

# Set Apart for God's Work

Acts 13-14

**Icebreaker:** Would it be easier for you to talk to about Jesus to someone in your hometown or someone in another country? Why?

When we last saw Paul and Barnabas in Acts 11 they were preaching the gospel in Antioch and converted many souls to Christ. This week's chapters pick up where Luke left off. In this week's lesson we will follow Paul and Barnabas as they travel follow God's leading and work through opposition.

## Acts 13:1-3

*What were the Christians at Antioch doing prior to the Holy Spirit setting apart Barnabas and Paul (also called Saul)?*

- They were fasting and worshipping the Lord.

It is no accident that God made his will known to them while they were focused on God through fasting and worship. When we do things like fasting, prayer and worship that are in tune with the Spirit we will be more in tune with God's will for our lives.

*What did they do following the message from the Holy Spirit?*

- Continued to fast and they also prayed.
- Then they sent Saul and Barnabas off.

They travel to Cyprus where they preached about Jesus in the synagogues.

## Acts 13:6-12

*Who do Paul and Barnabas get opposition from in Paphos?*

- A false prophet named Bar-Jesus.

*How did God respond to the opposition?*

- The Holy Spirit gave Saul the words and the power to boldly speak out against Bar-Jesus.

*How does this situation assure us that when you do God's will you can trust he will provide?*

- When we are serving God's purposes, God will provide what we need even during opposition.

From there they travel to Pisidian Antioch where they are asked to speak in the synagogue. Paul starts all the way back with their ancestors and the exodus. He works them through the Old Testament proving that Jesus was the Christ.

*When speaking to someone about Christ, why is it important to start with what they already know?*

- These Jews already knew the Old Testament.
- You can start with where they are at and go from there instead of starting from scratch.

### Acts 13:44-49

*Who turned against Paul and Barnabas this time? Why?*

- The Jews because they were jealous.
- They are doing God's will and face rejection by religious people. *How is that possible?*

*What good came out of that opposition?*

- The Gentiles in the area came to believe in Christ.

From Pisidian Antioch Paul and Barnabas traveled to Iconium. Once again they face opposition and once again God confirms their message through signs and wonders. *After undergoing so much opposition could miraculous signs and wonders have built up Paul and Barnabas' faith as much as it did their audience?*

- After facing so much opposition many people would need reassured that this was still God's desire

### Acts 14:8-20

In Lystra the opposition gets really tough. *Who comes back to persecute them even though they have gone to a different city?*

- The angry Jews from Iconium come to Lystra persuade the crowd and have Paul stoned.

Notice what Paul and Barnabas are doing in the very next verse (14:21) - they are back to preaching Jesus!

*How could someone be so zealous for their message that they would still preach it even though they might be killed for it?*

- If they know it is the truth
- If they know that life and death depend on whether or not it gets preached.

*How is the message of Christ something that should be preached no matter what the consequences?*

- It is a message that gives life to those who hear it and turn to God.

In the beginning of this lesson we saw how God set apart Barnabas and Paul for the work of spreading the gospel and they faced opposition at every step. When you do the right thing the path does not always become easier. It may become harder.

### Application

*What service do you feel God could use you in and what steps would it take to get more involved in it?*

*What can we learn from Paul and Barnabas about how to deal with facing opposition when we are doing what is right?*

*How can you encourage someone who has stopped working for God due to discouragement?*