

# A SURVEY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## 9. SEPARATE ME BARNABUS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK Acts 13:2

Adult Sunday School  
Gethsemane Baptist Church  
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## SEPARATE ME BARNABUS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK

Acts 13:2

“At this point Luke has reached a significant moment in his history of the apostolic church. In the previous sections of his narrative, Palestine has been the scene of the activity, first at Jerusalem and then throughout the land, and Peter has been the most prominent figure. Now the base of operations moves to Antioch in Syria and Paul is the center of attention.” (Kent. P. 107)

Of the many important lessons to be learned from a study of the missionary travels of the Apostle Paul the most important is the importance of the local church in missionary endeavors. Barnabas and Saul were leaders in the church in Antioch and they had been working in this church for several years. After their experiences at Cornelius’ house in chapter 10 *“Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.”* (Acts 12:25) While they were working at their church in Antioch the *“the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”* (13:3) God calls missionaries out of the membership of a local church even today. Someone who would desire to serve the Lord in a missionary work would be very

well served to first busy themselves in the work of a church here at home.

It was from this church that God called and sent his “chosen vessel”, Saul, to the Jews in Cypress and then to the gentiles of Asia Minor. He went first to the synagogue of the cities. His message was to the *“Men of Israel, and ye that fear God,”* (13:16) He bases his message to them on the history of Israel and the Grace of God. (14:3) God *“granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.”* (14:3) In many cases, *“a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.”* (14:1)

Barnabas and Saul began their journey by going to the island of Cyprus. According to Acts 11:19, as a result of the persecution associated with the stoning of Stephen in Jerusalem Jewish Christians fled to Cypress and preached the Gospel to the Jewish community. This set the stage for the visit of Saul, Barnabas and John Mark. Acts 4:36 tells us that Barnabas was from Cyprus. No doubt he had loved ones and others he cared about that he wanted to tell about Jesus. In the town of Salamis on the island of Cypress Paul sharply rebukes a sorcerer named Bar-Jesus who purposely sought to turn the deputy Sergis Paulus from the message of the Faith. The result of this rebuke was that, Elymas or Bar-Jesus was stricken blind. At this time Saul begins to use his Roman name, Paul. It gave him more stature with those who heard his message.

As Paul began to go to Perga in Pamphylia John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. We are not given a reason for his separation but from Acts 15:37-39 it appears that he left because of a controversy. There are many guesses as to why he left them. The 3 most common are;

- 1) He was not strong enough to continue.
- 2) He resented Paul's taking over the leadership of their group from his cousin, Barnabas.
- 3) He was unwilling to face the rigors of their trip to preach the Gospel.

We may never know just why he left Paul's group but it does demonstrate how Satan can hinder the work of God.

Paul in his journeys suffered much for the cause of Christ. It is possible that at one point he had contracted a disease. He was stoned. He walked many miles and climbed many dangerous mountains. Time after time many of the Jews sought to kill him. Yet, where ever he went there were churches established and people received Christ as their Savior. Serving the Lord always exacts a price from the preacher. Paul then retraced his steps back through the cities of this first journey and then returned back to the church in Antioch of Syria to report on how God had blessed their efforts. This again reflects the importance of the sending church in missions work.

Ideas to be considered:

1) Why do you think the local church is important missions today?

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2) Why do you think Mark left Paul on their missions trip?

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3) What kind of price does the ministry exact from the servant?

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