
Ministry of the Holy Spirit
Acts 13:13-52
Lesson 24 – When Jealousy Fights the Gospel

Acts 13:13-52 (NIV)

¹³ From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ From Perga they went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. ¹⁵ After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak." ¹⁶ Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me!

¹⁷ The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country, ¹⁸ he endured their conduct for about forty years in the desert, ¹⁹ he overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. ²⁰ All this took about 450 years. "After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. ²¹ Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. ²² After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' ²³ "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. ²⁴ Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel. ²⁵ As John was completing his work, he said: 'Who do you think I am? I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.' ²⁶ "Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. ²⁷ The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. ²⁸ Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. ²⁹ When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him from the dead, ³¹ and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people.

³² "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers ³³ he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "'You are my Son; today I have become your Father'.

³⁴ The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: "'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.' ³⁵ So it is stated elsewhere: "'You will not let your Holy One see decay.'

³⁶ "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed. ³⁷ But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay. ³⁸ "Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. ³⁹ Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

⁴⁰ Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: ⁴¹ "'Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, for I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe, even if someone told you.'"

⁴² As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. ⁴³ When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴ On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵ When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying. ⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not

consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.⁴⁷ For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."⁴⁸ When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.⁴⁹ The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.⁵⁰ But the Jews incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.⁵¹ So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium.⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Paul begin with Israel's history before presenting Jesus, and what does this teach us about understanding the Gospel?

- a. Why is Jesus the fulfillment—not the replacement—of the Old Testament?
- b. How does seeing one unified story of redemption strengthen your faith?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:16–41

Reference Scriptures: Luke 24:27, 44–47; Genesis 12:1–3; Romans 15:4

2. What is the purpose of the Law if it was never intended to save people?

- a. How does understanding the true purpose of the Law deepen your appreciation for God's grace?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:38–39

Reference Scriptures: Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:24; James 2:10

3. What does it mean to be "justified by faith?"

- a. What is the difference between forgiveness and justification?
- b. How should the doctrine of justification change the way believers view their relationship with God?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:38–39

Reference Scriptures: Romans 5:1; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:1; Phillipians 3:8-9

4. According to Scripture, why does grace offend people who believe they can earn God's favor?

- a. What is the difference between forgiveness and justification?
- b. Why do people naturally want to earn God's approval?
- c. How can Christians unknowingly drift into works-righteousness thinking?

Primary Text: Acts 13:38–39

Supporting Scriptures: Ephesians 2:8–9; Philippians 3:4–9; Luke 18:9–14

Be careful not to begin trusting your own performance instead of Christ's finished work!!!

5. What was the real reason the religious leaders opposed Paul, and what does this reveal about the nature of jealousy?

- a. Why does jealousy usually begin with comparison?
- b. Why is jealousy often more difficult to recognize in ourselves than in others?
- c. What blessings have you struggled to celebrate in someone else's life?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:44–45

Reference Scriptures: James 3:16; Mark 15:10; Proverbs 14:30; Ecclesiastes 4:4

6. How can jealousy disguise itself as spiritual concern or discernment?

- a. When can criticism actually reveal envy?
- b. How can we honestly examine our motives when evaluating another person's ministry or success?
- c. Why is jealousy often more difficult to recognize in ourselves than in others?

Primary Scriptures: Acts 13:45

Reference Scriptures: Matthew 23:27–28; Galatians 5:26; James 4:1–3; 1 Corinthians 13:4

7. John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

- a. What does it mean for Christ to increase while we decrease?
- b. Why can humble people celebrate another person's success?
- c. What practical habits help cultivate humility and genuine joy over another believer's success?

Primary Scriptures: Acts 13:44–45

Reference Scriptures: John 3:27–30; Philippians 2:3–5; 1 Peter 5:5–6; Matthew 23:11–12

8. Why did God choose Israel, and what responsibility came with that privilege?

- a. How does God's covenant with Israel point toward the Great Commission?
- b. What practical habits help cultivate humility and genuine joy over another believer's success?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:46–47

Reference Scriptures: Isaiah 49:2–6; Genesis 12:1–3; Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8

9. What can we learn from Paul and Barnabas' response when they were rejected?

- How should believers respond when people reject the Gospel without becoming discouraged or bitter?
- What responsibility belongs to us?
- What responsibility belongs only to God?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:46–51

Reference Scriptures: Matthew 10:14; Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 4:2; Luke 9:5; Ezekiel 2:7

10. Despite persecution, "the word of the Lord spread." What does this teach us about God's sovereignty over His mission?

