



# What is a Missionary?

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## Lesson Goal

Help students understand that today we need to send many missionaries to reach the world with the Gospel

## Lesson Objectives

1. Students understand what a missionary is
2. Understand what a missionary does
3. Understand that the church today needs to be sending multitudes of missionaries

## Key Verse

Acts 13:1-3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

## Application

1. What is a missionary and what does a missionary do?
2. Do we still need missionaries today?
3. Do you pray for God to send missionaries?
4. Do you give to help missionaries go share the Gospel?
5. Have you ever considered if God would have you be a missionary?



# Teacher Planning Sheet

## Prepare

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Application

*As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Three ways students need to apply this passage are*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Point

*Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Proclaim

*Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.*

**Presentation Ideas**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Praise/Music Ideas**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Practice

*Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## Lesson

A Missionary is Sent by God So, what is a missionary? The word missionary is a word that has been used in English to define someone that is sent to spread the Gospel. The Webster dictionary definition of missionary is: One sent to propagate religion. Quite simply a missionary is someone sent out by God to make disciples of Jesus Christ. While the word missionary is not used in the Bible, we have examples of missionaries in the Bible. These were men that were sent out by God to make disciples of Jesus Christ. A missionary isn't someone that is just acting independently on their own, but rather someone that is sent by God.

A: Paul was sent by the Holy Spirit

Acts 13:1-3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. God sent Paul (Saul) and Barnabas to the Gentiles to preach the Gospel.

This wasn't an idea they came up with on their own without God being in it, rather it was the Holy Ghost that commanded Paul and Barnabas to go forth. Notice in verse two it mentions, "The Holy Ghost said," and also in verse four, "being sent forth by the Holy Ghost" God through the Holy Spirit was sending Paul and Barnabas out. At that time of Paul and Barnabas's calling there were five men mentioned that were serving the church at Antioch. Two of them, Paul and Barnabas were sent by the Holy Ghost to go out and do God's work. Three of them weren't sent out at that time, but rather continued serving the church at Antioch. The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of these men to show them that Paul (Saul) and Barnabas needed to be sent out. This was a work that God did. He sent two men out to be missionaries from the church at Antioch.

B: God used persecution to send missionaries:

Acts 8:1-4 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. 4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.



The early Christians in the book of Acts were having a great time of fellowship and growth in Jerusalem. However, the surrounding towns, villages, and far away regions all weren't having the Gospel preached to them. What did God do? He allowed severe persecution to spring up against the church at Jerusalem. This scattered the church into the surrounding regions. What did they do? As they fled Jerusalem, they took the Gospel with them preaching it to everyone. Notice in verse four it says, "they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." While these people didn't have the same kind of experience as Barnabas and Paul when God sent them out, they nevertheless were still sent by God. God used persecution to send them out of Jerusalem to reach Judea and Samaria with the Gospel. God often will use persecution or other circumstances to send people out with the Gospel.

C: God used Paul's influence to send Timothy to the mission field:

Acts 16:1-3 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Timothy is a young man that had gotten saved and was living in the area of two cities named Debra and Lystra. He had a good testimony among the other Christians there. I don't know what Timothy's plans were. He may have planned to stay in Lystra, he may have imagined living his life in the church there, but regardless of what his plans were, one day the apostle Paul shows back up and desires that Timothy accompany him on his missionary journeys. Timothy obviously agrees and is soon accompanying Paul, traveling throughout Asia Minor, Corinth, and Rome preaching the Gospel. It might not seem like the most dramatic calling, but it is evident that God was all over it.

Later on in 1 Corinthians 16 Paul gives this testimony about Timothy: 1 Corinthians 16:10 "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do." It was evident that Timothy was fulfilling God's calling for his life. God used Paul's influence to send Timothy to the mission field. God will often use the influence of fellow laborers to send new people to the mission field.

Just like the apostle Paul, early Christians, and Timothy a missionary is first and foremost someone that is sent by God. A missionary is someone that knows God and has experienced God working in his/her life in some way to send him out with the Gospel. God can and will use all kinds of different means to send people out to reach the world with the Gospel.



