

INTO THE WORLD

“While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” - Acts 13:2

The Church of Jesus Christ is on a mission. If we think of it in any other way, we do not think of it biblically. It is on a mission given to us by Jesus, Himself, to reach the world with the gospel.

The early church in Antioch was the first to engage in God’s global mission. The Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Within that instruction, we can take note of three things the Holy Spirit does. First, He speaks and it was to a group of five leaders in the church at Antioch. Leadership in the early church was always plural and the way the Holy Spirit speaks to the leaders is by consensus.

The New Testament church was not democratic. They didn’t act on what the majority wanted. Neither was it autocratic; that is, only one person discerning the will of God. Autocracy is usually dangerous. God does raise up individuals, but as a church, it is theocratic, which is God leading, and He leads by speaking to several people. Scripture doesn’t tell us how the Holy Spirit speaks, but in our personal lives, we learn to recognize the voice of God as it usually has a familiar ring to the way He has led us before. As we begin to follow, confirmation usually grows, and we can see and sense how God is leading us and working out His purpose.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit sets apart people. We are called first to God, to fellowship with Him and enjoyment of Him. We are then called to our tasks, which flows out of our communion with God. If we bypass that, we may enlist in Christian work, but it will not be an overflow of our relationship with God, because our strength and motivation derives from spending time with Him.

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit sends. Our own background and experiences in life play a role in the way God has moulded, prepared and equipped us for what He wants us to do. God has been interested in us long before we were converted and nothing in our past is wasted. Many circumstances have brought us pain and disappointment, but God redeems us and makes everything in our lives usable. As Christians, we are workers together with Jesus and His Holy Spirit is the central player; speaking, setting us apart for specific tasks, and whether globally or domestically, sending us into the world with the gospel.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that I may be a means of reaching the world with the gospel. Help me to discern your voice and step out in faith. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I spending enough time with God? Would I recognize His voice?