

The Method of a Sending God: Missionaries
Acts 13:1-3, 14:8-28
November 17, 2019
Personal Study Guide

Theological Theme: God's kingdom expands through mission to the unreached.

INTRO: How would you define *missionary*?

“We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God.” John Stott (1921-2011)

1. God Sends out Missionaries Through His Church ([Acts 13:1-3](#)).

As the leaders of the church at Antioch were worshiping and fasting, they heard from the Holy Spirit, instructing them to set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which God had called them. God was separating these two men from the normal rhythms of being part of the church at Antioch for something else. Barnabas and Saul would leave their church and their lives as they knew it in Antioch to advance the gospel to unreached regions as missionaries.

“God isn't looking for people of great faith, but for individuals ready to follow Him.” - J. Hudson Taylor (1832-1905)

How do you support missionaries sent by your local church?

What are some common reasons people might offer as their justification for not going as missionaries themselves?

A Sent Identity

One note before we continue. In [verse 2](#) we see the unique way God sets apart and sends some to be missionaries. These Christ-followers take on an identity as being sent by God away from their home for the purpose of helping others discover their own Christ-given identity. This specific sending is one way we can define a missionary, but being sent is not unique to them. We all have this compelling identity. This is why we make disciples. This is why we “go” wherever we are—because the good news of the gospel that we believe now compels us to go and help others believe it too.

How should our “sent identity” frame how we live each day?

2. God Sustains Missionaries Through Opposition and Suffering ([Acts 14:8-20](#)).

Why do you think Paul re-entered Lystra after his stoning?

Committed to Comfort

Paul was willing to lose everything, even his life, for the sake of the gospel. This is the call of the missionary—to trust God completely for every need even in the midst of great opposition and suffering.

“We will not wish we had made more money, acquired more stuff, lived more comfortably, taken more vacations, watched more television, pursued greater retirement, or been more successful in the eyes of this world. Instead, we will wish we had given more of ourselves to living for the day when every nation, tribe, people, and language will bow around the throne and sing the praises of the Savior who delights in radical obedience and the God who deserves eternal worship.” –David Platt

What things would be difficult for you to surrender, if necessary, in order to live sent? Why?

3. God Strengthens His Church Through Missionary Efforts ([Acts 14:21-28](#)).

Notice the method Paul and Barnabas used to encourage the churches about facing hardships. They did not encourage the churches to pray that God would spare them from hardship. Neither did they minimize the hardship. Instead, they encouraged the churches by helping them embrace the reality and inevitableness of it. Hardship will come, so prepare for it. It will come because God uses it for His kingdom purposes.

“God does rescue the holy from affliction, but he does so not by rendering them untested but by blessing them with endurance.” Basil the Great (circa 329-379)

How does our experiencing hardship and suffering advance the gospel?

Conclusion

The God who sends continues to call us to share His heart for the unreached peoples and send more missionaries around the world. But if we are going to be faithful to His calling, we need to personalize this sending. “Where is God sending me as a missionary?” is the question we each must ask ourselves. If God’s answer is that we are to stay where we are, then we must ask how we will support those who have been sent. How will we support our missionaries through finances, prayer, and encouragement?