

spirit, indicated a decisive move for the expansion of the missionary work. The record at Acts 13:2-4 tells us: "The holy spirit said: 'Of all persons set Barnabas and Saul apart for me for the work to which I have called them.' . . . Accordingly these men, sent out by the holy spirit, went down to Seleucia [the seaport of Syrian Antioch], and from there they sailed away to Cyprus." How thrilling that must have been for Paul and Barnabas—sailing to their first foreign assignment! The apostle Paul was spearheading the Christian missionary activity. He was also laying a foundation for a work that would be completed in our 20th century.

Paul went on to make three recorded missionary tours plus his journey to Rome as a prisoner. In the course of these, he opened up the work in several cities in Europe and preached the Kingdom message in countries and islands that today are known as Syria, Cyprus, Crete, Turkey, Greece, Malta, and Sicily. He may even have reached Spain. He helped establish congregations in many cities. What was the secret of his effective missionary activity?

Effective Teaching

¹⁰ Paul imitated Christ's way of teaching. Therefore he knew how to relate to people. He knew how to teach and how to train others as teachers. He based his teaching on the Scriptures. He did not try to impress others with his own wisdom but, rather, reasoned from the Scriptures. (Acts 17: 2, 3) Paul also knew how to adapt to his audience and how to use the local setting as a springboard for his message. As he said: "I have made myself the slave to all, that I may gain the most persons. And so to the

Jews I became as a Jew . . . To those without law I became as without law . . . To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to people of all sorts, that I might by all means save some." —1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Acts 17:22, 23.

¹¹ Paul and his companions were effective missionaries. By perseverance and endurance, they established and strengthened Christian congregations everywhere they went. (Acts 13:14, 43, 48, 49; 14:19-28) The early Christian ministry was so widespread that Paul could eventually write about "the truth of that good news which has presented itself to you, even as it is bearing fruit and increasing in all the world . . . , and which was preached in all creation that is under heaven." Truly, early Christian missionary activity affected people.—Colossians 1:5, 6, 23.

¹² However, by the beginning of the second century C.E., apostasy was creeping into the Christian congregation, even as Jesus and the apostles had warned. (Matthew 7:15, 21-23; Acts 20:29, 30; 1 John 2: 18, 19) In the centuries that followed, theology and pagan doctrine submerged the Kingdom message. Christendom sent out missionaries, not to preach the true Kingdom of God, but to impose on defenseless natives—often with the sword—the kingdom of their political masters and sponsors. Authentic Christian missionary work ceased but not forever.

¹³ Toward the close of the 19th century, Charles T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Society, saw the need for missionary activity. He thus organized an extensive witnessing campaign, and he

11. What indicates that Paul and his companions were effective missionaries, and how widespread was the Christian ministry?

12. What caused the authentic Christian missionary work to cease for a time?

13. How did a missionary campaign get started in modern times, and what was accomplished by the end of 1916?

9. What did the apostle Paul accomplish by means of his missionary tours?

10. Why was Paul so effective in his missionary activity?