

WEEKLY CATECHISM

What is Sanctification?

Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby His elect is renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness.

FIVE SMOOTH STONE

The Book of Acts: The Spirit's Expansion of the Gospel throughout the Earth
(Acts 13:1-54)

Acts 1:8 tells us:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

❖ The Antioch Church

- Antioch: A Multi-Gifted Church

"Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, ..." (vs. 1a)

- Antioch: A Multi-Ethnic Church

" ... Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul." (Vs. 1b)

- Barnabas a Jew from Cyprus;
- Simeon is most likely an African because his Latin nickname "Niger" means "Black;"
- Lucius is a North African from Cyrene;
- Manaen, a high-ranking individual who was most likely a foster brother or intimate friend of Herod the Tetrarch;

- And then finally we have Saul, a Jew who was born and raised in the city of Tarsus, trained in the Law under the pharisee Gamaliel, and former persecutor of the church.

- Antioch: A Prayer and Worshiping Church

“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’” (Vs. 2)

- Antioch: A Commissioning and Sending Church

“Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.” (vs. 3)

❖ The Apostolic Charge

- Apostolic: An Adventurous Ministry

“So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.” (Vs. 4)

- Apostolic: A Challenging Ministry

“When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.” (Vs. 5)

- Apostolic: A Courageous Ministry

“When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. 7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. 9 But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, ‘You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.’ Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.” (Vs. 6-12)

- An Important Invitation and Unexpected Opposition (Acts 13:6–12)

- An Intense Invocation and Unusual Occurrence

“And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. 21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.” (John 3:19-21)

- Apostolic: A Confrontational Ministry (vs. 13-54)

“And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.” (Acts 13”15)

- ▶ Objective Foundation

"The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought He them out of it. And about the time of forty years suffered He their manners in the wilderness..." (vs. 17-18)

- ▶ Amazing Fulfillment (vs. 23-37)

"Of [David's] seed hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a savior, Jesus." (vs. 23)

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch and a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely..." (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

- ▶ Great Salvation (vs. 38-39)

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by Him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Vs. 38-39)