- How has God used hardship to spread the Gospel?
- What gives believers confidence during opposition?
- How have you seen God accomplish His purposes despite opposition or setbacks in your own life/evangelistic journey?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:49–52

Supporting Scriptures: Isaiah 55:10–11; Acts 1:8; Matthew 16:18

11. The chapter ends with disciples "filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." Why is joy the mark of surrendered believers while jealousy produces misery?

- Why were the disciples filled with joy even after persecution?
- What practical steps can help believers replace comparison with gratitude and Kingdom-minded celebration?

Primary Scripture: Acts 13:52

Reference Scriptures: Galatians 5:22–23; Romans 14:17; Philippians 4:4–7; James 1:2–4

Closing Challenge

Read aloud: Hebrews 12:15 "See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."

Final Reflection Questions:

- Is there anyone whose success is difficult for me to celebrate?
- Am I serving God out of gratitude or trying to earn His approval?
- Have I confused building Christ's Kingdom with building my own reputation?
- What step of repentance or obedience is the Holy Spirit calling me to take this week?

Share your major takeaways from the Lesson/Sermon this week.

Commentary

THE FIRST GREAT MISSION OF PAUL TO THE GENTILES: TO CYPRUS AND GALATIA, 13:1-14:28

C. Antioch of Pisidia, the Main City of South GALATIA (Part I): The Preaching of Paul, 13:14-41

(13:14-41) **Introduction:** this is the only full length message of Paul in Scripture. It gives a panoramic view of history, of God's glorious plan for man.

1. Paul and Barnabas entered Antioch of Pisidia (v.14-16).

2. God has been working throughout all history: He suffered and bore with the ways of Israel (and of the world) (v.17-22).

3. God has consummated history: He has given the world a Savior, Jesus (v.23-41).

1. (13:14-16) Missions— Evangelism: Paul and Barnabas entered Antioch of Pisidia. The facts are stated very simply.

1. The two ministers entered the synagogue on the Sabbath (Saturday). This was the method of evangelism adopted by Paul (see Deeper Study #1—Acts 13:46-47 for more discussion). Paul knew something: the faithful among the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles would be there. He and Barnabas would have a ready-made audience, so they grasped the opportunity.

Thought 1. Note how deeply Paul and Barnabas were committed to their call and mission. They were consumed with making Christ known and with meeting the desperate needs of men for life. They existed for this very purpose and for this purpose alone. Note the scene: they entered a city and grasped the opportunity that was available to share Christ.

Thought 2. The method of evangelism must always be to go where people are.

2. As strangers, they were invited to speak. This was the common practice of synagogues, to invite visitors to share a word of exhortation if they wished. Remember: Paul was a rabbi, so an invitation to speak would naturally be extended to him. (See Deeper Study #2, Synagogue—Matthew 4:23.)

3. Paul took the lead, addressing the Jews and the Gentiles who feared God. The people sitting before Paul would be the Jews who were faithful to their Old Testament Scriptures and the Gentiles who...

- had become sick of the immoral and wicked society and religion of their day.
- had seen some truth in the Jewish Scriptures and worship of one God.

Thought 1. Note: since Paul had been in Paphos, the capital of the island Cyprus, he had been taking the lead instead of Barnabas. He would continue to be the leader, the apostle to the Gentiles. Just imagine the character of Barnabas, the strength and humility of his love and trust in the Lord. When he saw the Lord moving Paul ahead in leadership, Barnabas willingly encouraged the move and fully supported Paul in his ministry. What a

rebuke to so many who allow jealousy and envy to enter their hearts against others who are moved ahead. We must serve where God has placed us, serve in love, supporting and pushing others ahead. (Cp. Phil. 2:3-4.)

DEEPER STUDY #1 (13:14) Antioch of Pisidia or Pisidian Antioch

2. (13:17-22) **Israel, History of— God, Plan— History, Overall View:** God has been working throughout all history. He suffered and bore with the ways of Israel and of the world (cp. Acts 13:18). The message preached by Stephen just about covers the same points Paul proclaimed. It is helpful to look at Stephen's message for development of Paul's points (see outline—' Acts 7:1-53 and notes—' Acts 7:1-53). Note how Paul's emphasis was God Himself...

