

The Week in the Word

Acts Worksheet #24: The Early Church Gets Involved in Missions

Passage: Acts 13.1-3

Sermon Dates: August 30-31

Study Period: August 24-29

Link Group Meetings: Sept. 1-6

Chapter 13 marks the beginning of a new focus in the Book of Acts. Now the narrative begins to focus on the ministry to the Gentiles, and the spreading of the Gospel around the world. Paul replaces Peter as the central figure, and he completes three missionary journeys before being imprisoned permanently.

Acts 13:1-3 records the commissioning of the first missionaries. The way the Antioch church went about selecting and sending them gives us some good ideas for our own church as we think about our own strategies for sending and supporting missionaries.

1. Read Acts 13:1-3. Despite their various backgrounds, how did the leaders of the church at Antioch function? (13:1,2)

2. Who did the choosing, and who did the sending of these missionaries? What do we learn about God's desires from this? (2,4)

3. What was the church doing when the Lord spoke to them about sending out missionaries? (13:2)

4. Where did the church find missionaries to send? How does that compare with how missionaries are generally selected for support today? Write a statement listing, in order of priority, where we should look for our missionaries, and why.

5. What were the positions of Barnabas and Saul in the Antioch Church? What would you say qualified them for God's calling? (v.1, also 11:25-26)

6. Would you say that the church parted with their best or their least? List some advantages and disadvantages of sending the key leaders out, as opposed to sending those who have no present ministry.

7. Why did the church leaders lay hands on Barnabas and Saul? (13:3)

Do you think churches should practice this today? Why or Why not?

8. The town of Antioch must have had a lot of needs, and a lot of unreached people, since it was so big. Weren't there enough ministry opportunities for them right in their own town? List a few reasons why sending missionaries beyond our borders is a good idea, even though there are great needs at home.

9. If you were present at the prayer meeting in verse 3, what prayer requests might you offer up for Barnabas and Saul?

10. Spend some time this week in prayer for our missionaries, and our trainees...

Missionaries we support:

- Rod and Valerie Hochstetler ("Hoe – stetler")...Pilot with Mission Aviation Fellowship
- Denny and Arlene Norris...Reaching the unreached in Morelia, Central Mexico
- David and Leanne Jimenez – Missionaries here in SM to Hispanics in the Newlove area.

Trainees:

- Tim and Tiffany Lanier...In Bible School
- Mason and Kim Lockwood...At New Tribes Mission's "Missions Institute" in Baker City, OR
- Mandi Kuster...Just starting New Tribes Bible Institute
- Bailey Brennan...Starting at Columbia Int'l University, Bible training for Missions Career.
- Brian Pruett, Training to be missionary pilot, now working to pay school debt.

Pray also for God's leading in the lives of our youth. Many are considering full time missionary careers, or full time ministry in other areas.

Pray for our church leaders, that they will have the wisdom needed to prepare these people for service in the Kingdom of God.