

Bible Stories for Adults

Paul's First Missionary Journey

Acts 11-14

Opening

- Gathering: Why would someone share the gospel in the face of rejection and threats to life?
- Today's Focus: God spent years preparing Saul & Barnabas to take His gospel to the world, then sent them.
- Key Verses: *Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.* Acts 13:2
Since you...do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.
Acts 13:46

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Persecutor to Promoter (*Acts 7-9*)

- When is the first we hear of Saul?
Acts 7:54-58
- Was Saul just a bystander to Stephen's stoning or was he involved in any way?
Acts 7:59-8:1a
- How did Saul react to what he had seen from these Jesus followers, and why?
Acts 26:4-5, 9-11
- How was Saul's focus significantly changed?
Acts 26:12-18

- How did Saul respond to this change in plans?
Acts 9:19b-22
- What happened after preaching 3 years in Damascus and the surrounding area?
Acts 9:23-25
- Where did he go and how was he received?
Acts 9:26-28
- Why did he leave after only 15 days?
Acts 9:29-30

God's Church Growth (*Acts 1:8*)

- What was God's plan for this new church?
Acts 1:8
- How well did the early believers respond to this calling?
Acts 5:42
- What did God allow that spread the gospel despite the believers' stationary approach?
Acts 8:1, 4-5, 14, 25

A New Church Center for the Greeks (*Acts 11:19-21*)

- How effective were the believers who had been scattered by the persecution?
Acts 11:19
- Did anyone understand that "God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18)?
Acts 11:20-21

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Help (Acts 11:22-30)

Antioch - 3rd largest city in Roman empire (after Rome and Alexandria), over 500,000 population
Called "Antioch-on-the-Orontes" since on Orontes River, also called Syrian Antioch
Seleucus Nicator established 16 Antiochs around 300 BC in memory of his father
300 miles north of Jerusalem, 20 miles east of Mediterranean Sea, 80 miles from Tarsus

How did the mother church in Jerusalem react when word arrived of Gentile believers?

Acts 11:22-24

What did Barnabas do when he saw that he needed help in this large city?

Acts 11:25-26

Why does this verse say their ministry only lasted a year?

Acts 11:27-30

John - Mark (Acts 12:25)

Who else returned with Barnabas and Saul from Jerusalem to Antioch?

Acts 12:25

How do we see that John-Mark was well acquainted with Peter and the Jerusalem church?

Acts 12:5, 7, 12 (1-19)

Early sources state that Mark recorded the story of Jesus as told by Peter (Gospel of Mark)

What story did Mark record at Jesus' arrest that many believe refers to him?

Mark 14:50-52

Why might Barnabas and Saul have taken John-Mark with them to Antioch?

Colossians 4:10

Antioch Leadership (Acts 13:1-3)

How was the church in Antioch able to operate while Barnabas and Saul were in Jerusalem?

Acts 13:1

Was God satisfied with the ministry these men were doing in Antioch?

Acts 13:2

How did this church respond to God's call for this birth of "foreign missions"?

Acts 13:3

To Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12)

Where did Barnabas and Saul head first?

Acts 13:4

Why might they begin there?

Acts 4:36

Where did these Christian Jews focus their missionary efforts on Cyprus?

Acts 13:5

What non-Jew did God lead them to as they reached the other end of the island?

Acts 13:6-7

What did Bar-Jesus ("son of Jesus") do when this teaching threatened his relationship with S. Paulus?

Acts 13:8

How did Saul respond, playing on his surname, his magical powers and his claim to be a religious light?

Acts 13:9-11

Did this have any effect on Sergius Paulus?

Acts 13:12

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A Different Missionary Group (*Acts 13:13*)

What transition did Luke make in the story we just read that highlighted a new focus to Gentiles?

Acts 13:9a

How did Luke also point out that the leadership of this effort changed from Barnabas to Paul?

Acts 13:13a

Was anyone bothered by this change in leadership?

