

Acts Part 10 – All Things Common

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney Wednesday, November 04, 2015

Acts 4:32-37¹

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

We left off in our last study with Peter and John getting threatened by the Jewish council that had arrested them for healing and preaching in the name of Jesus. They let them go after threatening them and told them never to preach in Jesus name again. Peter and John return to the other believers and tell them everything that has happened. The Church gets down and starts praying for the Lord to help them in the circumstances they are in. The Lord answered them through shaking the place they were in and the very last thing we read was “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”

Tonight we pick up with verse 32 and see the results of a Church that is in one accord and filled with the Spirit.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

“**Of one heart and of one soul**” and “**had all things in common.**” I believe one of the biggest things that is missing in churches today is nobody is in agreement. We see in this early New Testament church that everyone had all things in common. Nobody was different in their psychology, theology, eschatology, or any of them other ologies. They were together and had all things in common. How many times have you seen cliques in churches? One group congregates over here on the left, one on the right, one in the

back, one in the front, one in the middle; there's no unity that way. I've seen people that won't go up to the altar and pray with certain people but they will with other or won't say “Amen” while one person is singing but will another. To operate in one accord, we must all be together. We can't have a ½ of the people believing one way and half the other. They all believed the same. It says that they had “one heart and one soul.” They cared for each other as much as they cared for themselves, much like a family does. If someone in your family was going hungry you would go without so they could have something. Church family should be the exact same. “**neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own.**” There was no selfishness. No one said, “hey, that's mine, get your hands off of it.” They all shared and shared alike.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

So, just as the Church had prayed that the Lord would give the Apostles boldness and power, He did just that. They continued preaching about the resurrection of Jesus despite the threatening from the religious leaders and the Sadducees who hated it so much.

The “**great grace**” mentioned could be the great grace that God gave them to be able to preach like they were, or it could mean they had the grace and approval of all of the people.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Now we see something quite peculiar. I want you to notice that nowhere in the Bible will you find that the people were commanded to sell their property or possessions and give to others or the Church. It was not commanded. They did this out of their own free will and concern for others.

One trait of true Christianity is that you are willing to give to others. Christians and Churches are the most generous people in the world and always has been. We give without expecting anything in return. If you are saved and have the Holy Spirit indwelling within you then the fruits of the Spirit should exhibit in your life: [Galatians 5:22-23: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.](#)

These 9 fruits of the Spirit alone should compel us to unselfishly give to others and see that their needs are met, even above our own.

¹ All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version

You must remember that a lot of these people that made up the early Church had come from other places. They arrived to celebrate Pentecost, they got saved, and then they remained. There were probably scores of people that did not have a place to stay or enough money to buy food so the Church members took care of them.

Listen friends, belonging to the Church on those days was a big deal. It became their way of life. It wasn't just something that they gathered on Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night, Church was everything to them. Today's Christians treat Church like it is just a place to go to when they don't have anything else to do. Church to most people consists of 2 hours a week at the most. They walk out the door and they don't think another thing about it until the next service. We need to get back to the way things were in the 1st Century Church and maybe we would start seeing a difference in the lives of people around us. And, maybe we would see the Lord multiply the Church the way he did in those days.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

Intro to Barnabas

Now, we have the first mention of this man named Barnabas. Of course we are all familiar with him as being the first missionary partner with the Apostle Paul. He was instrumental in helping the Apostle Paul get established and accepted in the eyes of the disciples as we see in:

Acts 9:26-27: 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. 27 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.

It is interesting that the Bible singles him out to mention what he has done when there were many other people doing the same thing. We can only assume it is because the Lord wants us to take interest in this man and how he conducts himself for the cause of Christ. He is an excellent example of a true giver.

The Son of Consolation:

Don't forget that Luke, the writer of the Book of Acts, began this Book by addressing it to the same man he addressed the Gospel of Luke to, a man named Theophilus. So when we see things like that interpretation given of Barnabas's name: "**The son of consolation**," we need to remember that Theophilus probably did not have a grasp on the Hebrew language,

therefore, Luke was probably wanting to interpret so he would understand what his name meant. He said it means: "**The Son of consolation**." Which means "**one who prophesies and exhorts**." In other words, Barnabas is a type of preacher.

A Levite

We are also told that Barnabas is "a Levite." That means he is from the Priestly Tribe of Levi. The men of Levi were categorized into two different classes: Priests, and Levites. Of course we are all familiar with the duties of a Priest, but we don't hear much about the office of Levites.

A Levite was employed in the lower services of the Temple. We read about the duties of the Levites in **1 Chronicles 23:27-32**

27 For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above:

28 Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God; 29 Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size;

30 And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even;

31 And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD:

32 And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.

Country of Cyprus

Then we see that Barnabas was from the **Country of Cyprus**. So, while he was of Jewish descent, he was born and raised on a Pagan island. Cyprus is about 220 miles away from Jerusalem, out in the Mediterranean Sea. It is a very rich place which produced a lot of wine, honey, oil, and wool. Obviously Barnabas had made a good living in Cyprus and was somewhat wealthy. But when he became saved, he was willing to give up his riches and give to the Church. We see that in our last verse: **37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.**

This is going to get us set up for what is going to happen next in Chapter 5. As we see the first problem occurring WITHIN the Church. Everything up to now has been problems with those OUTSIDE the Church but when the husband and wife team of Ananias and Sapphira pull their little stunt, we are going to see there are grave consequences for lying to the Holy Ghost.