



## Decade of Availability Spirit And Mission

And Jesus said unto them, “Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of me.” *Mark 1:17*  
For who hath despised the day of small things? *Zechariah 4:10*

2013 Vision Theme: **The Year of Equipping**

**Equipped to Demonstrate:** Power/Prayer/Cure/Care

**Equipped to Articulate:** Witness/Share/Preach/Teach

This year we will study the second half of the book of Acts and follow Paul as he ‘demonstrates’ the power of God through prayer and miracles and also ‘articulates’ the message of the Gospel.

As with the first half of the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit is empowering believers to fulfill God’s call to ‘Go ye into all the World...’

### A. Early Church Leadership v. 1

The center of the early church expansion now moves from Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria. The office of the ‘prophet’ and the ‘teacher’ were critical to the growing and expanding church.

The ‘prophet’ proclaims, the ‘teacher’ explains, and the entire leadership and congregation minister spiritual gifts to one another, fast and pray for God’s leading.

- **Barnabas:** The son of comfort, an early believer in the Messiah
- **Simeon/Niger:** Some think this is the Simon who carried the Cross for Christ (Mk 15:21)
- **Lucius:** One of the first to bring the Gospel to Antioch (Acts 11:20)
- **Manaen:** He was at first in the court of Herod Antipas who murdered John the Baptist. After John’s death he gave his heart and life to Christ—and forsook that court.
- **Saul:** We know of Saul’s dramatic call from Acts chapter 9 but the leaders at Antioch needed the Spirit’s authentication to release Paul to ministry.

#### 1. ...Leadership **Lift Their Hands** v. 2

-**Note that this is ministry TO the Lord.** It involved the full range of worship and release of spiritual gifts so that the Holy Spirit could speak through the prophets for direction.

-**Fasting:** Fasting was a normal part of the early church experience. In this verse fasting was part of the worship experience TO the Lord.

-**God Speaks:** The ‘word’ from the Holy Spirit was to ‘separate’ Saul and Barnabas. These two who were considered a vital part of the church at Antioch—were now sent out!

#### 2. ...Leadership **Lay Hands on those called** v. 3

-**Fasted again:** This is not the same fasting during their worship to the Lord in vs. 2. After God spoke they went into another fast. We don’t know how long it was—but it was specifically in preparation for laying hands on Saul and Barnabas.

-**Prayer:** Fasting and prayer go together. Note that verse 2 says that they only ‘fasted’ and ministered to the Lord. Did that ministry involve prayer? Probably. However in this verse they already had the ‘direction’ so the prayer and fasting may have been for the purpose of praying for ‘empowerment’ for Saul and Barnabas when they laid their hands on them.

#### 3. ..Leadership is **Led of the Spirit** vv. 2; 4

-**Sent out by the Church:** vs. 3 indicates that after the laying on of hands the church sent them out.

-**Sent out by the Holy Spirit:** From vs. 2 it is clear that the Holy Spirit directed that Saul and Barnabas be sent out—but from vs. 4 it is also clear that the Holy Spirit did the real sending.

**So where is the Holy Spirit sending you this year? What is He calling you to do and be?**

### Acts 13:1-4 (KJV)

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

**2** As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

**3** And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

**4** So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

