**We Need Good Men (Acts 11:19-26)**

 If we want the church to grow, good people must answer the call to serve.

 Greetings dearly beloved as we continue on this Sunday to study the foundational events and truths of the church. We all desire to see the flourishing of the church – be it in maturity, but also in numbers. Today we’re going to speak about a new and important factor related to the latter. We’re going to see just what kind of people need to come forth in the interest of the growth of the church. According to the Scripture passage, Barnabas is remembered as a “good man”, which is where we get our title and main subject for today. Again, I want to reiterate that if we want the church to grow, good people must answer the call to spiritual work. Let’s move onto this main idea of “goodness”, then…

 For the church to grow, good or spiritual people need to apply themselves to serve. Everybody wants to be “good” – but not everyone has understood the Biblical definition of goodness. According to Scripture, a good man is filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. These two factors mean that a person who serves in church must be a devout believer (rather than a nominal or lukewarm one). Being filled with the Holy Spirit means having a relationship with God – but not only based on the general truths of Scripture, but also on the Holy Spirit’s moment to moment, daily and tangible guidance. In other words, the Spirit’s supernatural interventions are part of the life of a devout believer. Along with that, Barnabas is also noted to have been full of faith, meaning not just carrying the gifts and experiences of the Holy Spirit, but also one who is solidly established on foundation of the salvation of Jesus and His character.

 A person whose character has been shaped by faith can be recognized through the following questions: Can you labor on cheerfully without earthly reward? Can you toil on hopefully without tangible returns? Can you travel the road of frequent criticism without bitterness? Can you lift and agonize and sacrifice and pray and give, way down out of sight, while others lead the procession and receive the honors? In other words, are you willing to be soil in which providential events may grow, while others fill the places of leaves and blossoms on the trees of time?

 God searches for good men, in other words devout people, to work in the church. But here, it is important to remember that a devout person is not obligated to be a preacher or missionary. A devout believer may be a builder, an engineer, an artist, a writer, a housewife or a working mother, a student, a head of an organization, or in working in other fields. Let’s not think that God has called all of us to be clergy, but rather to use whatever gifts we have for the Lord, to live by the Holy Spirit’s leading, and to be a solid and model believer. It is helpful to know that in history, those believers who have had both the power of the Spirit as well as the character and knowledge of the Scriptures have generally been more successful in their service to the Lord in the church. On the other hand, those that have had amazing gifts but ungodly character, having the Spirit without cultivating a holy lifestyle, or conversely, having a holy lifestyle but with no power of the Spirit, both types of believers have been unbalanced and damaging to the life of the church throughout the ages.

 Today we are called by God to be filled with both faith and the Holy Spirit. If we are weak in one of these, let us get together and be strengthened by study and prayer in them. For the church to grow, good or spiritual people need to apply themselves to serve.

 Therefore, may God give us the awareness to recognize our spiritual need and the wisdom to address it. If we want the church to grow, good people must answer the call to serve.

May the Lord Bless you all. Amen.