

OREL LEONARD HERSHIESER 4th – Bulldog – Highlights power of vision

Anything worthwhile starts with a vision – true not just individual, but collective

TODAY – explore collective aspect of vision – as unwrap the soul of a NT Church

Connect w/ soul of this church – revolutionize how see mission in world

THIS CHURCH FOUND IN ACTS 11 – Backstory in order

Whole idea of church hatched by J – birthed by HS in Acts 2 – Jerusalem

- . Jerusalem church – epicenter – also dynamic model
- . A Few years in - (**Jumped Shark (Happy Days/ Fonzie)**)
 - . given a Great commission – nations –
 - . Ingrown/ growth stalled out – Jewish sect – irrelevant
(**Luis Palau – manure**)
- . God allowed Persecution – scattered
- . Acts 11 – massive/ tectonic shift – away from Jerusalem
 - . epicenter moves to a church city of Antioch in AM, 3rd largest
- . Thru Story – BW can be more fully aligned with God's mission

PICK UP STORY IN ACTS 11:19 – *Now, those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen, travelled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. BUT ... (huge contrast) ... there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch, were speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. - At Least 6 Defining Characteristics – only going to focus on 2*

Defining Characteristics:

#1 - A Compelling Passion to Reach the Lost

- . colored way outside the lines – outsiders (Greeks) – really messy
- . Preached Jesus – not morality/creed/concepts/religion/programs/lifestyles - J
- . Outsiders listened ... and embraced Jesus - **v. 21** – *And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed, turned to the Lord - Dynamic Impact* – lives, eternities, marriages, families

Other DFs - v. 22-26 - *The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose – for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul (who was later to be called the Apostle Paul), and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch, the disciples were first called Christians. Other DFs*

Spiritual Vitality (electric with spiritual growth)/ rockin')

Anchored by a team of gifted, proven leaders (Barnabas and Saul)

Spiritual depth & devo (**didasko**) – systematic – (“Christians”/“little Christs)

Second One - v. 27 – *Now in these days, prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them, named Agabus, stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine all over the world (this actually took place in the days of Claudius of Rome). So the disciples (in Antioch) determined, every one according to his/her ability, to send (financial) relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by*

the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

#2 – Unleashed Wave of Global Care & Compassion

- . Need - famine – they knew people would be hurting/ pooled resources – met it
 - . could do something – birthed missional heart/ focus/ drive
- . in fact, 2 chapters later – Acts 13 – HS call Barnabas & Saul 1st of 3 mission journeys
- . Church at Antioch - Became center of world missions
- . Little known Fact: pioneered the classic approach to interpreting the Bible
 - . activist vs. academic – missionally driven or Scripture-soaked - (can do both)

- . They Were Connected to God – Connected to Each Other – Connected to the World

CONNECTED TO THE WORLD

Reinventing Ourselves – Not just a great teaching Church attracts already found ...

- . Becoming – loves lost people, willing to expend time, energy, effort – go after

Practical: Rediscover our Calling to Reach the Lost, De-churched, UnChurched

Rediscover Your Individual Calling – Spiritual Gifts/ Life Mission

A GREAT ADVENTURE

THAT'S WHAT THIS WKEND IS ALL ABOUT – Highlight BW is becoming increasingly connected to world

Christine Reeves -

BRIDGEWAY – We Must Become a Church Reaches the Lost

BW Fantastic at Attracting the Already Convinced and Discipling them

- . We should not be satisfied w/ attracting already convinced from other churches
- . We cannot be content with just doing Church with excellence
- . We will not grow – unless we develop a greater passion to reach lost people

Increase Focus on Reaching the Lost - (Bless Project ...just the beginning)

Community Care and Global Care – What this weekend is all about –

Pushing Reset Button - More connected –

This Morning: Holiday Opportunities – Get involved physically

- . Meal Kits Project
- . Community Closet

Tonight: Online Connect Opportunity with our Global Partners

Christine and I hosting

PRAY