

## **Listening to the Holy Spirit**

### **Acts 13**

In this passage of Scripture, we find the leaders in the early Church listening to and obeying the Holy Spirit. Based on this Scripture and others - If you are a Christian, it is your reasonable expectation that the Holy Spirit will speak to you. This is a fascinating piece of Scripture that demonstrates the ability of God to speak to people in a way that they can understand and obey.

So... Do you know how to recognize the voice of the Holy Spirit in your life?  
Do you know the difference between God speaking to you and your own thoughts?

Clearly, we are told that the Holy Spirit calls and sends Paul and Barnabas. These two take John with them and so there are three empowered by the Holy Spirit to do something that no one on earth has done to this point in time. They are intentionally taking the name of Jesus to where that name has never been named before.

Here's a sobering question:

*What would the Church have been like in the ancient world if this personal  
Word from the Lord had not been obeyed?*

At this point in time in the Book of Acts, the Church is about 10 years old. If you like to do Bible research, Acts 13 is sometime after Galatians 1 and before Galatians 2. Reading Gal 1:11-23 can help you see the development in Paul's life.

What we learn from this passage about the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit is not an "it".
- The Holy Spirit can speak in a way that we can understand.
- The Holy Spirit has personality, intelligence and will.

Do you know how to recognize the voice of the HS?

1. The Holy Spirit agrees with Scripture.
  - ✓ 2 Peter 1:20-21
  
2. The Holy Spirit is God and therefore, the Holy Spirit speaks with God's heart.
  
3. The Holy Spirit glorifies God.
  - ✓ John 16:13-14

When you think you may have heard the Holy Spirit speaking to you, some good questions to ask are...

- ✓ Does this match with the Scripture?
- ✓ Is this consistent with the heart of God?
- ✓ Will this be God glorifying?

### **Home Group Questions:**

What aspect of this message were you the most comfortable with? The least comfortable?

Why do you think it's easier to talk about Paul and his travels than it is to talk about the possibilities of the Holy Spirit speaking to Christians today?

Jesus promised, "I will build my Church," (Mt 16:18). The Holy Spirit seems to be in the lead when He says, "Set apart Saul and Barnabas for the work I have called them to do," (Acts 13:2). How do you reconcile these two statements?

Describe your willingness to listen to the Holy Spirit.

Does it help you to think in terms of matching what you hear as possibly from the Holy Spirit with the parameters Pastor Karl gave us on Sunday?

*Does this match with the Scripture?*

*Is this consistent with the heart of God?*

*Will this be God glorifying?*