## 2. A Missionary is Sent Out

The whole idea of being sent is that you leave one place and go to another place. You leave somewhere where you are currently at and go somewhere different. This is what missionaries do and this is what God called several people to do in the Bible. Let's look again at the example of the Paul and Barnabas.

Acts 13:1-4 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. Notice in this story Paul and Barnabas were among the prophets and teachers at the church in Antioch.

They were serving the church and preaching the Gospel. It wasn't like they weren't involved or weren't being used in a great way. However, God had different plans for them. He sent them away from Antioch to bring the Gospel to new regions. Why would God take Paul and Barnabas away from a very useful ministry to the church of Antioch and send them away to different, unfamiliar places? Because God's plan from the beginning of Acts was that his followers would take the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the world. Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. A missionary isn't someone that stays where they are already at, but is someone that God sends to go somewhere else. Until the whole world is reached, God is going to keep sending people to take the Gospel to new places that do not have it. That is His plan.

## 3. What Does a Missionary Do?

A: Proclaim the good news of Jesus:

A missionary is sent by God to proclaim the Gospel. Every time you see people being sent out in the Bible, they always tell people about Jesus. This is what the apostles did, this is what Paul and Barnabas did, this is what Timothy did. This is what a missionary does. In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas leave Antioch and start preaching the word of God at all the new places they visit. Acts 13:5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.



Later on when Paul and Barnabas arrive in Antioch in Pisidia, Paul goes to a synagogue and tells people about Jesus. During the middle of his message which is recorded for us in Acts 13:32 he says, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, Paul made it clear that his message was a message of glad tidings, a message of salvation from sin. It is this same message that missionaries today proclaim. A missionary is sent to tell people the good news of Jesus Christ.

B: A missionary helps believers grow in the Lord: Not only did Paul and Barnabas tell people how to accept Jesus as their Savior, they also returned to establish believers in their faith. As they retraced their steps that they had traveled on their way back to Antioch they returned to places where they had preached the Gospel. At each of these places they gathered the believers together and encouraged them in the Lord. Acts 14:21-22 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Paul didn't leave these believers to try to figure out the Christian life on their own, rather he personally tried to encourage them to grow strong in the faith. Later on Paul writes many letters back to people he has preached the Gospel to helping them know how to grow in their faith. Paul didn't leave new believers without help. He tried to help them grow in the Lord. In fact, this is something that a missionary is supposed to do. When Jesus gives us the great commission he doesn't just tell us to teach people about Jesus, but rather commands us also to baptize them and teach them all of his commandments. Matthew 28:18-20 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. A missionary must try to help people he/she leads to Christ grow in the Lord.

C: A missionary establishes churches: A church is not a building, rather a church is an assembly of saved, baptized believers assembled together for the purpose of keeping the ordinances and fulfilling the great commission. All believers are commanded to not forsake the assembling of themselves together. Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. So, we see if a missionary is going to obey the great commission and teach believers all the things God commands them to do, they are going to have to teach them to assemble together as a local church. A missionary shouldn't leave new believers without a church. A church needs to have leadership and be organized to regularly meet, preach the word, baptize new believers, take the Lord's supper, and carry out the great commission.



A missionary should work towards organizing churches that will do these things. This is what Paul was working on in Acts 14 when he re-visited places where he had preached the Gospel and ordained elders in every church (assembly of believers). Acts 14:22-23 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. While not every missionary may have the role of actually planting a church, (Some missionaries may help an already established church or work alongside a missionary in a church planting role.) if we are going to be obedient to the great commission, every missionary should be in the business of establishing or helping grow Biblical local churches.

4. Do we still need missionaries today? A: Yes, Because God is still sending missionaries: In Matthew 9, God tells us to pray for God to send laborers into His harvest.

