**Living Life Together**

**by Properly Fulfilling the Mission[[1]](#footnote-1)**

3 lessons from the way God’s people expanded their ministry to a world in need of rescue

**I. Understand the Church’s Place in the Accomplishment of the Plan**

A. God uses church families to select and send the rescue team

B. New ministry developments often occur in the crucible of present serving and faithfulness

**Acts 13:2** - *While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting…*

**Matthew 25:29** - *For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.*

C. This is why we believe in the centrality of the local church

**Ephesians 4:11-12** - *And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;*

D. Churches determine ministry call, not individuals

1. It starts with a God-given desire

**1 Timothy 3:1** - *It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.*

2. The local church is then responsible to help a person determine the validity of the call by assessing both character and giftedness

cf. Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3

3. The local church has the additional privilege and responsibility to equip individuals who are called to serve

E. In a very real sense, we are all being sent out

**Matthew 28:19-20** - *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

**II. Be Prepared for Adventure and Challenge**

A. Centered on the proclamation of God’s Word

**Acts 13:2** - *While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”*

**Acts 13:5** - *When they reached Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their helper.*

**Hebrews 4:12** - *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

B. With people who haven’t always been perfect

**Acts 13:2** - *While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”*

**Acts 13:9** - *But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him,*

**1 Timothy 1:12-17** - *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

C. Where sometimes truth has to be proclaimed boldly

**Acts 13:10** - *You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord?*

**1 Thessalonians 5:14** - *We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.*

D. Where sometimes people will let you down

**Acts 13:13** - *Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.*

**III. Leave the Results Up to Our Sovereign God**

**Acts 13:45-48** - *But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, ‘I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, that You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.’” When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.*

1. Dr Steve Viars [↑](#footnote-ref-1)