

Introduction

- 1 When you hear the word "missions", what goes through your mind? – foreign countries, Macqueens...
- 2 Today would like to give brief history of how SIM, Ongs' Mission, was started in Soudan-now Nigeria
- 3 Of the 1st 3 mishes Walter Gowans, Thomas Kent, Rowland Bingham, who arrived in Lagos 4/12/1893
- 1st 2 died of Malaria within a yr, Bingham returned home too sick with malaria, tried again 1900, failed
- 4 1901 Four mishes established 1st Mission station, soon 1 died, 2 too sick returned, AW Banfield stayed
- a He learned Nupe language, translated 4 gospels within 3 years, then full Bible-started Niger Press
- 5 1901 SIM thought Dr Andrew Stirrett was too old @37, sold his pharmacy, medical practice went alone
- a Worked as doctor in Nigeria 47 years until 84, translated Bible into Hausa, preached to 10s of 1000s
- 6 Known as "The great white doctor" - above responded to God's call to missions - crazy or obedient?
- 7 Focus of their ministry - make the Word of God available and taught in many vernacular languages

I 11:19-26a Bible Teaching (6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 13:49; 19:20; 28:30-31 – Progressive signposts)**A Importance of Bible teaching, prayer in the early Church (Acts) became focus of the 12 apostles**

- 11:8 Jesus "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem...,
- 2 2:42 After 3000 responded to Peter preaching his 1st sermon on Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, New Chns devoted themselves to apostle's teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer
- 3 5:28 Enemies "Gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, but you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching
- 4 6:1-4 Apostles told church to choose 7 to help poor, so they focus on prayer, ministry of the word
- 5 6:7 Word of God spread, disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, many priests became believers

B 8:1-4 Scattering of witnessing believers from the Jerusalem church after martyrdom of Stephen

- 1 Jerusalem Chns enjoyed apostles' teaching, fellowship with Jewish converts, as local church grew
- a Forgot Jesus' command to witness at home, then move out ..b God forced them- Stephen' death
- 2 8:1-3 Exc. apostles, all Jewish Chns were scattered thru'out Judea/Samaria as Jesus 1st commanded
- a 8:4 Amazingly all those scattered, preached the word wherever they went, helped by Holy Spirit
- b Apostles taught all Chns God's word over months -they obeyed, lives changed-witnessed all over

C 11:19-21 These Christians 1st preached only to Jews at Antioch, later Africans spoke to Greeks also

- 1 8:1 When Jerusalem church was persecuted, apostles believed Gospel was only meant for Jews
- 2 10:1-11:18 Only after Peter had preached to Cornelius did Jewish Chns believe gospel was for all
- 3 11:19 When these Jerusalem Chns arrived in Antioch, they naturally only preached to Jews
- 4 11:20 Fortunately some Chns from Cyprus & Cyrene, Libya also came to Antioch-shared their belief in Jesus with non-Jewish Gentiles also, believing message was for everyone in the world
- 5 11:21 God blessed their ministry of His Word and many people repented and believed good news
- 6 Like the Jews many Sydney churches are reluctant to welcome Chn enquirers from other cultures

D 11:22-25 Jerusalem sent to Antioch, spirit-filled Barnabas, church was blessed

- 1 The 1st Jewish dominated Jerusalem church heard about this growth, sent Barnabas to check it out
- 2 11:23 He was very glad when he saw God's gracious work, so encouraged them to remain strong
- 3 11:24 Barnabas was very gifted-they fully trusted his judgement-good man-full of Holy Spirit, faith
- 4 He could have stayed but showed great humility a Realised new Chns needed solid Bible teaching to grow into committed disciples b he wasn't gifted spiritually to do it by himself c He needed help
- 5 He remembered how Pharisee Saul on his way to arrest Chns had met Jesus on road to Damascus
- a From being great persecutor, a Pharisee, OT Scholar was now a passionate preacher of Gospel
- b Barnabas went off to Tarsus to find Saul, who'd been forced to leave Jerusalem in fear of his life

