

**ACTS 13.1-12****“Don’t Leave Home Without Him”**

Isn’t it frustrating when you forget something?

I do it all the time.

Last Wednesday I had everything I needed for the Lenten worship except the benediction “My Child.”

I had planned to go downstairs and get it before I left the house.

Would you believe I forgot?

I know that surprises you.

I forgot and left the house without that prayer.

I’ve heard some of you say, he doesn’t have a prayer.

I know I have a prayer. I just didn’t have that prayer.

I left home without it.

American Express reminds us again, again not to “leave home without it,” the American Express credit card that is.

Because if you “do leave home without it,” you’ll be limited in what you can see and do, and you might find yourself in embarrassing, difficult, and even dangerous situations.

The same could be said for we who call ourselves Christians.

There is someone we can’t leave home without.

If we do we are more limited in what we can see and what we can do.

We’ll find ourselves in more embarrassing, difficult, and maybe even dangerous situations.

Actually we as Christians can’t leave home without him anyway.

He goes everywhere with us.

We just forget He is with us,

or forget or refuse to call upon His presence, His protection, and His power.

He guides us in, and teaches us truth,

He counsels, convicts, confirms, commissions, and comforts us,

And He advocates and defends us.

If we asked the children who that is,

They would raise their hands and shout Jesus.

Some might even say, God and Jesus.

We’re going to call him the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of our triune God.

He doesn’t care if he gets the glory.

He is the revealer,  
 who reveals the Father God, through the revealee, Jesus the Son.  
 The Holy Spirit exercises God's power.  
 We first hear of the Spirit in Genesis 1.1-2, you remember,  
**"Now the earth was formless and empty,  
 darkness was over the surface of the deep,  
 and the Spirit of God, was hovering over the waters."**

Like a mother bear that worries about her cubs,  
 A mother hen watching over her chicks,  
 A coach concerned about his team,  
 the Spirit hovers over this confusion and chaos of creation,  
 moves in, and creates order, beauty, and life.  
 That is the awesome power of God at work.

If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior  
 you can trust the promise that you have the Holy Spirit working with and in you.

Just don't leave home without Him,  
 Actually just don't forget that He is with and within you.

The early church didn't forget.  
 They relied and trusted what Jesus said,  
 "That the Holy Spirit would be with them."

We'll find that THE HOLY SPIRIT SETS US APART AND SENDS US OFF.

<sup>1</sup>**In the church at Antioch** (Antioch has a growing church)  
**there were prophets and teachers:**  
**Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene,**  
**Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.**

These men are listed so that we see the church is made up of people  
 from different ethnic and economic groups.

<sup>2</sup>**While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting,**  
**the Holy Spirit said,**  
**"Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."**  
 They put themselves in a position to be used by God.  
 They were vulnerable and available to God.

<sup>3</sup>**So after they had fasted and prayed,**  
**they placed their hands on them and sent them off.**  
<sup>4</sup>**The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit,**  
**went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.**  
 Barnabas did a little evangelism in his hometown.

<sup>5</sup>**When they arrived at Salamis,**

**they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues.**

They obviously relied on the Holy Spirit  
to guide, strengthen, and encourage them.

Some research has shown, “Most mainline churches don’t rely on the Holy Spirit today.”  
People just do things, do good things but then, just ask for God’s blessing.

If we took the Holy Spirit  
out of the mainline churches today,  
this research tells us it wouldn’t matter, we couldn’t tell the difference.

The church would pretty much look the same.  
And tragically the work God wants done, probably isn’t being done.

We might want to argue that,  
but we read in Acts about the early church and  
all of the miracles, healings, and conversions  
brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit.

The question this scripture raises needs to be asked,  
“Do we rely on the Holy Spirit’s guidance, discernment, and power here at FUMC?”  
We believe so.

Here are a few words from a few of those set apart and sent out.  
Notice they knowingly or unknowingly made themselves available.  
Notice God had something to do with time, place, and even the motive of their mission.

Margaret Wild caught that great love for missions  
from a mother and grandmother who taught love for missions.  
She remembers God wetting her appetite for missions in the sixth grade.  
She took a mission trip to Mexico in high school.  
The Holy Spirit continues to put opportunities in front of her through missions committee,  
the church bulletin, and personal invitations.  
The solar oven project and Haiti are near and dear to her heart.