- God working with man throughout all of history.
- God working with man through the nation of Israel.

The thrust of Paul's message (Acts 13:18) was that God had suffered and put up with the behavior of man from the very beginning. The words "suffered he their manners" (etropophoresen) mean...

- that God has suffered and put up with man's behavior.
- that God has borne and nourished man along just as a loving and caring father (cp. Deut. 1:31).

Note the emphasis again: it is upon God Himself and how He has borne and suffered with man all through history.

1. God chose Israel (see outline—' Acts 7:2-8 and note—' Acts 7:2-8 for discussion).
2. God delivered Israel. They had stayed in Egypt too long, becoming complacent and worldly, perfectly satisfied with the pleasures of Egypt. In fact, they stayed so long that an evil Pharaoh arose who enslaved them. But God loved and cared and delivered them (Exodus 6:1, 6. See outline—' Acts 7:17-29 and notes—' Acts 7:17-29.)
3. God *put up* and suffered with Israel through the wilderness. God gave Israel glorious provision, the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22) and manna for food (Exodus 16:15, 33-35). Yet they grumbled and murmured and rebelled against Him. But He still "suffered" and put up with them, nourishing them right along (Deut. 1:31. See outline—' Acts 7:30-41 and notes—' Acts 7:30-41.)
4. God led Israel to conquer Canaan. He constantly protected them, leading and guiding them to victory after victory despite their lack of trust and constant disobedience (Deut. 17:1; Deut. 20:17. Cp. Numbers 13:26-33 for an example of Israel's distrust in taking the land. Cp. Acts 7:5-6 for God's promise that He would give the land to Israel.)
5. God gave Israel judges. Once the land was conquered, Israel slipped into complacency, selfishness, and sin, forgetting God and His call. Nations marched against Israel. But despite Israel's sin, God heard the cry of the faithful few and raised up deliverers called judges (see The Book of Judges).

6. God gave Israel a man who was not only a judge, but the first of the great prophets, Samuel (cp. 1 Samuel 7:6, 15-17; 1 Samuel 3:20; Acts 3:24; Acts 13:20). Yet Israel was dissatisfied with God's choice and leadership. They looked at the world and desired what the world had—a king.

7. God gave Israel a king *of their own choosing*, a man named Saul. Saul was everything that men would choose, a very physical man who stood head and shoulders above everyone else (1 Samuel 9:1-2, 16; 1 Samuel 10:17-25).

8. God raised up a special king of His own choosing. Man's (Israel's) choice failed: Saul mismanaged God's will and the government that God wanted established. God removed him and set His own choice upon the throne, a man named David. (See Deeper Study #2—Acts 13:22-23 for discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY #2 (13:22-23) David— Jesus Christ, Davidic Heir

3. (13:23-41) Jesus Christ, Savior— History, Pivotal Point: God has consummated history. He has given the Messiah to the world—given the Savior Jesus Christ. Note that Paul...

- had reached the point toward which he had been moving.
- had reached the consummation of history.
- had reached the point when God *sent* the Savior Jesus Christ into the world.

Paul launched right into his major thrust: the Savior is Jesus. The name Jesus is significant to the Jews. It means Savior, God will save. The Hebrew form is Joshua (yasha), which means Jehovah is salvation; He is the Savior. The idea is that of deliverance, of being saved from some terrible disaster that leads to perishing (cp. John 3:16; Romans 8:3; Galatians 1:4; Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 7:25).

From this point on the sermon Peter preached on the day of Pentecost should be read. Paul's points are about the same as Peter's (see outline—' Acts 2:14-24; note—' Acts 2:14-24; outline—' Acts 2:25-36; and note—' Acts 2:25-36). Paul's message about Jesus Christ includes seven points.

1. The Savior was proclaimed by a forerunner, John the Baptist (Acts 13:24-25). The world was not caught off guard. God prepared the world for the coming of the Savior (see Deeper Study #1—Galatians 4:4). He sent John the Baptist, the forerunner, to proclaim...

- the baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

- the coming of the Savior, of Him whose shoes John was not worthy to loose (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7; John 1:19f).

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:10).

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 57:15).

2. The Savior is "the word of salvation" being proclaimed to you (Acts 13:26). Salvation means deliverance from both the power and penalty of sin, death, and judgment. Paul declared that Jesus is "the word of salvation." He Himself is the salvation of man, the salvation which God sent to man (cp. Acts 13:23).

a. Jesus is the One whom "God raised from the dead" (Acts 13:30-33).

