

ACTS 13:1-12

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with 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 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

⁴ The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

⁶ They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, ⁷ who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. ⁹ Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ¹⁰ “You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? ¹¹ Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.”

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. ¹² When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

When have you felt called by God to do something outside your comfort zone?
What was that experience like?

What were the conditions of the church at Antioch? What had the leaders been doing when the Holy Spirit sent two of them on a mission?

Do you suppose Barnabas and Saul had any reservations about leaving the great work they were a part of at Antioch?

Why is it so important that they are being led by the Holy Spirit (verse 4) and filled with the Holy Spirit (verse 9) for this mission?

Why does Paul confront Elymas, and what happens to him? How does the proconsul respond after witnessing what happened?

Paul boldly confronted spiritual opposition. When is it right for us to take a firm stand in our faith as we encounter resistance to God's work?

DAILY READINGS

1. 2 CHRONICLES 30:1-14
2. PSALM 111:1-10
3. PSALM 126:1-6
4. MATTHEW 13:1-23
5. LUKE 8:1-15
6. 2 TIMOTHY 4:1-18
7. ACTS 13:1-12