

Circle Group Questions from Acts 13:1-52

Ice-breaker: Please describe a visit to a different culture and describe what you did to fit in and not disrespect yourself or the guests.

Fun Facts:

- 1st Missionary Journey is described in Acts 13-14
- The focus of the ministry described in the earlier chapters of Acts begins to shift away from the Jews and toward the Gentiles
- The last reference to the name of Saul (later known as Paul) was made in Acts 13:9

Preparation Undertaken Before Proclaiming God's Word 13:1-5

Read: Acts 13:1-5

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 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." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

4 The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. 5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

1. From this passage, what could you deduce about the status and activities of the church in Antioch?
2. How did they prepare themselves for hearing from the Holy Spirit? What can we do to be open to hearing from the Holy Spirit in our lives and circumstance?
3. How do you think the Holy Spirit spoke to the congregation? (i.e. verbal, dream, etc.) If the Holy Spirit were to speak today, what elements and emphasis would you expect to be present?
4. What do you believe is the significance of the “laying on of hands” for those who are sending people into service? (Numbers 27:23; 2 Timothy 1:6)
5. What is the significance of being sent forth by the Holy Spirit? (13:2)
6. What appears to be John Mark’s main focus of work during the missionary journey? What are the values of being helpers in the ministry?

Opposition to the Proclaiming of God’s Word 13:6-13

Read: Acts 13:6-13

They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, 7 who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. 9

Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, 10 “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? 11 Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun.” Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. 12 When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord. 13 From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem.

7. Why do you think Sergius Paulas was interested in “hearing the Word of God”?
8. What are some things you can provide which may raise “interests” in others to get them to investigate more of the Word of God?
9. What influence do you think Bar-Jesus (Elymas) may have had on Sergius Paulas? Why would Paul intervene in this relationship and call out Bar-Jesus? How can our choice of friends affect our relationship with Jesus? (Prov 12:26)
10. What kind of things do you think will turn people away from wanting to “hear more of the Word of God?”
11. Please describe some things John would encounter during the journey which would lead him toward leaving the missionary team and traveling back to Jerusalem? (Acts 15:36-41)

Methodology Used for Proclaiming of God's Word 13:14-52

Quick Summary of Acts 13:14-52:

On the sabbath day, they went into the synagogue, sat down, listened to the reading of the law and prophets. When asked to speak, Paul provided a basic Jewish history about how God had worked amongst their nation through the time of King David.

Paul transitioned from the promises given to David and described how they were fulfilled in Jesus. The focus of Paul's words was on God who raised Jesus from the dead (see Acts 13:32-33 & Psalm 2:7) and that there would be no corruption to the body of Christ. (see Acts 13:34-37 & Psalm 16:10) Lastly, Paul stated that Jesus was preached for the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, which could not be justified by the Law of Moses. (see Acts 13: 38-39)

12. What was the purpose/benefit of following the decorum of the day in the Jewish synagogue? Describe some benefits Paul received as a result of following the customs of the day? (Acts 13:14-15, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Read: Acts 13:42-52

13. What was the reaction of the people and the Jews to Paul discussing the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?
14. Why do you believe Paul and Barnabus did not spend much time arguing with the Jews regarding Jesus' resurrection and the proclamation of the Gospel? (Acts 13:46-47)
15. When we are sharing the gospel with others, please describe any benefits of not engaging in arguments for the sake of arguing.

16. Why do you think the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit even though they were driven out of town? (Acts 13: 49-52) When we are faced with opposition and roadblocks, what should be our reaction?