

Week of May 27-June 2

## THE CALL

**Scripture Reading:** Read Acts chapter 13

*“Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers... While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”* The opening verses of Acts chapter 13 mark the launch of Paul’s 1st missionary journey and a transition from Jerusalem to Antioch as a launching point for missions. It also marked a transition in both Barnabas and Paul’s lives, as well as a transition for the church in Antioch. For Paul and Barnabas, it meant saying goodbye to familiar settings, successful ministry and good friends to launch out into the unknown of missionary work. For the church, it meant losing their lead pastor and their lead teacher too. Following the call meant a whole lot of disruption for a whole lot of people, something we don’t always appreciate when we read these verses.

Following God’s call today often leads to a similar disruption. I know it did in my life. When God called me to pastoral ministry, I was 17 years of age. His divine invitation to give my life to shepherding His people came as an interruption to my life’s dreams and goals. I was a senior in high school and making plans to attend college to prepare for a career in medicine, specifically in the area of brain science. To say “yes” meant I would have to lay that dream aside and follow His vision for my life. It was not an easy decision for me to make at the time. I battled the Lord on his invitation to pastoral ministry for several years before I finally yielded to His will and call in my junior year in college.

So, how about you? What is God’s call on your life that He is calling you to follow? You might argue that the call of God only belongs to those men and women who are called to full-time vocational service as pastors and missionaries, like Paul and Barnabas. These “supersaints” are the called ones but not you. Really? Have you checked that conclusion based on God’s Word? While there are some that are, indeed, called to be apostles, prophets, evangelists pastors and teachers, the Bible teaches that all believers are called by God to serve Him and others with whatever gifts God has given (1 Peter 4:10-11). In addition, the Scripture also teaches that all believers are called to be free, called to be holy, called into fellowship with Jesus, and called to his eternal glory (cf. 1 Cor 1:2; 1:9; Galatians 5:13; Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 2:9; 5:10; Jude 1:1).

You see, we’re all called. It might be to the mission field or to church planting, as was the case for Barnabas and Paul. It might be to shepherd God’s flock as it was for me. Or, your calling might be to medicine, science, forestry, construction, engineering, education, law, business, politics, etc. as a way of living out your faith and bearing witness to Christ. The call may come with disruption to your life if you obey. It did for Paul and Barnabas and it did for me. I’ve come to realize, though, that everything God had allowed in my life had prepared me for the call to pastor and that only in being obedient to that call would I ever truly know peace and satisfaction. You will find the same. Follow the call!

**Action Step & Prayer Focus:** If you haven’t yet discerned God’s call on your life, spend some time reviewing the Scriptures above, pray for God’s direction & then follow His call.

**Take-a-way:** *The call of God is not just for the few but for the all!*