

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for August 17, 2014**

**The Choosing of Barnabas and Saul**  
**Acts 12:25-13:3**

Acts 13 begins the second half of Acts as the focus of ministry shifts from Peter to Paul (referred to by the Hebrew name “Saul” until Acts 13:9).

**1. Barnabas and Saul select (12:25)**

“John, who was also called Mark” is the author of the Gospel of Mark and will become the focal point of a division between Saul and Barnabas in Acts 15:36-41. John was his Jewish name and Mark was his Roman name.

**2. Barnabas and Saul serving (13:1)**

The Holy Spirit used prophets to provide direct revelation to the church, whereas teachers instruct with that direct revelation. The list of five prophets and teachers is divided in the Greek construction between the first three, most likely the prophets, and the last two, most likely the teachers.

The list of five prophets and teachers is noteworthy for its diversity. Barnabas was a Levite from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus (Acts 4:36). Saul was a Pharisee from Tarsus in modern day Turkey. Simon was called Niger, which is a Latin word meaning black and indicates that he was from Africa. Lucius was from Cyrene, located in modern day Libya. Manaen was raised as a foster-brother of Herod Antipas (or possibly a slave of Antipas’s father, Herod The Great) and was therefore raised in Caesarea in an extravagant, half-Jewish, Rome supporting, dysfunctional home.

The multi-cultural aspect of the church in Antioch was the extension of the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2).

**3. Barnabas and Saul set apart (13:2)**

The church was described as “ministering to the Lord” (LEITOURGEO), which means servicing those in the church (cf. Romans 15:27). When we serve our fellow believers, we serve the Lord, which is a prerequisite for being set apart for further service.

The church was described as fasting. In the Bible, fasting was a response to dramatic sorrow or anguish, primarily over sin or, secondarily, a pending trial of great magnitude. By Acts 13, the new era of increasing persecution meant the church would be distressed about what was ahead for those they sent out.

Barnabas and Saul were selected for the Lord's service by the Holy Spirit, most likely through a prophetic revelation, and the perfect tense of the command "set apart" emphasizes that the divine decision existed before it was revealed.

Those set apart by the Holy Spirit are being set apart for work.

#### **4. Barnabas and Saul sent (13:3)**

The sending of Barnabas and Saul marked a major shift in the ministry of the church, when for the first time ministry to the Gentiles was planned.

The laying on of hands was to demonstrate the support of the church. The church in Antioch was the sending agency. Sending agencies today should assist the church in areas of expertise in order to facilitate the work of missions.

Today, the Spirit of God dwells in the church (1 Corinthians 6:19) and works through the church to recognize those whom He has set apart for further ministry.

May Valley Bible Church be faithful to send the right people for the right work according to the will of God.