



Building the church

A sermon series on the Gospel of Acts

The Spirit Leads, Sends and Empowers

Acts 13

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. 4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. 6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. 7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

- Acts 13:1-12



“all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. . . But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.”

- Isaiah 64:6,8

Acts 13:1-12

Main idea: What God commands, He also empowers.

vss. 1-3: The Holy Spirit **Sets Apart** Paul and Barnabas

vss. 4-5: The Spirit **Sends** them To Cyprus to Preach the Word

vss. 6-12: The Spirit **empowers** them in the face of opposition

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

- Acts 13:1-3

They dwell in their own countries but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do others; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but are citizens of heaven.

They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws in their lives. They love all, and are persecuted by all... They are poor, yet they make many rich; they are completely destitute, and yet they enjoy complete abundance. . . They are reviled, and yet they bless...When they do good they are punished as evildoers; undergoing punishment, they rejoice because they are brought to life.

- Epistle of Diognetus (circa 150 AD)

2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. 4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

- Acts 13:2-4

How To Discern The Spirit's Leading

1. What does God's Word say?

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3. What do Godly, mature men and women in my life say?
4. What does the Church at large think?

4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

- Acts 13:4-5

Main idea: What God commands, He also empowers.



"Depend on it. God's
work done in God's way
will never lack God's
supply."

- Hudson Taylor



But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

- Acts 13:1-12

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

The Gospel Is Offensive

- **Confronts personal sin:** It strips away human pride by declaring that no one is "good enough" on their own merit.
- **Eliminates self-rescue:** It states that salvation is a gift through faith alone, meaning human effort cannot earn it.
- **Claims exclusivity:** It positions Jesus as the single, exclusive path to God.