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

b. Jesus is God's Son, the One begotten of God (Acts 13:33).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

c. Jesus is the "Holy One" who did not suffer corruption (Acts 13:35, 37).

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11; cp. 1 Cor. 15:12-19).

d. Through Jesus is "the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephes. 1:7).

e. By Jesus "all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

3. The Savior was rejected and crucified (Acts 13:27-28). The outline above with the following notes covers this point adequately (see outlines—' Acts 2:23 and Deeper Study #2—Acts 2:23; Deeper Study #3—Acts 2:23; Deeper Study #1—Acts 3:13; and note—' Acts 3:13-15).

4. The Savior was raised from the dead by God (Acts 13:31-37). (See outline—' Acts 2:24 and Deeper Study #4—Acts 2:24 for discussion.)

- a. There was the proof of eyewitnesses and of close associates who could not be deceived or mistaken (see Deeper Study #1—Acts 1:3 for discussion).
- b. There was the purpose of Jesus' resurrection, the glad tidings of resurrection and incorruption for believers. God's promise has been fulfilled (Acts 13:32-37). Believers shall be raised from the dead just as Christ was.

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" (Psalm 49:15).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25; cp. John 6:40).

5. The Savior forgives sins (Acts 13:38). The only Person who can forgive sins...

- is He who died for sins in order to gain the right to forgive (John 1:29).
- is He who arose and is *now* living.
- is He who is living for the *purpose* of forgiving sins.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).

6. The Savior justifies all who believe, justifies apart from the law

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Galatians 3:6).

7. The Savior brings judgment upon men. Since He has come, men must beware lest what the prophet declared come upon them (Habakkuk 1:5).

⇒ They can be "despisers" (*kataphronētai* ^{PWS. 990}): to look down upon; think lightly of; act against.

⇒ They can wonder and perish: the idea is that a man can perish wondering if Jesus is truly the Savior and if the Word preached is true (Acts 13:38-39).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(13:14) **Antioch of Pisidia or Pisidian Antioch**: the city is called Antioch of Pisidia to distinguish it from Antioch of Syria, the home base of Paul and Barnabas. (See Introductory Notes, Special Features—Galatians for more discussion. Also see Maps of Paul's Journeys).

⇒ The city sat on a high plain about 3600 feet above sea level. It was a cultural and commercial center, by far the most important city of GALATIA (modern day Turkey).

⇒ The city was a city of Asia Minor founded around 300 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator, the founder of the Seleucid empire, named after his father Antiochus.

⇒ The city was made a free city by Rome in 25 B.C. and made a part of the rough province of GALATIA.

⇒ The city was made the military center of the district by Rome to control the surrounding wild tribes of native people.

⇒ the purpose of business and culture.

⇒ The city was a great commercial city, the most important trade city in GALATIA. The major commercial route between the west and Ephesus and the Cilician cities (Syria) ran right through Antioch.

A church was established in Antioch of Pisidia, but with great difficulty. Many of the Gentiles received the Word of God, but the Jews rejected Christ, stirring up influential women in particular to arouse the city officials against Paul and Barnabas. The two servants of God were forced to leave the city under attack. (See outline—Acts 13:42-52 and notes—Acts 13:42-52.) The strict Jews, the vicious Judaizers from Antioch of Pisidia and later Iconium, opposed Paul so strongly that they began following and arousing the people throughout GALATIA against him. They even led people to attack and stone him (Acts 14:19). But Paul and Barnabas remained faithful and many were reached for Christ. Churches were established and a strong witness was firmly rooted throughout GALATIA (cp. Acts 14:21-22). Note: the church...

- was founded by Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:14f).
- was revisited by Paul on his return journey to root them more deeply in the Lord (Acts 14:21-22).
- was apparently visited by Paul on his second and third missionary journeys (Acts 16:6; Acts 18:23).
- was one of the churches to whom Paul wrote The Book of Galatians.

DEEPER STUDY #2

(13:22-23) **David— Jesus Christ, Davidic Heir:** God is the One who "raised up" David to be King of Israel (1 Samuel 16:12-13). Note several points.

