



A *rise* Ω

reaching all people

LIFE
GROUPS

WEEK 25 • AUG 3

NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

Name an overseas destination where you have gone that wasn't just a vacation.

BACKGROUND

Acts 13:1-52—Get Out Your Bible Maps!

"Every disciple needs to travel!" explained our young Campus Crusade for Christ staff leader. We were juniors and seniors in high school, and he was taking us to help train other students in the far-away cities of Yakima, WA and Portland, OR. As we shared our testimonies of what we had learned about following Jesus, we experienced the power and excitement of seeing the movement of Jesus expand. Every disciple needs to share what they have gained in Christ. When we come to Acts 13, we see the Good News of Jesus expanding across the Mediterranean world. We see disciples making disciples as they overcome struggles, endure hardship, and share the adventure of presenting the Gospel to people who had never heard.

As Acts 13 opens, we see the church being scattered by persecution. Paul and Barnabas have made their way north to Antioch in Syria with their disciple John Mark. They will soon be sent across the sea to win, build and send more disciples of Jesus to the nations.

Read Acts 13. As we read the chapter, consider the places on a world map where God sent Paul and Barnabas to represent his Kingdom.

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Acts 13:2

While they were worshipping and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

READ: Acts 13:1-52



HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. In verses 1-3, the Spirit influences men who are seeking God's guidance through prayer and fasting. Luke introduces the prayer team according to their geographical and social connections. In what ways are these men already empowered to go to the nations?
2. Reread verse 4: Crossing the Sea. Who sent the mission team across the sea?

In Jewish scriptures, the sea is often depicted as a place of chaos. From the Spirit Who hovered over the great deep of creation, to the seas that covered all but Noah's Ark, to the storms on the Sea of Galilee, the Jews uniformly sought to avoid the open waters.

Remember the reluctant, disobedient prophet Jonah who set sail on the Mediterranean to rebel against God's missionary call. Unlike Paul, he was running away from the Lord's plan for his life. Paul, on the other hand, is setting out upon the sea in answer to God's call. In future journeys, like Jonah he also will encounter a great storm. Like Jonah, he will bring great glory to the One True God to the sailors on the ship. Like Jonah, God uses Paul to bring about great repentance. In Jonah's day, Nineveh was saved; in Paul's day, many cities received the Word of the Lord. Reread verses 4 -12.

3. What do we learn about the boldness of Paul?
4. What do you notice about the power of God expressed through Paul?

Everybody's got two names: Saul\Paul, John\Mark, Bar-Jesus\Elymas, Sergius\Paulus. Names in the Bible often reveal the authority of the Person who gives the name. In Paul's case, his new name gives testimony to the power of Jesus to convert him to faith. Elymas' false name claims him to be a son of Jesus. How does Paul take authority over this bad man?

5. How would you compare the blindness of Saul on the Road to Damascus, to the blindness inflicted upon Elymas, the sorcerer? In what ways does God reveal Himself through these power encounters with Saul and with Elymas?
6. In what ways does the Lord's power lead the proconsul to repentance?




HEART LEVEL: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God's word.*

Reread verses 13-45 Paul Preaches the Gospel

1. How does Paul use Jewish history to introduce Jesus to his hearers at Pisidian Antioch?
2. How does Paul use the prophecies of Psalm 2 and Psalm 16 to point Jewish and Gentile listeners to the Good News about the resurrection of Jesus?
3. How does Paul wrap up his message?


Reread verses 46-52 The Response to Paul's Message

4. What responses do we see among the people to Paul's message?
5. What do the people's responses to Paul's message reveal about their heart motivations? To what extent do they desire to surrender to the truth or cling to personal power?
6. How do Paul and Barnabas respond? To what extent does this display Spirit-filled courage?

 **HANDS LEVEL:** *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

Compare verses 1-3 to verse 52: The story ends where it began:

1. . . . [t]he Holy Spirit said, “set apart Barnabas and Saul to the work to which I have called them”. . . All the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. What kind of joy can we experience as we listen to the Spirit and obey His promptings?
2. In what ways is Holy Spirit moving upon you to venture forth on God’s mission to bring saving grace to the lost? Can you chart his calling on a map? A map of your office? Of your neighborhood? Of an unreached people group?

 **MEMORY VERSE:** Acts 13:52
And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)