

THE SOUTHEAST SOWER

Volume 36 Number 3

www.southeastchurchofchrist.org

2021

APOSTLES, WHY WAS BARNABAS AND OTHERS CALLED?

Marshall Patton

QUESTION: Why was Barnabas called an apostle in Acts 14:14? I understand that Paul was an apostle in addition to the twelve chosen by Jesus, but were there others? - A.B.

ANSWER: The above questions grow out of a failure to understand the meaning of the word “apostle” and its use in the New Testament.

The word “apostle” is from the Greek word “apostolos” and, literally means, “one sent forth” (W.E. Vine).

During our Lord’s earthly ministry he chose twelve men and sent them forth under the “Limited Commission” (Matt. 10:5-7) and, later the “Great Commission” (Matt. 28:16-20). Because Judas “by transgression fell” (Acts 1:25), and, therefore, could not carry out his “part of this ministry” (Acts 1:17) Matthias was chosen to take his place (Acts 1:15-26). That his appointment as an apostle met with divine approval is clearly indicated from the Scriptures. It was in fulfillment of prophecy (Acts 1:20). The Holy Spirit through the inspired historian, Luke, counted twelve apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:14) and again through Paul in a letter to Corinth (1 Cor. 15:5). All of these possessed the qualifications of Acts 1:21, 22. They were able to “witness,” in the primary sense of that term—bear “first hand” testimony—to the fact of his resurrection. Their intimate association with Jesus both before and after death enabled them to know beyond doubt that the one they saw after his resurrection was the same one they had known so well before his death.

To the above list of apostles must be added another, namely, Paul. He was not made an apostle in the natural way (Acts 1:21, 22), but was, nevertheless, qualified to “witness,” in the primary sense of that word, to the resurrection of Jesus by virtue of his miraculous experience on the Damascus road (Acts 22:14, 15; 26:15-18). Thus, he became an apostle of Christ “as

one born out of due time” (1 Cor. 15:8). The marginal reading says, “Or, an abortive” birth. In other words, he was not made an apostle in the natural way. Nevertheless, he was an apostle of Christ, primarily to the Gentiles, endowed with full apostolic authority (Rom. 11:13; 1 Cor. 1:1; 9:1, 2; 2 Cor. 1:1; 11:5; 12:11; Gal. 1:1). Thus, Paul, together with the twelve served in the apostolic office with certain qualifications, endowments, and responsibilities peculiar to “this ministry” assigned by the Lord. They were His apostles—He sent them forth— with a definite yet comprehensive mission, the fullness of which we will not discuss here.

The word “apostle” is also applied to other men in the New Testament. This does not mean that they were apostles of Christ—of the apostolic office appointed by Christ, but rather one who was “sent forth” by men, or by a church, or by some other power. There were times when Paul distinguished himself from such, e.g., Gal. 1:1. Again, in Heb. 3:1 it is used of Jesus Christ. He was “sent forth” from God. In Acts 13:3, 4 we find that “Barnabas and Saul” were “sent forth” by the Holy Spirit and the church in Antioch. No doubt, this is the sense in which the word “apostle” is used in the verse submitted by our querist. Paul, in addition to being an apostle in the sense here under consideration, was also an apostle of Christ along with the twelve. When Paul distinguished himself from the apostles of men in Gal. 1:1, he was talking about apostolic authority received from Christ. Indeed, this was not of men!

Sometimes the word translated “messenger” is from

Southeast Church of Christ

35 Walnut Ct

Mogadore, OH

330-628-7432

Service Times:

Sunday: 10 am, 10:50am; 6:00pm

Wednesday: 7:30 pm

the same Greek word elsewhere translated “apostle” - e.g., 2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25. Hence, in the light of the original text, the men here referred to were also apostles. This is true, because they were “sent forth” by the churches.

Note: Taken from: “Answers For Our Hope,” by M. E. Patton, p. 151-152

COLLECTION, THE, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

David Lipscomb

Note: Taken from: Questions and Answers, by Lipscomb and Sewell, edited by Kurfees, p. 129

Brother Lipscomb: Please explain 1 Cor. 16:2. Does it mean for each member of the church of Christ to lay by himself or herself, as the case may be, or does it mean that each one must cast into the treasury upon the first day of every week? Please tell, also, to what the term *gathering* refers. Does it refer to gathering up their nickels and dimes, or does it refer to the people’s coming together?

I copy this from page 553 of the Gospel Advocate for 1903: “There certainly is a word that means ‘putting it into the treasury.’ First they are commanded: ‘Upon the first day of the week let each one place (tithetoo, a verb meaning to place, in the imperative mood) by itself, putting it into the treasury (thesauridzoo, a participle from the verb which means to treasure up, or to place in the treasury for safe-keeping).’ Thesauridzoo is defined to store, to treasure up, to lay up in store, to preserve. The noun thesauros is defined a store laid up, treasure, a storehouse or treasure house, magazine; in Herodotus, especially, the treasury of a temple, any receptacle for valuables, a chest, a casket. The word meaning put it into the treasury after it is placed by itself is certainly in the sentence, and the only question that can arise is: Was it to be placed in the man’s own treasury or that of the church?” To place by itself means “to separate it from what he keeps as his own,” to take it out of his own treasury. Then it is to be placed in the treasury, “that there be no gatherings when I come.” It can mean nothing else than it must be placed in the treasury of the church ready for Paul when he reached Corinth.

COLLECTION, HOW TO BE TAKEN

David Lipscomb

Note: Take from, Ibid, p. 129-130

Brother Lipscomb: There is some trouble here about the way the collections are made. Some of the brethren want to go forward and lay it on the table after the Lord’s Supper, while some of them want to pass the plate and conduct the ordinance as the sects do.

I have never found a word of direction as to how the contribution was made— whether it was put under the table or on the table or whether there was any table at all or not. I think the service would be acceptable if it was performed in a stable, in a barn, or in a mountain cove where neither tables nor baskets were ever seen. Some of the collections were placed at the feet of the apostles. When people undertake to make laws how things should be done where God has made none, they commit sin. When the Lord tells a thing shall be done without telling how to do it, he expects men to do it the best way they can. It is not sin to wear clothes like the sects wear, nor to live in houses like the sects live in, nor to eat food like the sects eat, and I do not see it is any harm to place a collection in the plate, in a basket on the table or under the table, if the sects do it. Brethren who fuss over such untaught questions are very anxious for a fuss. Had God a special way for doing it, he would have let it be known. Do it the way that it can be done with the least trouble to all.