

Revival and Resistance | Acts 13:1-12 | Dave Cover Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

Icebreaker: What is your favorite snow day activity?

Opening

Read overview of Acts 13-17 from Sermon Discussion Packet with your group if you haven't yet.

Otherwise read...

Acts 13-17 hinges on an opening verse of Acts, Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." We will see this promise that Jesus play out in Acts 13-17, as the gospel begins to move to the ends of the earth.

In Acts 1-7, we see the very beginning of the church, with most of the action happening in Jerusalem and led by the apostles. As we move into Acts 8-12, the message about Jesus starts to spread beyond the city into places like Judea and Samaria. A church forms in Antioch and is an important part of early Christian history because it becomes a major center for Gentile (non-Jewish believers) and the launching point for Paul's missionary journeys. When we come to Acts 13, there's a noticeable shift. We see the church begin to move outward, spreading far beyond Judea as the Holy Spirit works through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas.

Discussion

Read:

Acts 13:1-3

¹ Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While 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 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

1. What do you notice about the leaders of this church in Antioch? And, what do you notice about how this mission begins?

THE **crossing** **small groups**

Read:

[Acts 26:17-18 \(Jesus speaking to Paul\)](#)

¹⁷ "I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

2. Dave referenced these verses in Acts 26 where Paul recounts the commission that Jesus gave him at his conversion. What do we learn about what everyone needs from Jesus? How is that different than what we tend to think people need?

Read:

[Acts 13:4-12](#)

⁴ The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

⁶ They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, ⁷ who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. ⁹ Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ¹⁰ "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? ¹¹ Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun."

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. ¹² When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.



3. Why is Bar-Jesus/Elymas a significant danger to the mission and message of the gospel?
4. What do we learn about Sergius Paullus? How is he rescued?
5. How can we make sense of Paul blinding Elymas? Is there any relevance to us?
6. Paul's direct and strong response to Elymas shows the danger of Elymas' influence. In what ways we tolerate false messages even when they affect us or others around us?

Read:

This passage is a summary Paul gives of the message of Christianity. As we read the next passage, listen for how Paul describes our condition and what God does in response.

Ephesians 2:1-5

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But

THE **crossing** **small groups**

because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

7. How would you summarize the message of Christianity based on this passage?
8. If this is really true, then what should this shape the way we live, pray, and view those still in darkness?

Sharing and Prayer:

Think for a moment about people you know stuck in the darkness. Pray together for the people that came to mind that God would open the eyes of their heart that they might turn to Jesus and be rescued from the darkness. Feel free to pray for them without naming specific names if that is helpful.