



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Mission Adventure Series, Lesson 52

Lesson Title: Paul and Barnabas Begin Their Journey

Take Home Point: God sets you apart to do something special for him.

Warm-Up:

Our family always enjoys giving gifts to each other. Occasionally we try to do something unusual in giving the gift, just to add to the fun. One of our favorite ways to do this is to have the recipient follow a trail of clues to reach the hiding place where they will find the gift. My son did this with his sister during our Christmas gift giving last year. First, she opened the package that contained a note telling her go downstairs and look under the chess set. Of course, under the chess set was a note telling her to go to another location. This continued throughout the house until finally, after six notes, she reached the spot of her gift – right behind the sofa on which she was sitting! It was fun. She didn't know where the next step would take her; she went where her brother told her because she knew he had an end purpose in mind.

Read: Acts 12:24 – 13:26; 1 Peter 4:10

Observation (What happened?):

Who sent out Barnabas and Paul?

What amazed the proconsul (governor) at Paphos?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

When they were selected by the Spirit of God, what did Barnabas and Paul know about what God wanted them to do?

What does Peter mean when he says we have each been given gifts?

Insight:

Notice that Paul and Barnabas did not say, "I have an idea. Let's go on a missionary journey." They were directed by God himself. This is consistent throughout the Bible. Moses, Jonah, King Saul, all twelve disciples, Paul and Barnabas – none of these people chose to do God's work on their own. In fact, several of them were either reluctant to do so or actually rebellious. God didn't choose them because they chose him or because they were special. He chose them because he had a special task for them to do. And every single time, God went ahead of each of these people preparing both the situations and the people to whom they were sent. That is the most wonderful thing about God selecting you and me to do his work – it actually means God goes before us to guide us and help us. And who is blessed? Not only those to whom we are sent, but you and I, too, receive the blessing of God's favor for being obedient! (Take some time to read about the calling of the men listed above in Exodus 3; Jonah 1; 1 Samuel 10; Matthew 4; John 1; and Acts 9. It's fascinating reading!)

Application (What does it mean to me?):

When was the last time you fasted and prayed about God's direction for you?

What are your spiritual gifts? How do you know? How are you using them?

Lesson 52