

Satanic Resistance

Scripture: Acts 13:1-13

Code: 1288

INTRODUCTION

Acts is a missionary book about the spreading of the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. But as we look at Acts 13:1-13, we reach a milestone in the ongoing ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I would title this passage, "Satanic Opposition to a Spirit-filled Mission." Satan is working today as he did then. We see it constantly--not only in our culture, but in other cultures around the globe. The enemy is always aggressively and actively antagonizing the ministry of Jesus Christ. One way or another, Satan works to shut down the efforts to build the Kingdom of God. With that in mind, let's look at the satanic resistance to a Spirit-filled mission in Acts 13.

A. The Building of the Church

Acts 13 is a critical chapter in the flow of God's expanding of His Kingdom and in the developing of the mission of the church. The time is approximately twenty-five years since the Day of Pentecost and the receiving of the Spirit. The church has flourished, grown, and developed. It has reached Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. That was the primary concentration in those early years of the church. But now the time has come to move into the Gentile world and establish that final element of our Lord's commission: to preach the gospel to every creature (Mk. 16:15). The final dimension of that plan in Acts 1:8 is to go to the uttermost part of the earth.

B. The Base of Operations

By this time a very effective base of operations has been planted in the pagan world: the church at Antioch. This key church at Antioch is the first real beachhead in a pagan world. That church had a great start, great growth, great impact, and a great attitude, as chronicled in Acts 11:19-30. It was a marvelous, Christ-honoring, God-exalting, Spirit-filled, growing, strong church. It was just the kind of church that was ready to explode on the world.

1. The Basic Characteristics

If you were to characterize this church, you would find that it had a very strong doctrinal basis--a strong foundation in the truth of God. You would also note that it had many gifted men who were

highly trained and capable. The foundation was laid, and now it is time to send them out.

2. The Key Characteristics

When we look at this particular church, there is a basic key that stands out.

a. Control by the Spirit

1) Acts 13:2 -- "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said...."

2) Acts 13:4 -- "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed unto Seleucia...."

3) Acts 13:9 -- "Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit...."

4) Acts 11:24 -- "For he [Barnabas] was a righteous man, and full of the Holy Spirit...."

Saul was full of the Holy Spirit. Barnabas was full of the Holy Spirit. The leaders at Antioch were ministering to the Lord and fasting in the Holy Spirit. And they were sent out by the Holy Spirit. We can easily conclude that this was a church under the control of the Holy Spirit. Antioch was a Spirit-filled, Spirit-energized, and a Spirit-empowered church that knew the meaning of Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me...." The key in any church that is going to impact the world, move out to fulfill God's great commission, and explode with the message of the Kingdom across the globe is that it be a Spirit-controlled and Spirit-filled church.

b. Constant Obedience to the Word

A Spirit-filled church is simply defined as a church in which the people walk in consistent obedience to the will of God. And where is the will of God expressed? In the Word of God. Ephesians 5:18, which says, "...be filled with the Spirit," parallels Colossians 3:16, which says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...."

A Spirit-filled church is made up of people who walk, live, talk, think, and act in the energy of the Spirit of God because their hearts are given over to the saturation of the Word of God. That is the kind of church that affects the world.

Now, there are several things I want you to notice as we look at a Spirit-filled church moving out into the world. It is...

I. CHARACTERIZED BY SPIRITUAL MEN (v. 1)

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas, and Symeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod, the tetrarch, and Saul."

A. The Priority of Leadership

Any church that is effective has to have the right leadership. Hosea the prophet said, "...like people, like priest..." (Hos. 4:9b). When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the chaos in their church, he never made any reference to a pastor, elder, or leader in that church. Apparently, their problems were related to a lack of spiritual leadership. People never rise above their leaders.

The Spirit-filled, Spirit-controlled church that would reach the world will always feature strong spiritual men as leaders. The goal of my ministry through the years has been to see God build strong spiritual men because they are what makes everything else happen.

B. The Premium on Leadership

God has always put a premium on strong leadership.

