

## "Set Apart for Me Barnabas and Saul"

- **Syrian Antioch was the setting for the birth of global church missions directed by the Holy Spirit and carried out by missionaries who were sent out under the direction of a local church.**

*At Antioch, God brought together three factors that He would use to change the world.*

1. The agents were prophets and teachers. (v. 1)
2. The agenda was set by a divine call. (v. 2)
3. The act itself was undertaken by the church at Antioch itself, demonstrating both discernment and yielding to the will of God. (v. 3)

## **1. Context**

1. If the theme of the Book of Acts is the progress of the gospel message to the world as outlined in Acts 1:6-8, how does today's passage (Acts 13:1-3) fit in to the progress of the narrative?
2. How does this passage connect with the passages we have just studied (Acts 12)? (See particularly Acts 11:30 and 12:25)

## **2. Observation**

1. Acts 13:1 speaks of prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch and lists five men. Why do you think they were listed starting with Barnabas and ending with Saul? Acts 11:27-28 mentions prophets sent to Antioch from Jerusalem and names one of them (Agabus), but apparently he had returned to Judea (Acts 21:10). A prophet is someone who receives authoritative revelation from God for the edification and direction of the community. Do you think the men listed here are prophets? Barnabas and Saul are mentioned here, but they are described as teachers in Acts 11:26. Were they all prophets and teachers? It looks like none of the men listed were natives of Antioch, were they the leaders of the church at Antioch?
2. In verse 2 it mentions that they were fasting and praying. Does "they" refer to the five men listed, or to the whole church in Antioch? The Holy Spirit calls for Barnabas and Saul to be set apart, but from whom? The other three men? The entire church of Antioch?
3. Who laid hands on Barnabas and Saul as they were sent off? The entire church? The other 3 men? What does the laying on of hand signify? (see Gen 48:14, Ex 29:10-18, 16:21, Num 8:10, 27:18-23, Acts 6:6, 8:17-18, 13:3, 1 Tim 4:14, 2 Tim 1:6, 5:22)

## **3. Meaning**

1. What does this passage suggest to us about the relationship of divine sovereignty and human responsibility in missions?

## **4. Application**

1. How does this passage apply to our own response to global and local missions?