

## Living out our faith Pt 16

### Acts 13:1-52

#### V1-12

- One of the great things about the book of Acts is it doesn't have any lulls in it, it's an action book, it's more about doing; and putting one's feet to their faith. True to its theme chapter 13 is going to introduce us to a new set of characters. Peter and the Apostles are going to drift into the background while Barnabas and Paul are going to take center stage as God uses them to take the gospel to far away gentile lands and fulfill Acts 1:8 – to be witnesses to uttermost parts of the world. Verse 1 – we already know from chapter 11 that a church had formed. What we didn't know was that God had brought to them men endowed with particular gifts in order to root them into the truth. There is a distinction concerning prophets and teachers:
  1. Prophet- those under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who guide the church as they speak the heart of God through edification and exhortation.
  2. Teachers- those who ground the church as they explain the ways and mind of God revealed through His Word.
- The focus is now off Jerusalem and on the gentile city called Antioch where five guys are mentioned: Barnabas - the encourager; Simon - who came to Jerusalem to view the Passover and ended up carrying the cross for the Passover Lamb (**Luke 23:26**); Lucius - from the same area as Simon perhaps one of his early converts; Manaen - someone who grew up with the Herods and all their madness yet God saved him out of that mess; and finally Saul - Paul the Apostle.
- A couple of points we must examine if we're to understand what God expects from the local church. As you can see this was a very solid leadership at this church, these were men who not only were hearing from God but also able to communicate what they heard so others may understand to. Verse 2 – they ministered to the Lord, not for the Lord but to the Lord. God calls us unto Himself; His desire is fellowship not robots, yet so many of us are mechanical in our relationship with God. They were sensitive to the leading of the Lord; they were on one accord for the glory of the Lord.
- Verse 3 – those who went were first sent, meaning their calling was recognized by their leaders and those who ministered with them, and when they go they go its with the right hand of fellowship. Make sure that before you sell your home and quit your job that you're waiting on the Lord, ministering to the Lord, and then go not as one who went but as one who is sent. As they go their preaching to whoever would hear and a very prominent man wants to hear their message but a man named Bar-Jesus – a sorcerer withstands them, and sought to persuade Sergius from the truth. Now Paul didn't suffer foolishness and he calls Bar-Jesus out pronouncing judgment upon him. And, fittingly Bar-Jesus who had led so many to spiritual darkness experiences some darkness of his own.

#### V13-22

- A Subtle but important change has occurred in Verse 13, before it was always Barnabas and Saul, now its Paul and his company, he takes the lead. Also we see their assistant Mark has left them abandoning the mission as its gotten a little too intense for him, this would later cause problems between Barnabas and Paul, but it also gives insight as to why Paul was so insistent when it came to ministry telling us in **1 Corinthians 4:1-2** and **2 Timothy 2:1-2**, faithfulness is a prerequisite for ministry.
- Paul would use every opportunity to preach Christ to any who would listen. He knows his audience addressing both Jew and Gentile – God fearers. This is Paul's first recorded sermon and notice how it resembles closely the message he first heard given by Stephen the early martyr. He uses the Jews history to show them how the Messiah would come through the line of David and it

wasn't because of their obedience but in spite of their disobedience Jesus came. He tells them that they are also blind but their blindness was all a part of God's plan for our redemption.

**V23-52**

- He lets them know that John's ministry was in preparation to Jesus just as the scriptures predicted, and rehearses their treachery in their ears. Verses 42 – when the gentiles heard that they could be saved just as the Jews they desired to hear this message again. Folks came from everywhere to hear this message the next week. This is the difference between religion and relationship. Whereas, religion responds to this revival with jealousy and pride, relationship responds with humility – being thankful that they are even able to partake of this move of God. All this was done so that Paul could take the gospel completely to the Gentiles leaving no doubt to what his ministry was and who it was intended for and that God had chosen it for him (Acts 9:16).