Matthew 9:36-38 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. The harvest is the multitude of lost souls that could be saved if they heard the Gospel. Jesus says the harvest is plenteous, meaning that the potential of people being saved is enormous, because of the enormous number of lost souls. However the problem is the laborers are few. The solution is to ask God to send more laborers. Obviously from this verse, as long as there is a problem with a shortage of laborers, the solution is always to ask God to send more laborers and God will send more people to carry the Gospel to the world. So the question is, "Is there a shortage of laborers today?" The answer is definitely, "yes!" In today's world there are billions of lost souls and in comparison very few laborers. God is still sending missionaries to reach this lost world with the Gospel.

B: Yes, Because the great commission is still in effect: God hasn't given us a pass to stop obeying the great commission. The Bible in Mark 16 tells us to preach the Gospel to every creature: Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. The church today doesn't have a pass to say that we can stop obeying this command, rather the church today is commanded to preach the Gospel to the entire world. We need to send missionaries today to every part of the world to tell people about Jesus.



C: Yes, because the world still is not reached: Do you realize that the majority of people in this world have not heard a clear presentation of the Gospel. In fact of the 7.8 billion people that live in this world, only 26% even claim to believe in some form of Christianity. We know that probably of these people that claim some form of Christianity, the majority have probably not been Biblically born again, but rather have been taught some sort of unbiblical teaching. The world isn't reached by any stretch. Billions of people lie in darkness. We need thousands upon thousands of missionaries to take the Gospel to this lost and dying world.

**Review Questions:**

1. What is a missionary and what does a missionary do?
2. Do we still need missionaries today?
3. Do you pray for God to send missionaries?
4. Do you give to help missionaries go share the Gospel?
5. Have you every considered if God would have you be a missionary?



# What is a Missionary?

Acts 13:1-3

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Write Acts 13:2-3

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2. What is a missionary?

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3. What three things does a missionary do?

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4. What are three reasons that we need missionaries today?

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## Missionaries Today

Mark 16:15 – “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Is the word “missionary” found in the Bible? If so, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Who sent out the first missionaries? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Acts 8:1-4 why were people “scattered abroad”? What did they do as they scattered? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the “Great Commission”?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is the Great Commission still in effect today? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long will God keep sending out missionaries? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Matthew 9:36-38

“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”

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multitudes

shepherd

fainted

Lord

compassion

harvest

labourers

send

scattered

plenteous

sheep

disciples

moved

pray



**COLOR**

YOUR DRAWING AND PUT IT ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR

**THINK**

ABOUT WRITING A LETTER TO YOUR MISSIONARY SOON.

# PRAY

FOR YOUR MISSIONARY

★  
**MY MISSIONARY'S NAME IS...**

"FINALLY, BRETHREN, PRAY FOR US, THAT THE WORD OF THE LORD MAY HAVE FREE COURSE, AND BE GLORIFIED, EVEN AS IT IS WITH YOU."

2 THESSALONIANS 3:1

★  
DRAW YOUR MISSIONARY

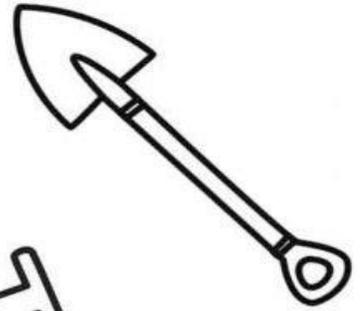
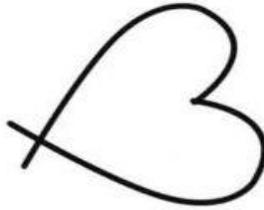
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COUNTRY...

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DRAW THEIR COUNTRY FLAG

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**HOW CAN I PRAY FOR THEM?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



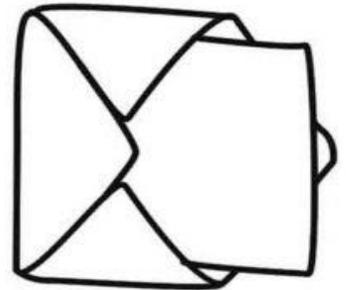


now

missionary

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