



## Unit .32

### Session .02

# The Church Is Sent to the World

## Scripture



## Acts 13:1-12

**1** 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. **9** 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.

**Why do you think there is a relationship between fasting and hearing God's voice more clearly in our lives?**

**How can we support missionaries God has sent?**



## 99 Essential Doctrines

### Mission of the Church

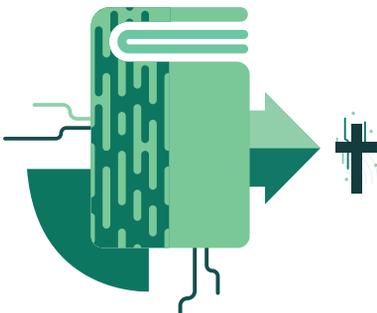
The church is a sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, a people united by faith in the gospel announcement of the crucified and risen King Jesus. The mission of the church is to go into the world in the power of the Spirit and make disciples by proclaiming this gospel, calling people to respond in ongoing repentance and faith, and demonstrating the truth and power of the gospel by living under the lordship of Christ for the glory of God and the good of the world.

## Main Point

**God sends missionaries from the church to take the gospel to the entire world.**

**What can we expect to happen when we obey the Great Commission?**

**What can we learn from Paul's courage with Elymas? What stands out to you about what Paul told him?**



## Christ Connection

Jesus told His disciples that the gates of hell would not prevail against His church, reminding us that God's people are on offense, continuing the mission Jesus began. God's plan is for missionaries to take the powerful, good news of Jesus to places of deep spiritual darkness with confidence that Jesus will build His church.

**What are some ways that you can be bold in standing for what is right and true?**

## In Defense



When we live for God's mission, it is inevitable that we will face challenges and opposition. In those seasons, knowing that you have been sent by the God of the universe is an anchor and a rock. Navigating moments of doubt and discouragement would be impossible if you were going merely out of your own ambition or because your church sent you. When you have been set apart and set by God, though, you can persevere knowing that you are there by God's providence, plan, and purpose.



## Head

**What are some areas you need to keep learning in so that you will be able to stand for the truth?**

**The proconsul was “a man of intelligence” (Acts 13:7). How can Christians do a better job of reaching people who are evidence driven?**



## Heart

**What can you fast in order to seek God more intentionally?**

**What are some things you love that might make it difficult to follow God’s voice if He called you to missions?**

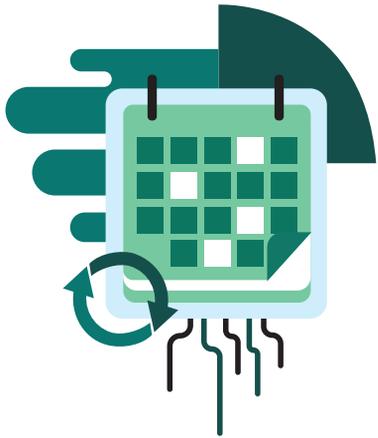


## Hands

**How can we guard against being combative as we defend the truth?**

**What are some ways that our group can get more involved in God’s mission?**

# Daily Devotions



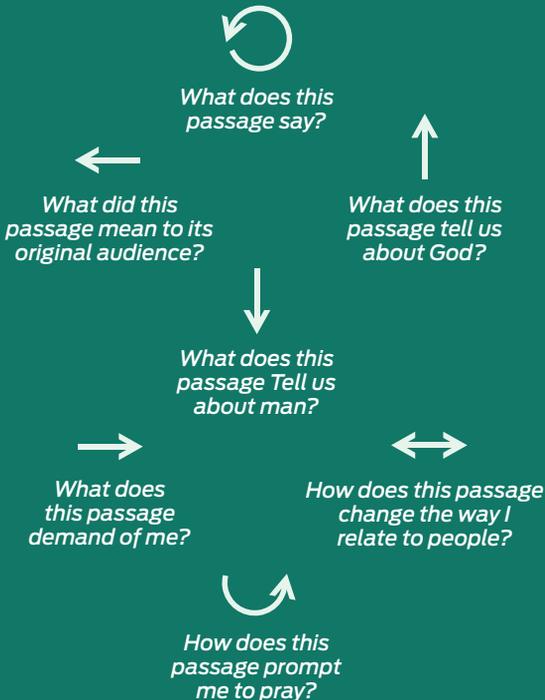
Day 1

## Acts 13:1-3

Although fasting is mentioned in the Old and New Testaments about 100 times, many Christians do not practice fasting. Fasting is a discipline that sharpens our ability to know and live out God’s plan and purpose. It was “while they were worshipping the Lord and fasting” (Acts 13:2) that the disciples heard what the Holy Spirit was saying.