1. Acts 6:3, 5, 8 -- When the church at Jerusalem began to form itself for the inevitable ministry, in verse 3 the Apostles said, "...look among you for seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Verse 5 says, "...they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit...." Verse 8 says, "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." The church has always been after men who are full of faith, full of wisdom, full of power, full of the Word of God, and full of the Holy Spirit of God.

2. 1 Timothy 3:2-4, 6-7 -- The Apostle Paul demands high standards for the kind of men that are to be leaders in the church: "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife..." (v. 2a). He is to be a one-woman man. It does not just mean that he is only to have had or have one wife (not be a polygamist or divorced), the idea in the Greek text is that he is to be utterly, totally, and singly committed to and in love with his wife. That is a present tense spiritual qualification. Just being married to the same woman doesn't qualify you for anything because it doesn't say anything about what you think of her. Verse 2 continues, "...temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity...not a novice.... he must have a good report of them who are outside...." Titus 1 repeats many of the same things.

There is a premium put on spiritual men. If a church is going to affect the world, it has to be led by spiritual men. But there are churches upon churches across this nation and around the world that do not have spiritual men in leadership. They do not have men who teach the Word of God, who live the Word of God, and who are filled with the Spirit of God. It is tragic.

C. The Pivotal Leaders

The church at Antioch had certain preachers and teachers--some were proclaimers and some were teachers. That is a good insight into the distinction between the gift of preaching and the gift of teaching. These preachers and teachers were Barnabas, Symeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul.

1. Barnabas

He was a Levite from Cyprus with tremendous knowledge of the Old Testament. Acts 11:24 tells us that he was full of the Holy Spirit. So Barnabas was a Spirit-filled Jew, trained in the Old Testament, and a resident Old Testament scholar with a pure Christian character. He was highly respected and highly loved. He was a warm-hearted man, a marvelously capable teacher, and a comforter--that's what the name Barnabas means.

2. Symeon

He was called Niger--meaning "black" in Latin. There was certainly no race distinction in Antioch. Some think he may well be Simon of Cyrene, the very man who carried the cross of Jesus Christ (Mk. 15:21). So he was a Gentile.

3. Lucius

He was also a Gentile from Africa.

4. Manaen

We don't know much about him except that his name means, "foster brother." It is very likely that he was an adopted child. Since his original name would not be known, he was named "foster brother." That was a very common thing in rich families when they wanted to raise a foster brother as a companion to a prince. So he may have been from a very common lineage but raised in royalty. Verse 1 says that he was brought up with Herod in the family of Agrippa.

5. Saul

He was destined to be the key to pagan world evangelization.

Those are the five spiritual men--five godly preachers and teachers--a motley arrangement of Jews and Gentiles, wealthy and common, but all chosen and controlled by the Spirit of God.

D. The Plurality of Leaders

A great principle is illustrated here: The church is always to be led by a plurality of godly men. The church is never to be under the leadership of one man ruling alone; there should always be that plurality of godly leaders.

Second, a church that is going to reach the world not only has to be led by spiritual men, but it has to be...

II. ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL MINISTRY (v. 2a)

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted..."

A. The Duty of Ministry

Have you ever wondered what the duty of a leader in a church is? The duty is to minister to the Lord. What does that mean? To serve the Lord, to fast, and to pray. And how is the Lord served? He is served in the dissemination of His Word and in prayer. That is the same twofold perspective of Acts 6:4. The Apostles said, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word."

1. Fulfilling Their Duty

The five leaders of Israel were ministering the Word, serving the Lord, offering their service as an act of worship to God, and spending their time in prayer. The responsibility of spiritual men is a spiritual ministry. So often people who are called to be in spiritual leadership are drowning in a sea of activity which may or may not be in the least related to spiritual ministry--the ministry of the dissemination of the Word of God and prayer. Antioch was marked by spiritual ministry, which uniquely set it apart to be used by God. They were doing what they were called to do.

