

## A FEW GOOD MEN

Acts 11:19-24

There are three men in the Bible that are identified as being “a good man.” What makes a man “good?” You can usually identify a “good man” by what proceeds out of his heart. Luke 6:45— A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil...

### I. BARNABAS (Acts 11:24)— A good man is FILLED.

- A. There is none good (Mk. 10:18; Mt. 19:17; Rom. 3:10-23).
- B. Goodness is part of “the fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22). Because Barnabas is filled with the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit (goodness) is manifested in his life.

### II. AHIMAAZ (2 Sam. 18:27 cf. 2 Sam. 15:27-36; 17:17-21)— A good man is FAITHFUL.

- A. Ahimaaz was a son Zadok, one of the priests that remained loyal to David during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:27-28).
- B. He would carry messages from Hushai to David from Jerusalem (15:34-36; 17:15-21).
- C. When Absalom was defeated by Joab, Ahimaaz wanted to run to tell David. Joab, sent Cushie instead. However, Ahimaaz was persistent and Joab let him also run. Ahimaaz outran Cushie. When David heard that Ahimaaz was coming with a message, he recognized him as “a good man” (18:27). Why? Because he knew of his loyalty and faithfulness in the past. ÆVerses 28-29— Because Ahimaaz was deeply devoted to David, he wished to “soften the blow” of Absalom’s death by preparing David’s heart for the worst.
- D. cf. Mt. 25:21; Luke 19:17.

### III. JOSEPH of Arimathaea (John 19:38 cf. Luke 23:50-52)— A Good man is FORTHRIGHT / FORTHCOMING.

- A. Where were the Lord’s disciples at this time? Hiding for fear.
- B. Joseph, who up to this point kept his discipleship secret, came forth in the open to boldly request our Lord’s body for burial.

Joseph had courage—the courage to step out and be counted for Christ when Jesus’ most intimate friends were still too confused and dazed and frightened to leave the dubious safety of the locked, upper room.

1. This was no small feat. He put himself at great personal risk.

It’s not easy to come out in the open against the authorities. Let me illustrate: During his years as premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev denounced many of the policies and atrocities of his predecessor, Joseph Stalin.

Once, as he reproached Stalin in a public meeting, Khrushchev was interrupted by a shout from a heckler in the audience. "You were one of Stalin’s colleagues. Why didn’t you stop him?"

"Who said that?" roared Khrushchev. An agonizing silence followed as nobody in the room dared move a muscle. Then Khrushchev replied quietly, "Now you know why."

2. Joseph could have remained safely anonymous and stayed on the sideline as an observer, but instead he was forthright about his association with Jesus. He did what the Twelve did not have the courage to do.

C. Fear is a human trait we all have. We need to rise above our fears. “Courage is doing what you’re afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you’re scared.”

1. Most people want to “fit in” and not cause any waves. Therefore, they go along with the crowd, even when the crowd is wrong.

2. One university conducted the following test: Ten students were placed in a room. 3 lines

of varying length were drawn on the board. The students were told to raise their hands when the instructor pointed to the longest line.

But 9 of the students had been instructed beforehand to raise their hands when the instructor pointed to the second longest line. One student was the stooge.

The usual reaction of the stooge was to put his hand up, look around, and realizing he was all alone, pull it back down. This happened 75% of the time, with students from grade school through high school.

3. LESSON: To get along, you go along.

4. But that is not what Jesus Christ called us to do. That is not the example set for us by Joseph of Arimathaea.

Æ A good man has FORTITUDE.

CONCLUSION: These are examples of A FEW GOOD MEN. Will you follow their example?

- Are you FILLED with God's Spirit?
- Are you FORTHRIGHT with your testimony?
- Are you FAITHFUL in delivering God's message?