

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“God of the Impossible” – Series

~LET'S PRAY~

NOTE TAKERS...

- I've titled todays message: **“Against All Odds”**
➤ (Acts 11:1-30) NKJV.

~INTRO~

NOW...

- As we continue our study thru (Acts)...
➤ Remember it records about 30-years of the early church...
 - With snapshot narratives.

AND TODAY...

- We arrive at (chapter #11).
➤ Where the expansion of the Gospel is chronicled...
 - AND where the Apostle Paul is added to the scene.

BUT...

- Before we get into the details...
➤ I want to pass along what I've learned about Bible Study.

WHEN WE STUDY OUR BIBLES...

- Sometimes the teachings are inspirational...
➤ And other times they're simply instructional.

(Chapter #11)... Gives us a behind the scene view of ministry...

- As God advances His mission to the Gentile world.
➤ And the message is simply instructional.

HERE'S A FEW THINGS WE CAN LEARN:

IDEA #1 – CRITICS & OPPOSITION: (vv.1-18)

AS WE GROW IN THE WILL & WORD OF GOD...

- We become more aware of God speaking to us.
➤ It's like a whole new world opens!

BUT...

- Following the Holy Spirit... can ALSO... generate opposition.

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(1 Cor. 16:8-9) NLT

“I will be staying here at Ephesus until the Festival of Pentecost. There is a wide-open door for a great work here, although many oppose me.”

PETER HAD RESPONDED...

- To the Holy Spirit's leading & was getting “*criticized*” (v.2) NLT

AS WE SURVEY THE SCRIPTURES...

- When God is at work... **conditions of opposition exist:**

- 1) Some will be envious (Mark 15:10)
- 2) Some will criticize you (Acts 11:2) NLT
- 3) Some will hate you (John 15:25)
- 4) Some will try to stop you (Neh. 6:1-10) NKJV

NEHEMIAH...

- Was opposed by men that associated with God's people...
 - [Sanballat, Tobiah, & Geshem] (Neh. 6:1)
 - BUT... they wanted to stop the work of God!
- These men tried to disrupt *Nehemiah* (5x) (vv.4-5).

(v.9) “*they were trying to make us afraid & weaken our hands in the work*”

FLIP AHEAD... (Neh. 13:4 & 13:7) NKJV

- Eliashib (priest)... was a bad leader...
 - Who allied with Tobiah who resisted the work of God.

NEHEMIAH RETURNED TO CHECK THINGS OUT...

- (v.7) and found that Eliashib had set a room for Tobiah in God's house.

RECOGNIZE THIS:

- Satan joins churches...
 - And then fights against us from within our walls!
- Traitors in the place of influence.
 - But... we can recognize them as they fight against...
 - Established truths / new methods / OR forward progress!

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APPLICATION:

- We overcome *resistance* in three ways...

I. Preparation of message ([Jer. 1:17](#)) NKJV

Contrast = ([1 Sam. 15:24](#)) NKJV

King Saul sinned against God because he...

“feared the people and obeyed their voice.”

II. Persistence in prayer ([Matt. 7:7-8](#)) NKJV

Jesus tells us to keep on asking & knocking!

III. Power of God ([Rom. 1:16](#)) NKJV

Paul tells us of the overcoming power of the Gospel!

IDEA #2 – PERSECUTION SPREADS THE WORK: ([vv.19-24](#))

READ ([vv.19-21](#))

- The church had been scattered...
 - AND ministry was expanding in NEW ways...
 - As Gentiles continued... responding to God.

WHEN TO START A CHURCH?

- ([Eph. 3:7-11](#)) NLT

IN ([Acts](#)) THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF CHURCH PLANTS:

1. **Strategic** = A carefully designed team to reach a community...
With a plan & resources.
([Acts 16 / 18 / 19](#))
2. **Organic** = Just show up and start preaching...
See if God wants to do something!?!
([Acts 11](#))

READ ([vv.22-24](#)) NLT

- Barnabas... (a church leader from Jerusalem)...

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- Shows up in Antioch... AND see's the evidence of God at work...
 - In both Jew & Gentile.
- (vv.25-26) Barnabas goes to neighboring Tarsus and gets Paul...
 - Who then spends a year ministering in Antioch.

COPY MAP



IDEA #3 – HOLY SPIRIT WORK: (vv.27-30)

AGABUS...A CHARACTER WE KNOW LITTLE ABOUT.

- (Was a prophet from Jerusalem).
 - AND by the power of the Holy Spirit he delivers a message...
 - About a coming feminine.

THIS IS VERY POWERFUL!

- We see a financial gift... from a heavily populated Gentile area...
 - Sent back to Jews in Jerusalem (Judea).

IT WAS A SIGN OF UNITY...

- Between believers... from both Jew & Gentile backgrounds.
 - It was *Against All Odds!*
 - It was a work of God & people responded by faith.

~IN CLOSING~

THIS IS THE SAME TYPE OF THING...

- We want to see in our churches today – Unity!
 - Men & women responding to God.

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AS THE DEACONS PASS OUT COMMUNION...

- May you prepare your heart before God...
➤ AND allow His Spirit to **unify** your will to His word.