

Introduction- WHAT A CHRISTIAN SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT DO IS PRETTY WELL COVERED IN THE BIBLE

1. Every problem faced by man today is covered in God's word- and the way that works is shown.
2. Governments today legislate the morality of Charity, but refuse to act against the murderer.
3. The early church faced a hostile government that murdered its leaders, and fed its enemies while the church starved, - so let's look at how the church faced the problem.

I.- THE PROPHECY OF AGABUS (Acts 11:27-28) A need shown before it exists.

Plenty of Prophets of Doom today - & Famines - - esp famine of Word -

A. A WARNING OF A GREAT DEARTH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD (inhabited land)

1. Agabus is named twice- here and in Acts 21:10- otherwise he is an unknown prophet.
2. We need men who are willing to train and labor for one or two "grand stand plays"-for God.
3. He spoke by the Spirit of God- not his message, but God's message- "Thus saith the Lord"

B. THE DEARTH WAS WORLD WIDE* THE CONCERN WAS JUST FOR JERUSALEM* WHY? *Starve food in city -*

1. The Church at Antioch was in better shape than the one in Jerusalem- wealthy with Gentiles.
2. The Church at Jerusalem had tried Communism, and was in very poor shape (if church can't do it)
3. On top of a general famine the church was faced with persecution! it just can't be done)

C. THE FAMINE ACTUALLY CAME - (The date was from 44-46 AD) /resulted in our reception of the gospel

1. This was the time that Claudius Caesar had finished the conquest of Britain-
2. The Queen Helena visited Jerusalem, and brought food from Egypt, Cyprus, to feed them.
3. But the public welfare program did not help the church- they were persecuted and killed, so God had to raise up his own relief for them. - *Christians today have a hard time - ask Peggy about Access*

II.- THE METHOD OF RAISING THE MONEY IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Letter & offering - the people as individuals raised their money -

A. "THEN THE DISCIPLES* EVERY MAN"- (29) In cooperation -prayer is answered, results obtained.

1. These people believed the prophecy of Agabus, as Pharaoh did Joseph in Genesis
2. God had blessed them with real spiritual blessings- cf. v.23- with purpose of heart- cleave
3. They all joined together- What stops us today is that always one holds back! /unto the Lord

B. "ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY DETERMINED TO SEND RELIEF" shows how the money was raised

1. Voluntary- Each followed the spirit personally - *BUDGETING & ACCOUNTING -*
2. Determined- determination shows strength, not emotion, but the use of rationality & will
3. as his ability- No holding back- and no giving too much- perfect balance - *Use of Credit!*

B. TO THE BRETHREN WHICH DWELT IN JUDEA - The gentiles sending to the Jerusalem church *unrequited love - credit only -*

1. They owed their salvation to the Gospel preaching from Jerusalem- God says Communicate!
2. When Jesus needed money to pay taxes- he sent Peter to catch a fish- These were fish!
3. To help others is a sign of the work of the spirit- "Jesus, others, and you"

III.- THE MESSENGERS TRUSTED WITH THE MONEY FOR THE CHURCH*

How did they send money - Coins - Checks - Credit cards - Gold - (Roller)

A. "WHICH THEY DID"* #) v.30 - They did not delay the sending of the money

1. So often the Christian arrives too late with too little- but these were prompt.
2. They had been conditioned by a year's ministry of Barnabas and Saul- v. 26.
3. They were at a spiritual peak- and they did something about it- (show me- don't tell me how /spiritual you are)

B. THE FUNDS WERE SENT TO THE ELDERS*

1. The organization of the church was honored.- This was not completely personal- but a church.
2. The church must have the protection of appointed officials and channels- not anarchy.
3. Some might say- the church in Jerusalem failed once- Church didn't fail- individuals did.

C. BY THE HANDS OF BARNABAS AND SAUL - trusted to carry the large sum of money

1. Barnabas was sent from the church in Jerusalem- v.22, and v.24 described his faith. *★*
2. Paul, here called Saul was so led of the Lord that he wrote II Cor 15 years later
3. Then he sent Titus to collect the "abundance"- of II Cor 8:20-21.- yet many Baptists today are unfaithful with their funds, so they suspect their officers.

Letter help available - But you have to use it -

Concl. THE PHYSICAL NEEDS OF THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM WERE MET BECAUSE IT SENT OUT MISSIONARIES

1. We have physical needs, that they will not be met unless we get busy in soulwinning!
2. Our financial giving is a thermometer of our spiritual condition - how do you rate?
3. Those who go for Christ, and who give for Christ are almost always the same- do you, will you?

We have a few more vacations- then we have to get down to work

Inv. Lets make the DVBS a real time of service- but it takes real dedication!