2. Violating the Duty

When I go around the country and speak at pastors' conferences, I inevitably tell them, "Men, give yourselves to the ministry of the Word and to prayer." And then many say to me, "But how can I get to it? I have so much other stuff to do." A fellow asked me that recently and I said, "I have a wonderful

plan for that--don't do it!" He said, "If I don't do it, it won't get done." I said, "Precisely. And if it doesn't get done then maybe people are going to realize that if they don't do it, it isn't going to get done at all because you're not going to do it. You have been called to the ministry of the Word and to prayer. If you sacrifice that for other things, you will violate the principle the Apostles followed in Acts 6 and the principle the pastors followed at Antioch in Acts 13. They ministered in terms of serving the Lord through the dissemination of the Word and prayer--intense prayer."

B. The Definition of Ministry

The word minister is leitourgia in the Greek. The English word liturgy comes from it. It basically means, "to serve in a priestly manner, to serve in terms of worship." It's used in 1 Peter 2:5 with the idea of offering priestly service to God. Those five leaders saw their ministry to the people as an act of worship to God.

For example, you ask me, "What do you give God?" I don't sacrifice a lamb. I don't sacrifice a turtledove. I don't sacrifice a goat, a ram, or anything else. My sacrifice to God is my service rendered. Every sermon I preach is in my heart as if I were bringing an offering into the sanctuary to present it to God. Every sermon I preach, every day I live, every hour I study, and every moment I spend in prayer is what I offer God as an act of loving service and worship to Him. That is what the heart and soul of ministry is about. Certainly there are other things that you have to do, like write and sign letters, work on projects, and work out details for something, but you never lose sight of the priority.

All of the service of those five leaders was seen as a ministry to the Lord. Everything they did was a spiritual sacrifice offered to Christ. In the ministry of Christ and in the leadership of the church, you should be able to say, "Everything I've done today can stand as a sweet-smelling offering to Jesus Christ." It should have that spiritual value to it.

C. The Direction of Ministry

In addition, they ministered to the Lord rather than just to the people. When all you are concerned about is ministering to the people, you tend to compromise because the people become the end. But as long as you are offering everything as an offering to God, there is no place for compromise. Like the Macedonians, they first gave themselves to the Lord, and everything else flowed out of that (2 Cor. 8:1-6).

D. The Devotion of Ministry

According to Acts 13:2, they fasted, which indicates the intensity of their prayer. Fasting is a way to express intensity, devotion, vigilance, and passion. It has nothing to do with becoming spiritual

because you don't eat. Some people go on a diet just so they can lose weight and expect to feel spiritual. That is not what fasting is. Fasting isn't stopping from eating so you'll look better and feel better, it is the result of the times when you are so passionately consumed in a cause in your heart that you have no desire for food. Sometimes it is a partial abstinence from the things and the delicacies of the world because you are consumed with the things of God. Fasting can be partial or total as the Lord directs.

The five leaders were ministering to the Lord, fasting, disseminating the Word, and their prayer life was offered as an offering to God Himself.

There is a third element. Spiritual men with a spiritual ministry are...

III. CALLED ON A SPIRITUAL MISSION (vv. 2b-5)

A. The Call of The Spirit (v. 2b)

"...the Holy Spirit said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work unto which I have called them."

1. Enlightened by a Prophet

I don't know who the voice of the Holy Spirit was, but I would imagine that if in fact there were certain prophets among those five leaders, it was one of them. The special ministry of the prophets before the completion of the New Testament was to speak a direct word from the Holy Spirit to the life of the church. The Apostles gave the doctrine and the prophets spoke the practical aspects and the application. No doubt one of the five leaders, or another in their midst who was a prophet and spoke for God, was used by the Holy Spirit and pinpointed Barnabas and Saul for the work.

2. Established in Activity

Notice that the call came as they were ministering. God does not use people who haven't been doing anything, He uses the ones that are in the middle of doing something. He takes the best. Can you imagine your reaction if you were in that church? When it came to a decision as to who you would send to the mission field, you would probably say, "I nominate Symeon," or "I nominate Lucius," or "I nominate Manaen. But God, don't take Barnabas and Saul. They are the best we have." And that is exactly who God took, and called them into a special mission.

