

ACTS DEVOTIONAL CHAPTER 13 LED BY THE SPIRIT

"The great struggle of my life is not trying to discern God's will; it is trying to discern and then disown my own. Once I see that, then prayer flows." Paul Miller

SCRIPTURE: "While they were worshiping 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.'" Acts 13:2, 3

ACTIVITY: When you are not sure what direction God is leading you, how do you go about discerning His will? So often we pray for direction expecting the answer in the next five minutes! But God is a King for whom we must wait. One idea is to set "a time of seeking" to fast, pray, and worship. (Worship gets our eyes off ourselves and looking to the Wiser One.) Share your dilemma with others (who know God's Word like the men in this story) and ask them to fast and pray with you. Then discuss what the Holy Spirit seems to be saying to all of you. Take the answer and fast and pray again to be sure. This worked for the first disciples! Check out these promises. (Jeremiah 29:13; James 1:5; Psalm 32:8)

PRAYER: (from Esther DeWaal)

"Uncrowd my heart,
O God, until silence
speaks; in your still,
small voice, turn
me...to listening,
waiting, stillness,
silence."

"All spiritual warfare is waged over one essential question: Who will control reality on earth, heaven or hell?" Francis Frangipane

SCRIPTURE: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Matthew 6:13

"Paul and Barnabas met a sorcerer named Bar-Jesus who opposed them...and Paul filled with the Holy Spirit looked straight at him and said, 'You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right!...you will be blind.'" Acts 13:6 & 8

REFLECTION: It seems that soon after one is chosen, one will encounter the evil one. "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him!" 1 Peter 5:8. Jesus is our model; he used Scripture to resist each temptation. (See Matthew 4:1–11) Paul was not a victim; he, too, resisted Satan. Check out these promises. (1 John 4:4; James 4:7)

PRAYER:

Holy Spirit, we know that in every adventure you plan for us, we will encounter the devil. Help us fill our hearts with God's Word, so we will be able to resist the devil's discouraging lies. Fill us with Yourself. You are greater than any evil force in this world! Lead us on, Holy Spirit!