

## **A Church “On Mission”**

We are taking a break from Ezra to spend two weeks thinking about our outreach efforts here at Faith. Today we are looking at the kind of church we believe God is calling us to be: a church on mission, a church that wholeheartedly pursues the mission to make disciples near and far. A church in the first century that embodied this type of continuity was the church at Antioch. Acts 13 and 14 depict the church at Antioch as both a “sending church” and a “receiving church.” It provides a great illustration of how the local church is at the heart of God's plan for the nations.

### **Read Acts 13:1-3**

1. What observations can you make about the church at Antioch from these verses?
2. In light of what we know about Barnabas and Saul (Paul), how might it have been difficult for the church at Antioch to send them?
3. In light of the whole experience at Antioch how might Barnabas and Paul have felt as they embarked on the start of their missionary endeavors?
4. Do a quick skim of the rest of Acts 13 and 14. How would you describe what takes place on their first missionary journey?

### **Read Acts 14:24-28**

5. How would you describe what happens at the end of their first missionary journey?

6. What is significant about the fact that they returned to the church from which they had been sent out?
7. The passage says that they “spent a long time” with the church at Antioch (v. 28). What kinds of things do you think the church might have learned from Barnabas and Paul during this time?

Steve said:

When we send people to serve in other parts of the world, we are saying to them, “We believe that Jesus is worthy of the worship of every grouping of people on earth. Because Jesus is worthy, it is worth it for you to leave fathers and mothers, farms and houses, careers, friends, and the comforts of this culture. And there are no guarantees you will come back; some people give their lives in other lands. But we believe that even that sacrifice is worth it because Jesus is worthy. . . . If we are your sending church, we will affirm your calling and we will support you. And I will tell the people of Faith that we need to live the same type of life here that we are sending you to live there. How dare we say that it’s worth it for our missionaries to sacrifice and suffer and then think, ‘But us . . . we’re busy people; we don’t need to sacrifice anything for the cause of Christ.’ No, actually we believe that there should be continuity between how we live ‘here’ and how our missionaries live ‘there.’ We should pursue the same things here that we send them to pursue there. We should be the same type of church here that we are sending them to plant elsewhere.”

8. What is your reaction to the idea that we need to “live the same type of life here” that we send missionaries to live there?
9. Do you have any sense of how you might begin (or continue) to more and more live the kind of life here that we send missionaries to live “there”? In other words, how can you live on mission?
10. What makes it hard to live on mission at times?