Prayer and fasting are tools God has given to believers to know and discern His will. Fasting provides you with time to pray because you are cutting other things out of your day. The point is to stop doing something temporarily in order to seek God instead. We have so much noise in our lives that it can be hard to pause and hear God’s voice. We need to tune out the distractions and listen to God speak.

## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



**What can you give up this week in order to seek God more intentionally?**

# Acts 13:4-8

“Sent out by the Holy Spirit”—That is the way Luke described Barnabas and Paul. They weren’t going in their own authority or living for their own purposes. They went in the authority of God and for His mission. It makes me think of how our four-year-old wants to be a big helper all the time. My wife will send her to get an outfit or diaper for her baby brother. I will ask her to go get my phone or computer, or to get me a tool when I am working on something. Sometimes she will even come get me and tell me to do something for my wife.

Now, in all of those instances, she is not acting in her own authority. She is acting in the authority of the one who sent her to accomplish a particular task. Even if a sibling or cousin were to try to stop her, she could continue the task because she had been sent by a higher authority for that very purpose.

The Holy Spirit sends you out for His mission today. Don’t fear the potential opposition, for you have been sent by the highest authority.

**How would your boldness for Christ change if you lived like you were sent by God Himself?**

# Acts 13:9-12

Following Jesus often puts us in intimidating situations. It may be that the task itself is daunting, or maybe, like Paul, an influential person is against you. Left to ourselves, we tend to cower with fear and try to find our comfort zone again. How can we imitate Paul’s courage and boldness?

Luke tells us in verse 9 that Paul was “filled with the Holy Spirit.” That’s the key ingredient that we all need. When we are weak, He is strong. When we can’t find the words to say, the One who inspired the Scriptures will direct your words. In our flesh, we are likely to say the wrong thing or nothing at all, but when we are filled with the Spirit, we can face any situation God places us in. Pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit every morning, because you need Him every day.

**Are you humbling yourself to depend on the Holy Spirit, or are you trying to live for God in your own strength?**

# Acts 13:13-52

In Acts 13:15, the leaders of a Jewish synagogue asked Paul if he had “any word of encouragement for the people.” Paul used the opportunity to share the most encouraging news the world has ever known—the God of Abraham has kept His promises in Jesus Christ. What encouragement do you need today? What are you looking for to lift your spirit? Look no further than this assurance, that God will fulfill every promise He has ever made. You may feel, as some did in 2 Peter 3:9, that God is being too slow in accomplishing what He has said He will do. But let Paul’s words in Acts 13 comfort your soul with the hope that God doesn’t forget His word.

Your parents and friends and siblings will sometimes forget their promises or fail to deliver on their promises, but the gospel is a constant reminder of God’s faithfulness. As Paul said in verses 32-33, “we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus.” May you respond as the Gentiles in Acts 13:48, who “began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord.” God keeps His promises in Jesus and brings “salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:47). Walk in this encouragement today.

**How can you encourage someone today with the faithfulness of God?**

# Acts 14:1-28

As followers of the crucified Savior, we should always be willing to suffer, but we also need the wisdom for when to remove ourselves from a bad situation. This tension is on display in Acts 14. Paul is doing the work of the Lord, but he is also facing fierce opposition at every turn.

At first, Paul and Barnabas stayed and proclaimed the word boldly, but when they found out the Jewish and city leaders were planning to stone them, they fled. The pattern repeats itself in the next city, but there, Paul was stoned and left to die. Although he survived, he got out of town the very next day. When you are doing what is right, expect opposition and hardships. Be willing to suffer for what is right, but also know that you don’t always have to stay in a bad situation. Seek help and remove yourself from dangerous situations. It is sinful to repay evil for evil or to be ashamed of Jesus and give into pressure to stop living a godly life, but there’s nothing particularly ungodly about not enduring evil if God gives you opportunities to remove yourself. Seek help today if you need it, and try to help others who are being mistreated, too.

**Is there a situation you need to take steps to remove yourself from? If so, how can you reflect God through your exit?**