

## MURPHY'S LAW AND THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH

### Studies in the Acts

#### MURPHY'S LAW STATES:

- One, Nothing is as easy as it looks.**
- Two, Everything takes longer than you think.**
- Three, If anything can go wrong, it will!**

#### THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH:

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: (1) Barnabas, and (2) Simeon who was called Niger, and (3) Lucius of Cyrene, and (4) Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch (or, Herod Antipas), and (5) Saul.

Acts 13:1

#### Barnabas:

Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 4:36-37

When he (Saul/Paul) came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.

Acts 9:26-27

So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came (where) to Antioch and began speaking to (who) the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.

The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.

Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he (what) rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord for he was a (1) good man, and (2) full of the Holy Spirit and (3) of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.

And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Acts 11:19-26

**Simeon, who was called Niger** (means "black")

**Lucius of Cyrene** (city in North Africa)

**Manean, brought up** ("foster brother") **with Herod the tetrarch**

**Saul**

But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him (Stephen) with one impulse. When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Acts 7:57-58

Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him. But Saul began (what) ravaging the church, (1) entering house after house, and (2) dragging off men and women, he would (3) put them in prison.

Acts 8:1-3

Saul is converted on the Damascus Road - Acts 9:1-19

Saul begins to preach the Gospel - Acts 9:20-22

Plot on Saul's life and his escape to Jerusalem - Acts 9:23-25

Rejection by the Apostles in Jerusalem - Acts 9:26

Enter Barnabas - Acts 9:27

Second plot on Saul's life because of his fearless preaching - Acts 9:28-29

Saul sent away to Tarsus - Acts 9:30

Enter Barnabas once again to bring Saul to Antioch - Acts 11:25

One year of teaching at Antioch - Acts 11:26

Famine relief from the Gentiles to the Jerusalem church - Acts 11:27-30

Barnabas, Saul and John Mark return from Jerusalem - Acts 12:26

#### THE WORK OF THE CHURCH LEADERS IN ANTIOCH:

While they were (1) ministering to the Lord and (2) fasting, (what) the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul (why) for the work to which I have called them."

Acts 13:2

"**ministering**" means: *leitourgeo* - "to discharge a duty, to worship"

"**fasting**" - times of intense prayer, self-denial, intimacy with the Lord

**Some Questions:**

**Who were the church leaders ministering to?**

**Who spoke to them about Barnabas and Saul?**

**Who called them to the work?**

**And why is this so important?**

**What planning was done by the early church in regards to world evangelism and church planting?**

**Who determined what programs the early church established?**

**Were there, in fact, any programs at all?**

**What about the ordination of church leaders?**

**Who conveyed the authority to minister in the name of the Lord?**

**What do the Scriptures say about the qualifications for ministry?  
even the ministry of waiting on tables?**

**Problem:**

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.

**Solution:**

So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of (1) good reputation, (2) full of the Spirit and of (3) wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."  
Acts 6:1-4

**What does it mean when a church lays hands on a person?**

**Did this mean that Barnabas and Saul had been called to the ministry? Or was it in recognition of what the Holy Spirit had already done in their lives?**

**Also, who is the one who "calls" into service?**

**And what does the term "calling" really mean, anyway?**

**Did the church choose Barnabas and Saul?**

**Did Barnabas or Saul volunteer for the mission?**

Then, when they had (1) fasted and (2) prayed and (3) laid their hands on them, they (what) sent them away (or, let them go; released them).

Acts 13:3