

Study Series: Absolute Surrender

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 Lesson Title: “Separated unto the Holy Ghost” (pp. 109-121)

Session 9

May 1, 2022

The main point of this lesson is: Absolute surrender means the Holy Spirit directs the work of God in our lives.

Focus on this goal:To help adults seek the Spirit’s leadership in their lives, not just His power on their work

Key Bible Passage:Acts 13:1-4

Before the Session

Read Acts 13–14 and be prepared to briefly summarize (and show on a map if possible) the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas. (Step 6)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

State: A few years ago, most of us probably thought self-driving cars existed only in science-fiction, but now they actually exist on roads. Ask if participants would ever want to ride in or “drive” a self-driving car and why. Assert: Many might want the power of a self-driving car, but are not willing to give up control of steering their own vehicle. Many Christians desire the power of the Holy Spirit, but are not willing to surrender control of their lives to Him.

Read the main point of this lesson statement (p. 120).

Step 2. Intention

Invite a volunteer to read Acts 13:1-4. Explain the author relates six thoughts from this passage. Request another volunteer read the first thought from Day One (p. 110).

Discuss Day One, activity 1 (p. 110). Ask: We tend to make our own plans then invite the Spirit to come along for the ride; what should we do instead? Request a volunteer read the pull quote in Day One (p. 111).

Discuss Day One, activity 2 (p. 111).

Step 3. Revelation

Read (or quote) Isaiah 40:31 from the KJV. Ask: Does waiting on God tend to renew or deplete your strength? What would it take for our waiting to increase our strength?

Declare we need to trust “God is willing and able to reveal to His servants what His will is” (second thought, Day Two, p. 111).

Discuss Day Two, activity 1 (p. 112).

Evaluate reasons God seems to give so little grace and success when Christians ask for power to do His work.

Guide the group to describe a person who hears and understands when God reveals His will. Request a volunteer read the last sentence of Day Two (p. 112). Ask: Why does that require absolute surrender?

Discuss Day Two, activity 2 (pp. 112-113).

Step 4. Direction

State that the author asks readers to “Note the disposition to which the Spirit reveals God’s will” (third thought, Day Three, p. 113). Explain disposition refers to a person’s mindset, and also how something is arranged in position with something else.

Invite a volunteer to reread Acts 13:1-4. Ask: What did the disciples reveal about their mindset and position with their prayer and fasting?

Discuss Day Three, activity 1 (p. 114). Explore how fasting helps believers separate from the world and focus on God.

Discuss Day Three, activity 2 (p. 114).

Step 5. Separation

Request a volunteer read the author’s fourth thought (p. 115). Invite the group to answer that question. Determine the twofold aspect of the command for separation.

Ask: How did the church demonstrate absolute surrender in sending out two of their leaders? State: The church likely had plans for building their church in Antioch through Paul and Barnabas. But they didn’t let their plans take precedence over God’s plans for His kingdom. They took their hands off the steering wheel, and God trusted them to set apart Paul and Barnabas for His great work.

Explore what it means to be “separated unto the Holy Ghost.” Draw attention to the pull quote in Day Four (p. 115). Discuss Day Four, activity 1 (p. 115).

Request a volunteer read the Day Four paragraph (p. 116) beginning with “I am sure there are workers . . . .”

Read the author’s probing question in Day Four, activity 2 (p. 116). State one reason many believers can’t answer “yes” to that question is because they’re afraid that absolute surrender will mean absolute misery. Ask: How can we know from 1 Corinthians 2:9-12 that is not true?

Assert God wants us set apart not just because there are things He has for us to do for Him, but because there is so much He wants to do for us.

Step 6. Partnership and Blessing

Ask a volunteer to read the author’s fifth thought (Day Five, p. 117).

Read Acts 13:4, summarize Paul and Barnabas’s mission, then read Acts 14:23-27. Ask: How do you see the partnership between the Holy Spirit and God’s people in this missionary journey? Why is it significant they continued to pray and fast?

Ask a volunteer to read the pull quote in Day Five (p. 117). Consider why Christians tend to stop praying about Christian growth and work.

Discuss Day Five, activity 1 (p. 118).

Invite a volunteer to read the author’s last thought (p. 119). Explore blessings the early church experienced because they allowed the Spirit to lead. Invite responses to Day Five, activity 2 (p. 119).

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Ask: God is so willing to bless His people, so why is there not more blessing? How can we demonstrate that we are willing to let go of the steering wheel and let the Holy Spirit drive our lives?

Close in prayer.