Samantha Fontenelle made herself vulnerable to the Holy Spirit at Acquire the Fire.  
She felt her heart strangely warmed.  
Now she senses God shaping and molding her life  
just as the potter shapes and molds clay.  
So, in gratitude she wants to give something back to God.  
The Holy Spirit is sending her to New York to work with intercity kids this summer.

Dan Harvey would say that one of the ways that the Holy Spirit  
is reshaping and remolding his life is through missions.  
He confesses that at first his love for missions was driven  
by his great sense of adventure,  
by a fun and games attitude rather than being obedient to God.  
The Holy Spirit has used mission trips to South American

to help him refine that motive and to teach him,  
 “that to whom much is given, much is expected.”

Not only does THE HOLY SPIRIT SET US APART AND SEND US OUT  
 But THE HOLY SPIRIT SUPPLIES AND SUSTAINS US as well  
 particularly in Spiritual Warfare.

List to this.

<sup>6</sup>**They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos.**

**There they met a Jewish sorcerer (wizard) and false prophet named Bar-Jesus,**

<sup>7</sup>**who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus.**

<sup>9</sup>**Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit,**

(Paul didn't leave home without the Holy Spirit)

**looked straight at Elymas and said,**

<sup>10</sup>**"You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right!**

**You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery.**

**Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?**

Obviously the Devil doesn't want people hearing the Gospel,  
 the Good News about the love of Jesus.

Paul says that he uses deceit and trickery,  
 We might add fear and distraction, even our success  
 and certainly our failures,  
 and all out, blatant attacks upon ourselves and our families.

Last year a young adult said that Satan had her soul because of something she did.  
 Had she committed her life to Satan-NO!  
 Then how did she know that Satan had her soul?  
 Someone had told her that.

Had she committed her life to Christ.

She said yes.

If she truly committed her life to Christ than Satan couldn't have her soul, right?

She believed a lie, but, as a believer she could,

“...be strong in the Lord and his mighty power (the Holy Spirit).”

She could, “Put on the armor of God and stand against the devil's schemes.”

She needed to remember that God who made her says,

**“Do not fear, I have redeemed you,**

**I have called you by name and you are mine.”**

A teacher had premonitions and feelings of fear while she was trying to teach.

It didn't feel like any normal anxiety or fear.

Being a mature person of faith she discerned those feelings to be a presence of evil.

She knew that **God's perfect love cast out fear.**

She read the Bible, praised God, and prayed binding Satan and cast him from her presence.

There was this very godly missionary from Uganda who spoke to our seminary class.  
 He said he was having trouble praying one day.  
 He said he felt his prayer got no higher than to the roof of his hut.  
 He knew it was the work of the village witch doctor.  
 He wasn't personally afraid.  
 He knew that, "**He who was in him** (meaning Jesus)  
**was greater than he** (meaning the devil) **who was in the world.**"

Once when preaching at a funeral service  
 I was stumbling and bumbling even more than usual.

It was like there was a wall, a barrier, a veil of some sort.  
 The words were not getting any farther than the pulpit.  
 I was new to the ministry, a bit immature in the faith,  
 and had no words for it at the time.  
 Later I found out that some of the grandchildren sitting in the front row were in a cult.

About a month ago a pentagram was painted on the North side of our building  
 and the word Satan painted on the MOC.

Interestingly enough our youth were leaving that morning for Acquire the Fire.  
 We erased the work of these wayward artists, forgave them, and prayed for changed hearts.

We prayed, too for the protection of our youth as they traveled,  
 for their protection at the concert, and that each of our youth would experience Christ.

They did. Each one committed or recommitted their lives to Christ.  
 We thank God for the work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul, we can call him Paul now,  
 Paul confronted and rebuked the wizard working against the Gospel.  
 and the wizard who was spiritually blind, became physically blind as well.  
 Sound familiar? It happened to Paul.

Now, how did Paul do all that?  
 Verse 9 tells us, "... **he was filled with the Holy Spirit.**"  
 He didn't leave home without Him.

Anyway, there's a happy ending for Sergius Paulus-he saw the light, he believed.  
 There may be a happy ending for the wizard-there is hope, right now he needs a helping hand.  
 Paul and Barnabas, well, they have a boat to catch.  
 And the Holy Spirit will be around, all around.  
 And you and I, let's don't leave the church today without Him.

Let's stand and sing the prayer, "Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me."

