intimate basis. Get involved in one on one discipleship where you can learn the Word of God and then teach others the Word of God. Along with all of that, I am thrilled that Liberty Baptist Church has available KVXL 101.1 FM. Throughout the day you can hear the preaching and teaching of the Word of God by godly preachers and teachers from across this country. The Word of God is our guidebook. The church at Antioch made a definite impact on their world and culture because they heard and obeyed the Word of God. You as a believer will do the same. You will SHINE for Christ as you hear His Word.

SHINE Devotional

Week 43 – Lesson 3



Serve the Lord

Scripture reading Acts 13:2

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”

What a wonderful privilege it is to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and God. Beyond that, it is a wonderful privilege to be able to be His servant. When you got saved, you were born into the family of God. You became His child. When you got baptized, you were baptized into the membership of a local church. God gave you a spiritual gift that you could use, not for your own edification, but to edify or build up others. Your responsibility as a believer is to find out what that spiritual gift is and use it to serve Jesus Christ.

Now the question comes, how can you serve Jesus Christ? The Bible says in our passage *“they ministered to the Lord.”* That means that they served the Lord. What exactly does that mean? They could not walk up to the physical body of Jesus Christ and wash His feet. They could not walk up to the physical body of Jesus Christ and give Him food to eat or water to drink. He is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. So, how do I “minister” to Him today? I do it by serving His local church. The local church is the body of Christ. In the future judgment, when God judges the nations, Jesus will make this statement, *“Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”* (Mathew 25:40). When believers serve other believers, they are serving Jesus Christ. When we got saved His Spirit came to live inside of us. We are given a spirit to serve when we get saved. The preachers and teachers that were in Antioch served the Lord. How? By serving His people. Pastors and teachers are not to be worshipped. They are to serve God by serving His people. We serve by using the gifts God has given us to advance His kingdom and help His people. Are you serving the Lord? What are you involved in when it comes to ministry? God’s call is not for you to just go to church or hear the Word of God, but to serve other people according to the Word of God. When you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 43 – Lesson 4



Learn to Fast

Scripture reading Acts 13:3

“And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”

In the Bible fasting is a determination to abstain from certain foods for a given period of time because of a particular burden or need. Moses fasted for forty days and nights to spend time with God so that he would have God’s direction and leading for the people of God. Nehemiah heard about the destruction of his homeland and wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed because he was burdened about the need to do something to rebuild his city. Jesus was led of the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to fast for forty days and nights as He prepared for His public ministry on this earth. Jesus said that after His departure those who followed Him would fast. In Acts 13, a new era in Gospel outreach began when Paul and Barnabus were sent out of the local church in Antioch to travel to foreign lands to preach the Gospel. The Bible says that they fasted and prayed.

Fasting shows sincerity of our hearts and our desire to see the hand of God. Jesus, when asked why the disciples did not have the faith to cast out a demon from a particular young man, said, *“This kind [of faith] can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting”* (Mark 9:29). It is natural when we are extremely burdened about some event in our life to give up food. When a mother is holding a sick baby that doesn’t seem to be recovering, she will fast. Sitting by a loved one in a hospital will cause someone to not desire food. People often find themselves fasting when they are in a dire financial situation. The believers in Acts were concerned about the advancement of the kingdom. So, they met together, prayed, and fasted. Fasting is often followed by a miraculous intervention by God.

I was thrilled in January of 2020, when many preachers were calling for a time of fasting throughout the United States and around the world. Because of that, I believe that God is doing an amazing work through the Covid-19 pandemic. I don’t know exactly what God is doing, but I know that God does respond when His people fast. Learning to fast is a discipline that most Christians avoid. Let me encourage you to fast. As you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 43 – Lesson 5



Now Is the Time to Pray

Scripture reading Acts 13:3

“And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”

If ever American Christians need to pray, we need to pray now. We look around our streets and we see terrorism, destruction, discontent, and a general spirit of unthankfulness and ungodliness. Paul said in the last days, perilous times shall come. What can the Christian do? The Christian can pray. In the Book of Acts, we see what the early churches prayed for. In Acts 12:5, the people prayed for Peter to be delivered. *“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him”* (Acts 12:5). Keep people prayed God delivered Peter. The first church also prayed for power to witness. *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). When Peter and John were threatened by the Sanhedren, they went back to the church at Jerusalem and the church prayed for boldness to proclaim God’s truth. *“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness”* (Acts 4:31). Now here in Acts 13, they were praying for direction and God gave them the answer to that prayer. We are told in Scripture that we are to pray for many things. Paul told Timothy, a pastor, to pray for kings and all that are in authority. It amazes me that some preachers think that pastors should not be involved politically. Yet, that is not the pattern for the Old Testament prophets or New Testament preachers. In our day, we have an anti-God political party that is promoting an anti-God socialist system. We should pray for our president that God would give him the wisdom to continue to promote a pro-Christian, pro-life, and pro-Israel agenda.

Jesus taught us to pray in Luke 11 for God’s holy Name to be manifest, His kingdom to come on this earth, and His will be done in this earth like it’s done in heaven. He told us to pray that our Father would give us every day everything we needed to do His will, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us, keep us from trial, and deliver us from satanic attack. The New Testament believers in Antioch prayed and God used them, answered their prayers, and the great missionary movement of the first century began. When you learn to pray as they learned to pray, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 43 – Lesson 6



Listen to the Holy Spirit

Scripture reading Acts 13:2 & Ephesians 5:18

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said”. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”

When you became a child of God, you were born of the Holy Spirit of God. He came to live inside of you. Jesus said, *“where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”* (Matthew 18:20). When believers are united in prayer, when they are seeking the face of God, the Holy Spirit’s presence will be there, and He will make himself known. We need to be willing to hear what the Holy Spirit says and follow His direction. Let me remind you that His Holy Spirit will never contradict His Holy Word. I have heard people say that the Holy Spirit told them to do this or that and it was contrary to something in the Bible. When that happens, we know it is not the Holy Spirit of God but another spirit.

This group of New Testament believers ministered to the body of Jesus Christ and listened to the Holy Spirit as He led them. They also chose to obey. He said to go, and they went. He said to witness, and they witnessed. He said to send Paul and Barnabus away, and they laid hands on them because they wanted to be involved in that ministry. By laying on of hands, they endorsed their ministry and endowed (that is giving to) their ministry. They got involved in the ministry of missions.

God wants you to be involved. His Holy Spirit leads and directs you. If you are in His Word, His Spirit will speak to you a through His Word. He has enabled you and gifted you with certain spiritual gifts. Listen to His leading. Do what God empowers you, encourages you, and leads you to do and then leave the results to God. Our nation needs men and women of God who follow the admonition of Scripture and use the gifts, talents, abilities, and privileges God has given them to advance His kingdom. I would encourage you to pray, fast, go to church, and to send missionaries. Get involved in your city, state, and nation. Tell others about Jesus. Use the tools that God has given you to advance His kingdom. By the way, in this political season, one tool that God has given to American Christians is the power to vote. Do not abdicate that responsibility. Use that privilege that God has given you to advance His kingdom on this earth and you, as a believer, will SHINE.