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GOOD NEWS FOR JEW AND GENTILE

ACTS 13



Luke now comes to a turning point in his story. Here we are at the start of an extraordinary triple journey which will take Paul across Turkey and Greece and back again, then again once more, and finally off to Rome! We would much prefer the story to be one of gentle persuasion rather than confrontation. We may like it better if Paul had gone about telling people the simple message of Jesus and finding that they were happy to accept it and live by it. But there is no advance for the gospel without opposition. Christian mission is about radical transformation of life, something which was already happening all over the place in the early chapters of Acts.

THE GOSPEL IN CYPRUS (13:1-12)

1. Read Acts 13:1-3. How would you characterize the church at Antioch?
2. When Paul and his companions met the magician on Cyprus, what are some of the ways they could have responded? How does Paul respond and what are the results?
3. While we're not all facing the kinds of situations Paul and Barnabas were, we do encounter modern skeptics and supernatural beliefs and practices that are not biblical. What should the Christian's response be to these competing worldviews?

IN PISIDIAN ANTIOCH (13:13-43)

Having left Antioch in Syria, Paul and Barnabas now arrive in a different Antioch—Pisidia in southern Turkey. The almost instant fellowship of Jewish people around the world and the acceptance of visitors to public worship provided a natural opportunity for Paul to announce his good news.

4. In verses 16-25, how does Paul stress with these Jews the continuity of the story of Israel with the coming of Jesus?
5. In verses 38-39, how do the promises Paul mentions apply to both Israel and other ethnic and cultural groups?

“AS MANY AS WERE APPOINTED” (13:44-52)

6. Read Acts 13:44-52. Why are some of the Jewish leaders filled with righteous indignation, and why are the Gentiles thrilled¹?
7. Why might our church resist including other groups that haven't been a part of our fellowship before?
8. What can we do to increase a spirit of openness?

¹Repeatedly in Acts we see that God's grace plays the crucial role in the advance of the gospel, as even repentance and faith are gifts from God. When the Gentiles hear the gospel, “as many as were appointed to eternal life believed” (13:48). Faith in Christ comes as the result of **GOD'S GRACIOUS INITIATIVE**, and even belief in the gospel is a gift of God's grace (See: 14:27).