Acts 13:13b

Was Paul upset by John-Mark leaving?

Acts 15:36-41

Were Paul and Mark ever reconciled?

2 Timothy 4:11

Preaching in Another Antioch (*Acts 13:14-41*)

Where did Paul and Barnabas head for our next story of this journey?

Acts 13:14

Antioch - 110 miles from Perga past Taurus Mountains, 4000 ft elevation

Why did Paul always begin his ministry in a new city by going to the synagogues?

Acts 13:15-16

Luke recorded two examples two examples of Paul's typical sermons - Acts 13 (Jews) and 17 (Greeks)

What components did Paul include in a typical sermon to Jews?

Acts 13:17-22

Acts 13:23-25

Acts 13:26-29

Acts 13:30-31

Acts 13:32-37

Acts 13:38-39

Acts 13:40-41

Responding to the Message (*Acts 13:42-52*)

How did the listeners respond to Paul's sermon?

Acts 13:42-43

Did they still want to hear more the next week, or was their request just excitement of the moment?

Acts 13:44

How did the members of the synagogue feel about this heavy attendance of all sorts of people?

Acts 13:45

How did Paul and Barnabas respond that became typical in other cities they visited?

Acts 13:46-47

Did Paul change his ministry to focus primarily to the Gentiles (non-Jews)?

Romans 1:14-16

How did the Gentiles feel about what Paul said?

Acts 13:48-49

Did the Jews in Antioch just ignore Paul and Barnabas from that time on?

Acts 13:50-52

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Iconium (*Acts 14:1-7*)

How were Paul and Barnabas received in Iconium?

Acts 14:1-3

Was the opposition in Iconium as strong as it had been in Antioch?

Acts 14:4-5

What happened?

Acts 14:6-7

Gods in Lystra (*Acts 14:8-20*)

What kind of faith did Paul and Barnabas find in Lystra?

Acts 14:8-10

Why does verse 9 say "he had faith to be healed"?

Matthew 9:28-29; 13:58

How did the people of Lystra respond to this miracle?

Acts 14:11-13

Lystra legend was that Zeus and Hermes had visited and were recognized only by an old couple

Zeus was the patron god of Lystra and his temple was there

How did Paul and Barnabas react to being called gods?

Acts 14:14-18

How were the people eventually convinced that Paul and Barnabas were not gods?

Acts 14:19-20

Back to Syrian Antioch (*Acts 14:21-28*)

Were Paul and Barnabas effective in Derbe?

Acts 14:21a

Where did Paul and Barnabas go after leaving Derbe?

Acts 14:21b-25

Did they go back through Cyprus?

Acts 14:26

What did they do in Antioch?

Acts 14:27-28

Note: First journey understood to have taken about 2 years, Stayed 2 years before second journey

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. In what ways have I been made effective for God that, in hindsight, took year to prepare me?
(*Acts 13:17-22; Jeremiah 29:10-14; Acts 7:9-10, 14; 1 Cor 2:9; Gal 1:15-2:1; Eph 1:4-10; 2:10*)
2. When have I been impatient for God's timing?
(*Acts 7:22-24, 29-30, 34; Psalm 90:4; Isaiah 30:18; Hab 2:3; Heb 11; 1 Peter 5:6-10; 2 Peter 3:3-9*)
3. When has God's timing been faster than mine?
(*Matthew 24:27, 36-51; 25:1-13; Luke 12:35-40; Prov 6:6-8; Ecc 5:4; Heb 5:11-14; 2 Peter 3:10-13*)
4. What work has God called me to complete?
(*Acts 13:2; Esther 4:14b; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 1:15-16; Ephesians 3:1-9; 4:1, 11-13*)
5. How responsive have I been to God's call to do His work?
(*Acts 13:2-4; Genesis 12:1, 4; Judges 6:11-27, 36-40; Isaiah 6:8; Luke 1:5-22, 26-38*)