

“Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:2, NIV).

Bible Study 67 Dynamic Duo

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Read Acts 11:25-30; 12:25; 13 and 14.

When Saul and Barnabas are paired in these passages, whose name is listed first? _____

Who joined Saul and Barnabas on their first mission journey? (Acts 12:25) _____

Where were Barnabas and Saul and what were they doing when they were called to missionary service? (Acts 13:1-2)

What happened to Elymas? (Acts 13:11) _____

Why was this ironic? (Acts 9:8-19) _____

Who did the people at Lystra and Derbe think Paul and Barnabas were? (Acts 14:11-13) _____

Wherever Paul and Barnabas preached, they stirred up strong emotions on both sides of their arguments for the resurrection of Christ.

These two missionaries were always overcoming barriers. First it was hecklers (Acts 13:8-12), then race and culture (Hebrew/Gentile), and then mistaken identities when they performed miracles (Acts 14:10). Most New Testament commentaries tell us the order of words in a list is in descending order of importance. In a pair of names, the first one is more prominent. When Barnabas and Saul began their partnership in Antioch, Barnabas had more recognition and position in the church.

Later in the narrative (beginning in Acts 13:9), Paul assumed first place in the pairing. After all the barriers they had overcome, pride or jealousy could have been the one to trip them up. But Barnabas eventually learned to play the role of “second fiddle,” not only for Paul but also for John Mark. The New Testament contains books written by Paul and Mark but not Barnabas. However, his role as supporter, encourager and friend made him a valuable partner in missions.

In a list of three partners *on mission*, where would you want your name to appear? First, middle or last? Why?

In these verses, how many times were Paul and Barnabas stoned or their lives threatened? _____

Why did Paul return to a city where he had recently been stoned? (Acts 14:20) _____

In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas addressed the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch. They knew their audience well; history was extremely important to the Hebrew people. Many times the Jews had been near extinction and God had delivered them. Paul tried to show that once again God was attempting to rescue them, this time

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finally through Jesus as their Deliverer. He recounted stories from the Torah (first five Old Testament books), quoted from the Psalms (*Acts 13:33,35*) and from the prophets (Isaiah in *Acts 13:34*; Habbakuk in *Acts 13:41*).

A basic mission principle is this: The gospel message should be told both in the "birth" language of the target culture and in images and phrases that are meaningful in their particular culture. Eskimos have no concept of alligators; Floridians don't understand living six months of the year in darkness. Target groups must be studied to discover "keys" to reaching them with the gospel.

What group of people of a different "culture" (age, race, interests, etc.) are you trying to reach with the gospel?

What will happen to the advance of the gospel and the kingdom of God if Christians only share it with people like themselves?

What groups of people in your community are still spiritually unreached?

What will it take to reach them?

The "audience" that Paul and Barnabas understood best (the Jews) largely rejected their message, while the Greeks responded well to it. Although Paul was extremely qualified to preach to the Jews, God had other plans for him. He told Paul (during his conversion experience on the road to Damascus) that He would send him to the Gentiles. Paul had to learn how to communicate the Good News to people who had no understanding or interest in the God of the Jews, their history or their Scriptures.

Consider the gospel message Paul preached to the Jews and Gentiles in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch. Wherever Paul and Barnabas preached, they stirred up strong emotions on both sides of their arguments for the resurrection of Christ (*Acts 13:50-52; Acts 14:4*).

What caused these reactions?

Could they have omitted this portion of the message to keep from offending or stirring up trouble?

Yes No

What are the essential and non-negotiable parts of the message of the gospel? (*1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 15:1-11*)

What would it take (e.g., partners, prayer, resources, study, practice, desire, opportunities) to make you a more effective witness and missionary of the gospel of Christ?