1. God "found David." The picture is that of God seeking a man to fill the gap. God sought throughout Israel for a man who would obey and fulfill His will (Psalms 89:20).
2. The man needed was a man who had a heart set on God and His will alone: "a man after God's own heart," a man who would seek to fulfill all God's will (1 Samuel 13:14; Psalms 40:8; Isaiah 44:28).
3. The choice of God was divine. Note:
 - ⇒ The divine choice: God provides the man.
 - ⇒ The divine heart: a man after God's "own heart."
 - ⇒ The divine behavior or obedience: a man who will fulfill "all God's will."

All of this, of course, points toward Christ. David was a type of Christ. God "gave testimony," that is, God made a covenant ([Acts 13:22](#)) and promised David that He would send a Savior to Israel and the world, a Savior that would come through his seed ([Acts 13:23](#). See notes—' [Luke 3:24-31](#); note—' [John 1:45](#); [Deeper Study #3—John 1:45](#); and [Deeper Study #4—John 1:49](#). Cp. [Romans 1:3](#).) It was the seed of God's King, the promised Savior, that Paul began to proclaim.

Thought 1. Note how God is still the One who is working and suffering and bearing with man, reaching out to save and deliver all who will be saved.

DEEPER STUDY #3

([13:32-37](#)) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection of:** the purpose of Jesus' resurrection is incorruption, that is, He arose to make it possible for man to escape the corruption of death. Long before Jesus ever came, God foretold that He would send the Savior into the world and that the Savior would not be allowed to see corruption. Paul declared:

"God hath fulfilled the same [promises] unto us...in that he hath raised up Jesus again" ([Acts 13:33](#)).

Paul covers three prophecies in particular.

1. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" ([Acts 13:33](#); [Psalm 2:7](#); cp. [Hebrews 1:5](#); [Hebrews 5:5](#)). The resurrection of Christ is proof that Jesus is the Son of God ([Romans 1:4](#)).

2. "I will give you the sure mercies of David" ([Acts 13:34](#); [Isaiah 55:3](#)). The sure mercies of David refer to the promises and the everlasting covenant given to David (see note—' [Luke 3:24-31](#) for a discussion of the Davidic promises). Paul was declaring that the resurrection of Christ fulfilled and sealed these promises.

3. "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" ([Acts 13:35](#); [Psalm 16:10](#)). Paul was saying that David died and was buried and left in the grave. He saw corruption ([Acts 13:36](#)). Therefore, the prophecy could not be referring to him. But there was a Person whom God raised from the dead: Jesus Christ. He saw no corruption; therefore, the prophecy refers to Him. He is the Son of God ([Acts 13:33](#)), the Holy One ([Acts 13:35](#)), the Savior ([Acts 13:23](#)). (See outline—' [Acts 2:25-28](#); notes—' [Acts 2:25-28](#); outline—' [Acts 2:29-31](#); and note—' [Acts 2:29-31](#) for discussion. See [Deeper Study #4, Corruption—Acts 13:32-37](#).)

DEEPER STUDY #4

([13:32-37](#)) **Corruption** (*diaphthoran* ^{PWS: 807}): to decay, deteriorate, perish. In no place does Christ promise a new body to the unbeliever, to the unsaved and lost. A person's body and flesh can be destroyed forever. The unsaved die without any hope of ever receiving a new and glorified body that lives forever. (This is a fact seldom pointed out.)

Antioch of Pisidia, the Main City of South GALATIA (Part II): Various Responses to the Gospel, [13:42-52](#)

([13:42-52](#)) **Introduction:** this passage is an eye-opener, very informative in picturing how people respond to the gospel. It shows exactly what the witnessing believer can expect as he proclaims Jesus to a lost and needful world.

1. The people's response to the gospel (v.42-45).

2. The preacher's response to the people (v.46-52).

1. (13:42-45) Gospel, Response to: the people's response to the gospel was fourfold.

1. Some non-religionists (Gentiles) desired to hear more. The non-religionists were Gentiles. They were heathen men and women who had become sick of the immoralities and injustices of their society. And their *empty religions* had left them empty. In their hunger for something more they were attracted by the Jew's morality and worship of One Supreme Being. Therefore, they sometimes attended Jewish services. However, they understood little about the Scripture. This is the point of what happened now. They had understood little about what Paul had preached. Their childhood had not included the teaching of Scripture.

⇒ Their friends and neighbors knew little if anything about the Scripture.

⇒ Their religions had taught little of the truth about God.

⇒ Their environment and society were anything but godly.

