

## Spirit-dependency (Acts 13:1-12)

The church in the ancient city of Antioch was a diverse, sacrificial and mission-minded church. It's been a model church for centuries and Acts 13 brings us behind the scenes to see what was central to this thriving community: a dependency on the Spirit of God – the very Helper Jesus sent for his followers to depend on.

### 1. The Spirit speaks (Acts 13:1-3)

Background: Acts 11:19-26. Scattered due to the persecution...pushed into areas they wouldn't have gone – took good news of Jesus went with them.

= A new church, made up of predominantly non-Jews located in the city of Antioch (capitol city of Roman province of Syria / Modern day Turkey).

Acts 13:1 We're introduced to this church's diverse leadership.

*"While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting..."*

Followers of Jesus, mindful of the call to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20), wondering *"what's next, how to do we do this, where do we go, who do we send?"* + urgency, desire, dependency, expectation.

*"...the Holy Spirit said..."* How did The Holy Spirit speak? What did The Spirit say? V2

They were willing to send two of their key leaders to start a new work.

Their ground-breaking decision to pray and obey.

### 2. The Spirit sends (Acts 13:4-5)

God sent his Son who then sent The Spirit to be with and empower us for the mission he's called us to – that we might *be* sent AND send others.

### 3. The Spirit strengthens (Acts 13:6-12)

"Elymus the magician" = "one who knows" opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from faith. NT Wright: *"When a new work of God is going on you can expect opposition, difficulty, problems and confrontation."* Ephesians 6:12 Surprised? We shouldn't be.

Saul is now Paul. Paul is his Roman name - he's walking out God's calling on his life to reach non-Jews. The Spirit fills Paul – empowers (strengthens) to take this stand.

V12 The proconsul, believed. He was lit. "being amazing" at the teachings of Jesus.

Will we move forward with an increased dependency on the Spirit of God – the very Helper Jesus sent for his followers to depend on?

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. How did Sunday's Talk encourage or challenge you?
2. Read Acts 13:1-12. How would you characterize the church at Antioch? Describe it. (VV1-3)
3. Here they were, followers of Jesus, mindful of the call to make disciples, wondering *"what's next, how to do we do this, where do we go, who do we send?"* What did they do in light of those questions? How do we cultivate the kind of "urgent desire" they had? Consider Matthew 28:19-20
4. What did The Spirit say? How did they respond?
5. It was said, *"When a new work of God is going on you can expect opposition, difficulty, problems and confrontation."* What opposition did Barnabas and Saul (now called Paul) encounter? What are some moral and cultural roadblocks to the gospel in our day / in this city?
6. The Spirit "filled" Paul (strengthened, empowered him) - to do what? What will it require for us to move forward with an increased dependency on the Spirit of God – the very Helper Jesus sent for his followers to depend on?
7. The proconsul believed and was "astonished at" the teaching of the Lord. What does that teach us about disciple-making?

Pray we would be increasingly Spirit-dependent – mindful of the Helper Jesus gave us for the mission we're on together. Ask God to send people *from us* to areas of the world that have little or no representation of the gospel.