E 11:26a Barnabas fetched Saul of Tarsus to help teach God's Word in depth for one full year

- 1 Barnabas made the right decision, found Saul brought him to Antioch, Lord blessed their ministry
 - a For one full year Barnabas/Saul met with the church
 - b Taught God's truths to great many people
- 2 Doesn't mean they spent one hour + on a Sunday morning to teach the Bible, but a Probably every day for several hours
- b Antioch was 3rd largest city in Roman Empire
- c so many people came to visit the city
- d part of that was to listen to these Bible teachers (17:6) eg Paul at Ephesus, Corinth

II 11:26b-30, 13:1-2 Some Local Church results in response to this Bible teaching

A 11:26b The disciples of Jesus were called Christians first at Antioch

- 1 Most of the 1st Christians had been Jews in Jerusalem, Judea etc. –just a new branch of Judaism!!!
- 2 Antioch had large Gentile population so many had become followers of Lord Jesus, joined church
- 3 After consistent teaching of Barnabas/Saul, God changed them within-known as followers of Christ
- 4 These new disciples 1st became known as Chns @ Antioch – their lives were dramatically changed

B 11:27-30 Local church members gave proportionately to help Christians in Judea

- 1 11:27-28 Prophets incl. Agabus prophesied @Antioch thru' Holy Spirit famine thru'out Rom Empire
- 2 Most Christians left Jerusalem after Stephen's stoning, so as minority of population, would suffer
- 3 11:29-30 Due to Bible teaching they had received, spontaneously these Antioch disciples decided they
 - a Should look beyond their own church's needs, to needy believers elsewhere in the world
 - b Gave proportionately, each according to their ability
 - c Richer or those who earned more gave more than those with less
 - d Didn't just talk about it, but did it, sent to elders with Barnabas, Saul.

C 13:1 God increased the leadership team from two to five

- 1 We aren't told how much time lapsed between Acts 11&13, but we now see 5 leaders instead of 2
- 2 May have come from elsewhere, but Barnabas/Saul solid Bible teaching produced 3 new teachers

D 13:2 While worshipping/fasting Holy Spirit told them to set aside Barnabas/Saul as missionaries

- 1 Solid Bible teaching led to these 5 church leaders meeting to worship, prayer and fast,
- 2 Holy Spirit clearly told them to set aside their 1st leaders Barnabas and Saul, for a special ministry

III 13:3-4 The mainly Gentile church at Antioch sent out their first two missionaries

- 1 After fasting, praying to make sure they'd heard Lord clearly, they commissioned the 2 to go, serve
- 2 Holy Spirit sent Barnabas, Saul to Seleucia caught boat for Cyprus on Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

IV Lessons to be learned from these verses for our local church

- 1 Bible teaching, preaching must be central to worship at local church every week, home groups etc.
Read/obey Bible daily, join Bible study group, attend church wkly, attend Bible teaching conferences
- 2 Church must welcome, share gospel with people from all cultural/language groups, not just their own
- 3 As Christians obey teaching of Bible others will see their changed behaviour in their words and deeds
 - a With help of the Holy Spirit will want to witness and share their faith with people from all cultures
 - b Will desire to support Christian ministry in proportion to income at local church and worldwide
- 4 Local church leaders to regularly pray/fast asking the Lord to identify from among church members
 - a New potential teachers,
 - b gifted members to consider missionary service throughout the world

Example of worldwide growth of Christian activity through one mission society, SIM in Nigeria

ECWA church in Nigeria with disastrous beginnings has grown -“Evangelical Church Winning All” to

- a 3-5 mil'n worshippers -3500+congr, 800 Ch plants supports 2,400 mishes+100 in Africa+12 ME/USA
- b 2 of latter joined SIM now 120yo-Dr Joshua Bogunjoko, (+Dr Joanna) recently appointed as Int. Dir.