

Memory Verse: And now we are here to bring you this Good News. Acts 13:32

A missionary is a representative of Jesus who is both *called* and *sent* by God. After spending a year in Antioch, Saul and Barnabas were **called** by the Holy Spirit to spread the Good News of Jesus. Members of the Antioch church affirmed this, prayed over them and **sent** them along with John-mark, on the first *long-distance* missionary journey recorded in Scripture.

The missionaries sailed for the island of Cyprus, and preached from town to town all across the island. When they reached Paphos, they met a Jewish sorcerer, a false prophet named Bar-Jesus. He had attached himself to the governor, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. The governor wanted to hear from Paul about Jesus, but the sorcerer tried to interfere.

Saul, (also known as Paul), was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he looked the sorcerer in the eye and said, “You son of the devil, full of every sort of deceit and fraud, and enemy of all that is good! Will you ever stop telling lies about the true ways of the Lord? The Lord will now punish you by striking you blind; you will not see the sunlight for some time.” Instantly, Bar-Jesus was blinded! When the governor saw what had happened, **he became a believer**, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord. Paul and Barnabas continued to other towns in Asia Minor, but John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem.

One Sabbath, in the city called Antioch of Pisidia, the Jews asked Paul if he had any encouragement for them. So Paul enthusiastically said **yes**, and beginning with the story of God rescuing His people from slavery out of Egypt, Paul showed them how God remained faithful to His people (descendants of Abraham) to provide them with a Messiah. Then Paul looked at the people and said “**And now we are here to bring you this Good News.**”

Paul taught the people that God fulfilled His promise by sending Jesus who died on the cross, and was raised from the grave to bring salvation to the farthest corners of the earth.” Many Jews and Gentiles received Paul’s words as Good News, yet many Jews refused to believe, and wanted to hurt the missionaries. So Paul and Barnabas left and went from city to city, sharing the good news, seeing some accept it, and other violently oppose it.

One day, while they were at Lystra, Paul and Barnabas came upon a man with crippled feet. He had been that way from birth, so he had never walked. He was sitting and listening as Paul preached. Looking straight at him, Paul realized he had faith to be healed. So Paul called to him in a loud voice, “Stand up!” And the man jumped to his feet and started walking. When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted, “These men are gods in human form!” And they tried to worship them.

But Paul and Barnabas quickly tried to set the people straight. Paul said. “We are merely human beings—just like you! We have come to bring you the Good News that you should turn from these worthless things and turn to the living God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them.” Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowds to their side. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead. But as the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town.

After many weeks of traveling, preaching and seeing many come to Christ, Paul and Barnabas began their return journey back to Antioch of Syria. They traveled back through the cities to strengthen and encourage the believers, even warning them that followers of Jesus often encounter hardships. Paul and Barnabas also appointed elders in every church. Finally, they returned to Antioch, where they reported everything God had done through them; it was a story filled with God’s victories over

The Bible tells us that EVERYONE who chooses to follow Jesus is called to be a missionary. Jesus said “Go and make disciples of **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” So, Whether traveling long distances to foreign countries, or sharing with a neighbor across the street, ALL of Jesus’ disciples are called to share what good things Jesus has done in our lives.