But their hearts had been touched by the gospel. The Holy Spirit was working within them, stirring them to crave...

- forgiveness of sins (Acts 13:38).
- justification from all things (Acts 13:39).

Note the word "besought" (*parekaloun* ^{PWS: 361}). It is continuous action: the heathen continued to beseech. The picture is that they begged and begged Paul to share more about the forgiveness of sins which is in Jesus.

Thought 1. Note two significant points.

1) There are many who are ignorant of the Scriptures, who know little about what we preach. They did not have Christian parents nor have they ever been exposed to genuine Christian believers. They just have never had the opportunity and exposure to the gospel that some of us have had. Because of this, their hearts are fertile and soft to the gospel. When they hear the truth, the Holy Spirit is able to convict and convert them much more easily than He is a *gospel-hardened* heart.

2) This is great encouragement to the witnessing believer. It should challenge every one of us to get to the task, for the world is full of such people. They may be steeped in religion, but they are ignorant of the truth about Christ. They are soft and ready to respond, to hear more and more of the glorious truth that Jesus saves, forgives, and justifies (Acts 13:23, 38, 39).

"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh"
(Luke 6:21).

"My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42:2).

"I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments" (Psalm 119:131).

2. Some who were hungry for God desired to hear more immediately. These were mainly proselytes, heathen Gentiles who had become so impressed with Judaism they had actually become converts to the Jewish religion. Many of these and many of the Jews (genuine religionists) followed Paul and Barnabas from the preaching service. They could not wait until next week. They were too convicted, too drawn to Christ and the hope of forgiveness. They had to hear more right then.

a. Note the word "many." The worship service was filled with many who were familiar with the Scripture. They had sought God by studying the Scripture. Therefore when Paul preached the truth of Christ, the Holy Spirit took their hearts and drew them to Christ. Their hearts which hungered to know the truth hungered to hear more, to hear that Jesus is the Savior...

- the One whom God raised from the dead (Acts 13:30).
- the One who fulfilled prophecy (Acts 13:33-37).
- the One who forgives sins (Acts 13:38).
- the One who justifies from all things (Acts 13:39).

Thought 1. The truth of Christ and the Scripture should always be the message preached and the lesson taught. God has naturally put within man a hunger to know the truth, a craving to know Him. Within every congregation there are those who have sought God and have read and studied the Scripture day and night. They have also sought Him in their churches and synagogues and temples. Their hearts are eagerly ready to receive the truth of Christ and the Scripture. But note what is needed: a believer who lives and preaches and teaches as Paul, a believer...

- who prays much.
- who studies the Scripture much.
- who diligently seeks to live righteously.
- who preaches Jesus the Savior.

b. Note that Paul persuaded them to "continue in the grace of God." While Paul preached, they apparently made a decision to trust Christ for forgiveness and justification (Acts 13:38-39). They were seeing for the first time how Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promises. They were hungering to know more and more. They could not wait until the next week. They followed the preacher then and there. They wanted to learn more immediately. The picture is that of urgency, hunger, and thirst after the truth. Paul strongly exhorted them to continue in "the grace of God."

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

3. Some who never attended came to hear the Word of God (Acts 13:44). They came to the worship service on the next Sabbath. What brought them?

⇒ The natural hunger within the human heart for God and the truth.

⇒ The news being spread abroad about the preaching of the truth.

⇒ The faithful work and witnessing of Paul and Barnabas and the other Christian believers throughout the week.

Thought 1. How may churches would be filled with people desiring to hear the Word of God...

- if we preached the truth like we should?
- if we were witnessing and leading our people to witness as we should?

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (2 Cor. 4:13).

4. Some rejected and opposed. There were three primary reasons for their rejection and opposition (Acts 13:45).

a. They were filled with envy toward the people who were coming. The place was filling up with people...

- who were different.
- who were thought unclean and dirty.
- who were sinful and unjust and derelict.
- who were *outsiders* to the regular congregation.
- who usually did not attend or show interest in attending and therefore did not support the permanent priests and their ministry.

b. They were filled with envy toward the preachers, Paul and Barnabas. The preachers were preaching a message that was meeting the needs of the people and the people were flocking to them. The regular priests and teachers (*rabbis*) were jealous of their success, for the people did not support their ministries like they were supporting Paul and Barnabas.

c. They opposed "those things," both what Paul was doing and teaching. They opposed both his ministry and the doctrine and teachings of Paul. They actually spoke against the truth, contradicting what Scripture proclaimed. They even blasphemed the name of Christ.

