

ACTS 13

Main Point: Separated unto God

Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Acts 13:1-3

Digging Deeper

God has called every believer to be holy and set apart from this world, (1 Peter 2:9, Romans 12:1-2). In our study here in Act 13 we see that God has called the apostles to "Separate" Barnabas and Saul for the work they are called to. The language here reminds me of the concept of Holiness. Many Christians can define holiness as something set apart for a special or uncommon purpose. While this is an accurate definition, it's incomplete. To grasp the whole meaning we have to think BIGGER. We often think about a 'holy' person as one that is morally excellent. But in reality, holiness has a deep connection to the 'divine' or spiritual. Holy in the Bible is often used as a verb to describe God in His status as creator and master of the universe, His magnitude, His glory, His goodness, His awesomeness, or His perfection. It goes beyond a human idea of moral excellence and reaches the things of the divine. Webster's definition of Holy is:

HOLY

1: *exalted or worthy of complete devotion as one perfect in goodness and righteousness*

2: *DIVINE*

3: *Devoted entirely to the deity or the work of the deity*

Every human being was created in the image of God to reflect God's holiness. As scripture calls us a Holy nation and Royal Priesthood we are called to participate in the work of demonstrating God's beauty, glory, and holiness to the world. This was God's plan from the beginning. As we are created new in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10) we are now separated from the world and how it expects us to live and DEVOTED entirely to the work of God.

Read Isaiah 6:1-8, How does this demonstrate the Holiness of God?

Discussion Questions

1. Before today, what was your idea or understanding of the word 'Holy?'
2. What does it mean to be devoted to God?
3. Discuss God's reply when Isaiah admits his impurity In Isaiah 6:1-7. What does this tell us about God's character?
4. Isaiah said, "Here I am Send me!" just as Barnabas and Saul were also sent. Who are you sent to?
5. If Holiness can be synonymous with God's glory, what does it mean for us to participate in God's glory as a holy people?