3. Expressed Through Desire

Notice the phrase "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul." The idea is to separate in a unique sense to the Holy Spirit. They are His men--His to use and to send. The Holy Spirit says, "Separate Me Barnabas

and Saul for the work unto which I have called them" (v. 2b). What a special call that is. The greatest reality in my life in the ministry is that I know God has called me. I can't shirk that responsibility. And while it is a great responsibility, it is also a great joy to think that God called me. There is a call when the Spirit of God puts His hand on your heart, and I think that call is dominantly expressed through your desire. Sometimes people have said to me, "Why did you go into the ministry?" And it's so easy for me to answer, "Because I didn't want to do anything but this." And I don't ever want to do anything but this.

So God said to the church at Antioch, "I want two of the best five you have."

B. The Commissioning by the Church (vv. 3-4a)

"And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit..."

The church responded. They fasted, they prayed, and they poured their hearts out to God. I love the spiritual quality of this ministry. It convicts my own heart. We become so bound up in the pragmatics that we lose this sense of the power of the Spirit of God. That church prayed, fasted, and laid hands on them--the sign of affirmation, confirmation, and identification. It is like saying, "We are with you, we stand with you, we are in solidarity with you and your cause, we stand behind you with prayer and support, and we send you out."

C. The Course of Paul and Barnabas (v. 4b-5)

"...departed unto Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John [Mark] as their helper."

They departed to Seleucia, which is the port of Antioch, about fifteen miles away on the shore of the Mediterranean. From there they sailed to Cyprus, which was the home of Barnabas. That was approximately one hundred and ten miles away. Beyond that, they went to Salamis and preached. It was the principle trade center and the largest city on Cyprus. It contained a great population of Jews. It was large enough to handle many synagogues, and there were several there. They went into one of those synagogues and preached.

Verse 5 indicates that John was their helper. This is John Mark, who is named in Acts 12:12. John's surname was Mark, his mother's name was Mary, and they used to hold Bible studies in his house. So Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark were sent on a spiritual mission.

Now we come to the crisis. Spiritual men operating a spiritual ministry are separated and sent on a spiritual mission and then they...

IV. RUN INTO SPIRITUAL MILITANTS (vv. 6-8, 13)

A. External Resistance (vv. 6-8)

1. The Place of the Resistance (v. 6a)

"And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos..."

Paphos is on the west coast of Cyprus. They started in the town of Salamis, and now they were going to Paphos. It was the seat of Roman government. It was also the center for the worship of Venus, the fabled goddess of love and sex. According to tradition, Venus was born out of the foam of the sea near Paphos. She was worshiped in the wildest, most extravagant sexual orgies imaginable. The city was a sin pit where people wallowed in moral filth.

2. The Prelude to the Resistance (vv. 6b-7)

"...they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus [son of salvation], who was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God."

a. The Prudent Man

Somehow, when Barnabas and Saul went to Paphos, they got an interview with the governor--the Roman proconsul, the deputy of the country. He was what Pilate had been in Palestine. They probably wanted to meet him with the intention of presenting the gospel to him.

b. The Evil Sorcerer

When they received an audience with the governor, they found this sorcerer with him. A sorcerer was someone who contacted demons, like a medium. The word "sorcerer" is the Greek word magos from which the word magi comes. In its positive connotation, it referred to someone who is wise, who studied the stars--an astronomer. In its negative connotation, it referred to someone who was superstitious and occultic, and who consulted the stars as an astrologer. There is a big difference between the two. One is a science and one is a false religion. He was an evil and satanic man--a man who consulted demons, and who was a false prophet.

3. The Plan of the Resistance (v. 8)

"But Elymas, the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation), withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."

a. The Confrontation

Paul and Barnabas meet with the man who is the governor of the area. No sooner does he request to hear the Word of God from them that Satan is immediately threatened by that. So Satan's agent, Elymas, begins to withstand them in order to turn the governor away from the faith. Whenever you set out to reach a soul for Jesus Christ, you can be sure that hell wants to prevent you. You are in a battle and you're wrestling "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers..." (Eph. 6:12a).

