

June 13, 2021

Baptism Sunday

La Jolla Christian Fellowship

Paul's First Journey // Episode 1: Know, Grow, Go

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Acts 13:1-3

Now in the church at **Antioch** there were **prophets and teachers**: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ²While 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." ³So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

The church at Antioch - Acts 11:19-21 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. ²⁰Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

- Here believers were first called Christians. (Acts 11:26)
- [Antioch of Syria](#) was one of the largest cities in the first-century Roman world, accommodating a population between 100,000 and 300,000.
- Large Jewish community and many converts.

Characteristics of a thriving church:

1. **A Knowing Church** - They knew the Holy Spirit and who they were in Christ.
2. **A Growing Church** - They were committed to doing the difficult work of growing in Christ.
3. **A Going Church** - They were committed to a cause greater than themselves.

1. **Knowing:** At Antioch there was a high value placed upon knowing who you were in Christ and what role you played in the church according to your gifting.
 - a. **Vs. 1** Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.
 - i. Agabus the prophet was from Antioch. (Acts 11:28)
 - ii. **Acts 4:36** Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called **Barnabas** (which means "son of encouragement").
2. **Growing:** The believers at Antioch understood exponential growth came with a cost.
 - a. **Vs. 2** 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."
 - i. Worshiping and fasting are acts of self-sacrifice and self-denial.
 - ii. Acts like these are igniters for the work of the Holy Spirit.

This was not a church filled with consumers, but rather those wanting to be consumed.

3. **A Going Church** - They were committed to a cause greater than themselves.
- a. 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.”³ **So after** they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and **sent them off**.
 - i. **Set Apart:** They understood following Jesus more as being set apart than discovering their unique individual purposes.
 - ii. **So After:** Rarely a pivotal move was made without being bookended by prayer, worship, and fasting.
 - iii. **Sent them off:** They actually did the thing that they were set apart for rather than spending years just talking about it.

Small Group Questions:

1. Do you know your spiritual gifts in Christ? What are they?
2. When you seek God, how often is it about you getting what you need rather than giving to God what he deserves? Meaning, is your spiritual life self-focused?
3. How could you change that?
4. Are you growing in your walk with Jesus? How have you grown in the last year? Was your growth forced upon you by circumstance or did you go after it with a passion?
5. Has God set you apart for something? Has he called you to something? Have you gone?

What do I need the Holy Spirit to direct me in?

What is your plan to worship, pray and fast in order that you might ignite the Holy Spirit's work in your life?