Thought 1. Note the seriousness of opposition against the message of Scripture and the ministry of the Lord's servants.

Thought 2. The servant of the Lord can expect rejection and opposition just as he can expect openness and reception to the gospel.

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (John 15:20).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).

2. (13:46-52) Ministers, Response to Persecutors: the preachers' response to the people was fourfold.

1. The preachers rejected the rejecters of the gospel. It is important to note why the rejecters were rejected.
 - a. The Word of God had been clearly proclaimed to them. They had received every opportunity.
 - b. They had pushed the Word away. They vigorously and strongly reacted; they rejected the Word.
 - c. They judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life. It was not God who counted them unworthy. God actually counted them worthy. He had the gospel taken to them. It was they who condemned themselves; they who brought judgment upon themselves.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).

Thought 1. The disciples of the Lord were instructed to turn away from rejecters (Luke 10:10-16). The fields are white unto harvest. There are too many who will open their hearts and homes to the Lord to waste precious time on those who are so evil that they contradict and blaspheme Christ.

"Then said he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy" (Matthew 22:8).

2. The preachers turned to willing hearers. Note several significant points.
 - a. Christ is the One whom God has *set*, *fixed*, and *purposed* to be...
 - "the light of the Gentiles."
 - "the salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6; cp. Luke 2:32).

Christ is to be proclaimed to the Gentiles, to the whole world. Therefore Paul declared loudly that he and Barnabas were obeying God's will; they were turning to those who would readily receive the glorious gospel of salvation.

- b. The Gentiles (the heathen) rejoiced and glorified the Word of the Lord. Note the reason: salvation—they were to be saved. They experienced the thrill of being saved, of coming to know Jesus personally and receiving the assurance of life eternal.
- c. Some were ordained to eternal life and believed

d. Both the preachers and the new believers were faithful to God's calling. They published (*diephereto*^{PWS: 3084}), that is, spread abroad and proclaimed the Word throughout all the region. The new believers became faithful witnesses immediately.

3. The preachers were persecuted and forcibly expelled from the city and surrounding areas. Religious leaders stirred up some prominent women (honorable) who were also very devout or religious. Apparently the women were either wives of city officials or prominent in society and business. In either case they had enough influence to turn the city officials against Paul and Barnabas. The preachers were persecuted rather severely. Paul referred to this later when writing Timothy.

"But thou hast fully known my...persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me" (2 Tim. 3:10-11).

4. The preachers dramatically turned away from the rejecters. This was exactly what Christ had said to do when people rejected the gospel. It was a symbol that people were unworthy of the gospel because of their obstinacy, their continued rejection and hostility to the gospel.

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet" (Matthew 10:14).

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Mark 6:11).

"And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them" (Luke 9:5).

5. The preachers were sustained by God, filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit—despite terrible rejection and persecution.

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim. 4:18).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(13:46-47) **Paul, Method:** this is a very significant passage. Paul emphatically stated that he was turning from the Jews to the Gentiles *in this particular city*. The significance is this: Paul's *method of evangelism* was to do exactly what Christ said, to go the Jews first, then to the Gentiles.

"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you" (Acts 13:46).

Note Peter's words: **Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25-26).**

This is the reason Paul adopted the method of going into the synagogues first. (See note—Acts 13:14-16 for more discussion.) Christ had commanded that the Jews be the first to hear the gospel. If they rejected, Paul then turned away and preached to the public or world at large, that is, to the Gentiles.

Note: Paul said the Lord commanded the preachers to adopt this method (Acts 13:47).

DEEPER STUDY #2

(13:48) **Predestination**: this verse shows both God's part and man's part in salvation. Jesus Himself had said:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

The man who comes to Christ is a person who has been drawn *by God*, a person who has experienced the *divine initiative*. A man does not act alone and come to Christ by his own effort and energy, not by his own works, whether mental (thought or will, John 1:13) or labor (good deeds, Ephes. 2:8-9). A man is a dead spirit; therefore, he can do nothing spiritually just as a dead body can do nothing physically. The natural man prefers self and sin; therefore, if a man with a dead spirit is to come to Christ, he has to be acted upon and drawn by God. Both God and man have a part in salvation.

⇒ God's part is to draw men.

⇒ Man's part is to believe.

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