The name "Elymas" is an Arabic root word, and could come from either the Arabic word alimon meaning "wise" or alima meaning "powerful." So Satan's emissary--a fast-talking, turncoat Jew who had rejected the true religion, a self-styled false prophet who had attached himself to the leader of the country--was now trying to prevent the governor from coming to know the truth of Christ. That is indicative that Sergius Paulus dabbled in the occult, and Bar-jesus was his constant contact with demons. At the great moment when the gospel was to be presented to Sergius Paulus, the demon activates Elymas to do everything he can to stop that presentation.

b. The Comparison

1) 1 Timothy 4:1 -- "...in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons." Have you ever wondered why someone will seem to be interested in the faith and then suddenly fall away? It may not have been just an intellectual exercise, it may have been a hellish invasion by seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.

2) 2 Timothy 3:8, 13 -- "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses...." Those men are the same kind of people who withstood Moses when he came to speak the truth. Verse 8 continues, "...so do these also resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." Just as there were evil men then, there are the same men now. Verse 13 says, "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse...."

The satanic seduction that happens when the faith confronts a soul is nothing new. It went on in Moses' time, it is illustrated in Acts 13, and Paul himself testifies that it will occur again throughout the latter days. We're in a battle with the demons, the impostors, the magicians, the sorcerers, and the occultists--the demonic opposition to the gospel.

Satan not only resists us externally, but notice a remarkable insight into how he resists us internally:

B. Internal Resistance (v. 13)

"Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John [Mark], departing from them, returned to Jerusalem."

There was an outside attack from Elymas, and an inside attack from John Mark. The church is very often devastated internally as much as it is externally in its mission. It is devastated by disunity, discord, dissension, division, and an unwillingness to go.

1. Rejecting John Mark

John Mark bailed out. He had no good reason and Paul never forgot it. In Acts 15:37-40 Barnabas said, "I want to take John Mark with us." Paul said, "No, you're not taking John Mark. He's a traitor." The argument became so hot that Barnabas took Mark and split up with Paul, and Paul took Silas. Paul knew that John Mark had demonstrated cowardice. Paul was tough. But Barnabas was a comforter, and he wanted to forgive, restore, and give John Mark a second chance.

2. Restoring John Mark

Paul was tough, but he became tender in his old age. In 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul writes, "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry." Mark restored himself, and Paul was willing to take him back.

You say, "What made Mark leave Paul and Barnabas?" Fear of the danger--they were going to have to cross the Taurus Mountains. The caves in those mountains were occupied by robbers. Paul no doubt referred to them when he talked about the perils of robbers in his letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:26). The romance was wearing off very fast when he thought about the drudgery of the journey and the tremendous price he had to pay, so he just quit. That attacks the mission from the inside.

God has given us spiritual men and women engaged in spiritual ministry that He has separated to a spiritual mission, but they have to face the spiritual militants and...

V. WIN WITH SPIRITUAL MASTERY (vv. 9-12)

A. Disarming the Enemy (v. 9)

"Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him."

Have you ever had your dad or mom say to you when you very little, "Look me right in the eye?" That is a very important message. Paul looked him right in the eye. B. Defining The Enemy (v. 10)

"And said, O full of all deceit and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"

That is a definition of an occultist. What is an occultist?

1. Full of Deceit and All Mischief

What is "mischief"? The Greek word means "easy wickedness, doing wickedness with ease, deceitfully evil." The word "deceit" can refer to a "fishhook." How deceitful a fishhook is! The occultist is deceitful, wicked, and mischievous.

2. Child of the Devil

That is a play on words by Paul. In other words, "Your name may be 'son of salvation' but you are a son of Satan. You enemy of all righteousness, there is nothing good in you. Will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"

C. Defeating the Enemy (vv. 11-12)

1. Winning the Battle (v. 11)

"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand."

God struck him blind on the spot. That is spiritual mastery. When you get into the spiritual battle, you know you are on the winning side, and nothing is more sweet than winning the battle. But if you are going to stay back and not even get involved, then you will never know the sweetness of the victory.

