**THE HIGH PRIORITY OF EVERY CHURCH**

**AND EVERY CHRISTIAN**

**Acts 13:1-52**

* *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.”*
* **This is the first time Saul’s Roman name Paul is introduced (Acts 13:9), and he would subsequently be referred to as Paul based on his primarily Gentile audience going forward.**
* **Ministry is messy and everyone has an off day, which is why we need to walk with grace towards others**.
* **No matter what persecution and hardships we face, we can always find joy because the Holy Spirit of God resides within us!**

**BIBLICAL CHURCHES SHOULD BE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CHURCHES**

* *“As 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 Then after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off.”* (Acts 13:2-3)
* **The Gospel is the gift given to us that was meant to be shared with the world, yet too many are holding on to the gift of salvation as if reaching the nations doesn’t matter.**
* Jesus - *“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations…”* (Matthew 28:19)
* **When Jesus gave the Great Commission in Matthew 28 He was essentially telling every Christian to “Live sent.”**

**PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IS THE HIGH \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OF EVERY CHRISTIAN**

* *“Arriving in Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues.”* (Acts 13:5)
* *“Then, when he saw what happened, the proconsul believed, because he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.”* (Acts 5:12)
* **The early Christians understood the urgency of the Gospel getting to everyone and we do well to emulate them in that urgency.**
* *“And we ourselves proclaim to you the good news of the promise that was made to our ancestors.”* (Acts 13:32)
* **Contextualization (making the Gospel known in a way appropriate for the context/audience) is important when sharing the unchanging message of the Gospel.**
* *“To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; to those under the law, like one under the law—though I myself am not under the law—to win those under the law. 21 To those who are without the law, like one without the law—though I am not without God’s law but under the law of Christ—to win those without the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some. 23 Now I do all this because of the gospel, so that I may share in the blessings.”* (1 Corinthians 9:20-23)
* *“Therefore, let it be known to you, brothers and sisters, that through this man forgiveness of sins is being proclaimed to you. 39 Everyone who believes is justified through him from everything that you could not be justified from through the law of Moses.”* (Acts 13:38-39)

**SOME WILL REJECT THE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, BUT WE CAN REJOICE AND HAVE JOY FOR THOSE WHO ACCEPT JESUS**

* *“But Elymas the sorcerer (that is the meaning of his name) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith….Then, when he saw what happened, the proconsul believed, because he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.”* (Acts 13:8;12)
* **We can either focus on those who reject truth and become discouraged, or we can rejoice in those who are being saved daily; let’s choose the latter.**
* *“When the Gentiles heard this, they rejoiced and honored the word of the Lord, and all who had been appointed to eternal life believed. 49 The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. 50 But the Jews incited the prominent God-fearing women and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their district. 51 But Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet against them and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.”* (Acts 13:48-52)
* **When one person passes from spiritual death to spiritual life in Christ all of heaven rejoices, and we should as well.**
* *“I tell you, in the same way, there is joy in the presence of God’s angels over one sinner who repents.”* (Luke 15:10)

\*\***CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION ON BACK\*\***

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**ICE-BREAKER:** What is your favorite underdog movie and why?

**START THINKING (Observation):**

* What does Acts 13 teach us about God?
* How does the church in Antioch demonstrate their commitment to making the gospel known to the whole world?
* Who was Sergius Paulus and why was it significant that Paul and Barnabus shared the gospel with him?
* What do we learn about opposition from Acts 13?
* Why is Saul referred to as Paul from this point forward in Acts 13?

**DIGGING DEEPER (Understanding and Application):**

* In what ways might we as a church become more committed to fasting and prayer with a focus on sending out people? (Be specific and have the Connect Group leader share responses with the Leadership Team)
* How has Acts 13 impacted your understanding and commitment to missions and living sent?
* How has Paul’s faithfulness and flexibility in regards to context in evangelism challenged you? (In other words, Paul was willing to make whatever necessary changes to reach all people, even stepping outside his comfort zone.)
* What encouraged you most from these encounters in Acts 13?
* What will you do differently as a result of this message?

**LOVING OUTWARD**

* Who in your life needs to hear the truth of the Gospel? How has this message/text affected and/or inspired you to reach them?
* Who are you inviting to Church next Sunday?