

# CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

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– COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE –

## Studies in the Book of Acts

### “Sent Out by the Holy Spirit” – Acts 13:1-12

#### MAIN IDEA

Sometimes gospel ministry develops in a way that seems random or spontaneous, other times it feels right to prepare, plan and have a strategy. Some will argue that the former is more Spirit led since it means less people and more God. But this passage in Acts shows that God also leads in the details. Already the reader sees the church in Antioch starting to recognize the Lord's calling on certain individuals. God said, “Separate to Me, Barnabas and Saul for the work which I have called them.” Then as a spiritually, healthy community, the church endorses this commission, and supports and sends these two out to the field. God is so intertwined in the plan, Luke is quick to rephrase it again, “So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went...” This is not a correction or narrative schizophrenia, it just shows how conscious these men were that their actions were shepherded by the Spirit. This maturity didn't just happen though, verses 1-3 reveal the disciplines that prepared the work. They fasted, prayed, waited, and affirmed God's direction. When the moment of truth arrived, verses 4-12 reveal a work and ministry that preached, defended, and bore fruit. There is still much gospel ministry to be done today, and God still works through his people. Let's prepare and plan to participate the same way they did in Antioch.

#### SCRIPTURAL INSIGHT

This passage records a confrontation between two sets of prophets. The story lays out the credentials of each kind in order to contrast the two different kingdoms they represent. Jesus had warned His disciples that certain demonic confrontations would only be won by “prayer and fasting.” (Mark 9:28-29) It is no mistake that Luke makes sure to mention these disciplines of the brothers in Antioch several times prior to this encounter. But the passage also curiously records a shared attribute of these prophets. They both had the hand of God upon them. (v. 3, 11) This is the irony of the moral of the story. God's hand can be a blessing or a curse depending on which side one chooses. The proconsul saw this and chose wisely.

#### READ & DISCUSS

Read out loud together Acts 13:1-12, paying special attention to the preparation for gospel ministry.

**Acts 13:2-3 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.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.**

- *What does it sound like when God speaks to you? When have you heard the Holy Spirit give you direction? Why does God use people to accomplish his work? What does He give them to help them? What does fasting mean, what are the different ways? How have you fasted? When has fasting been a part of God accomplishing His purpose for you?*
- *How did the goals and outcome for Elymas the Sorcerer parallel Saul's life before Christ? **Read Acts 9:1-9** again and note the similarities between Saul and Elymas. Also **read John 8:44-45** and note how Jesus' words sound similar to Paul's in Acts 13. *How can Christians be more sensitive to spiritual warfare? Why is this so important to gospel ministry? What other spiritual disciplines are important to prepare for Christian work?**

#### RESOURCE

*Secret Power: The Secret of Success in Christian Life and Work.* D. L. Moody. Abbotsford: Aneko Press, 2017. <https://www.amazon.com/Secret-Power-Updated-Success-Christian/dp/1622454367>

#### PRAYER & TESTIMONY



**Community Group Discussion Guide**

*Based on Pastor Brian Brodersen's message from April 15, 2018.*

*Watch: <https://cccm.com/teaching/the-spirit-the-church-and-the-world/video/sent-out-by-the-holy-spirit/>*