But the battle wasn't really with Elymas, the battle was for the soul of Sergius Paulus.

2. Winning the Soul (v. 12)

"Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."

I believe that there are souls all over this world that God will reach. Dick Winchell, the general director of TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission) told me that they think there are thirty-five tribes in one area of Irian Jaya (West New Guinea) that have yet never heard the message of Jesus Christ. What a challenge! Satan has a stronghold in many places in the world. In Europe in the city of Bologna with a population of six hundred thousand people, there is only one small assembly of believers. That's the way it is all across that continent.

Yes, there is a war out there. But God isn't going to send you unless you have proven your ministry here. A man from Wycliffe spoke at a chapel service when I was in seminary. I will never forget what he said: "I just want you to know what we have learned in missions: The geographical location of your feet has absolutely nothing to do with your heart." If you are not concerned about souls here, there is no reason to believe you will be somewhere else.

God chooses spiritually-minded men and women who are engaged in spiritual ministry, and calls them to a spiritual mission. They must face the fact that immediately upon the call to a spiritual mission, they are going to run into the militants of Satan who want to thwart their effort. But if they are faithful, and if they call on the resource and power of God, they will know the spiritual mastery that God gave to Paul and Barnabas. Our God has not changed. He is the same, and the victory is ours. And the key behind everything is that we should be controlled by the Holy Spirit. There is work to be done, and Satan will resist. But the Bible says, "...greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn. 4:4b). That is the promise of victory.

Focusing on the Facts

1. Why was the church at Antioch so crucial to the expanding of the church to the Gentile world?
2. How would you characterize the church at Antioch? What was the key characteristic?
3. How would you define a Spirit-filled church?
4. What is a Spirit-filled church characterized by?
5. What were the problems that existed in the Corinthian church related to?
6. What are the important characteristics that a strong leader should manifest (see Ac. 6:3, 5, 8; 1 Tim. 3:2-7)?
7. Who were the leaders in the church at Antioch? Explain their importance?

8. What principle is illustrated by the fact that the church at Antioch had five leaders? Explain.
9. What are the duties of a leader in the church?
10. What does it mean to minister to the Lord?
11. According to Acts 13:2, what does the fasting of the leaders indicate?
12. What was the special ministry of the prophets prior to the completion of the New Testament? How did that ministry apply to the call of the Holy Spirit in Acts 13:2?
13. What does activity in ministry have to do with the call of God?
14. What is the dominant method by which God expresses His call to an individual?
15. What was the purpose for the people of the church at Antioch laying hands on Paul and Barnabas?
16. What are the two connotations attached to the word "sorcerer"? What is the major difference between the two?
17. What is one thing that you can be sure will happen when you set out to reach a soul for Jesus Christ? Who is your battle against (see Eph. 6:12)?
18. What are the two ways in which Satan resists the mission of the church?
19. How is a church devastated internally?
20. What made John Mark leave Paul and Barnabas during their journey?
21. What is an occultist?
22. What is the only way that Christians can experience the sweetness of victory over the enemy?

Pondering the Principles

1. How would you define your ministry to God? Does it relate to the definition in 1 Peter 2:5? Even though you may or may not be a leader in the church, can you say this with confidence every day: "Everything I've done today can stand as a sweet-smelling offering to Jesus Christ"? Why or why not?

If not, what changes do you need to make in your daily activity? Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-6. What characterized the Macedonians activity of service to God? In order to remember the priority of all that we do in our service, memorize 2 Corinthians 8:5: "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."

2. Have you been called by God into a particular ministry? If so, how did the call come to you? What were you involved in when the call came? If you have not been called by God to a particular ministry, perhaps you have not been active in ministering to the body of Christ in some way, no matter how small. In addition, you are missing out on the tremendous sense of victory that God gives to you in overcoming the forces of evil in the world. What are some ministries that you know of that you could become involved in? Which one do you think you would enjoy the most? Ask God to help you in determining which ministry you should start to become involved in. Make the commitment this week to investigate a ministry you would like to be actively involved in.

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