

“The First Sermon Of The Apostle Paul”

Acts 13:13-39

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Teaching Aim: To explore the invitation and content of Paul’s first recorded sermon. To realize the importance of being ready to share the gospel, even before the opportunity arises. To recognize Paul met his Jewish listeners right where they were at spiritually. To realize Jesus can be found throughout the Old Testament Scriptures if one will simply look. To understand the sinless life, atoning death, burial, resurrection, ascension of Jesus into heaven, and future return are all essential to a person having saving faith.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The desertion of John Mark and the journey to Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:13-18)

1. Where do we find “*Paul and his party*” setting sail from (**vs. 13**)? What do the words, “*Paul and his party*” imply? What was their destination? Perga was a major city in the Roman province of Pamphylia, it was located in Asia Minor. In what modern country was the Roman province of Pamphylia located today? What disturbing news do we find in **verse 13b**? Why do you think John Mark deserted Paul and Barnabas at this time? How would this desertion later affect the relationship between Paul and Barnabas? (See **Acts 15:36-41**) Why do you think Barnabas fought so hard to have John Mark return for their Second Missionary Journey?
2. In **Romans 8:28** we learn, “*...all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*” What good came out of this separation? How do we know that Paul and John Mark’s relationship was restored? (See **2 Timothy 4:11-13**)
3. John Mark is an excellent example of “*failing forward.*” What is meant by, “*failing forward,*” and how can we do so today? What are some of John Mark’s accomplishments in ministry after his initial failure? Have you ever “*failed forward?*” If so, how? Is your life better today for the things that you’ve learned?
4. How is Antioch in Pisidia different from Antioch in Syria (**vs. 14**)? In what modern country would Antioch in Pisidia be located today? Where did Paul and Barnabas go on the Sabbath Day? Why? Were the two men respectful of this Jewish form of worship? If so, how? What did worship in a 1st century Jewish synagogue look like? (See Bible Dictionary) Was it a common practice to invite visiting Jewish rabbis to speak? (See **Luke 4:16-22**)

5. How did Paul respond when invited (**vs. 16**)? Notice: Paul began by reminding them that the Israelites were God's chosen people. (See **Exod. 19:5-6**) What two major events from Israel's history did Paul cover in **verses 17-18**? Who was the Deliverer of the Israelites during these difficult times? How has God delivered you in difficult times?

Part II: Paul's invitation to preach and his summary of key moments in the Hebrew Scriptures (Acts 13:19-25)

1. Today our news media, and even many Christians, talk about Israel as being the land of Palestine, but is this biblically correct? According to the Bible, what was the land called before it became Israel (**vs. 19**)? What seven nations were removed as Israel arrived? (See **Deut. 7:1**) Were the Palestinians included among this list?
2. What major period in Israel's history do we find Paul moving to next (**vs. 20**)? Who was Israel's king during this period of history? (See **1 Sam. 8:19-20; 10:20-24**) In **verse 20**, Paul specifically mentioned *"four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet."* According to your Bible commentaries, how are the four hundred and fifty years broken down?
3. When Israel demanded a king from God, who did He give them (**vs. 21**)? Note: This is the first time in the Bible that we learn King Saul reigned for forty years. King Saul stood head and shoulders above every other man in Israel and was also handsome, he was the kind of king the people were looking for. Was the Lord satisfied with the way King Saul ruled (**vs. 22a**)? What did God do to King Saul? Who did the Lord raise up as his chosen king? Why (**vs. 22b**)? (See **1 Sam. 13:13-14**) How could God say David was *"a man after His own heart"* when he did so many evil things? (See **Psa. 51:3-4**)
4. R.C. Sproul wrote: *"David ushered in the golden age of Israel. He expanded Israel's boundaries from Dan to Beersheba and established the most prosperous period in all of its history. David became a great king – a warrior king, a shepherd king, and a poet king – and was also a prophet through whom God gave a new covenant. The covenant He made with David was the promise that from his seed would come God's Son, who would also be David's Lord and Savior. Paul was preaching his way through redemptive history to David."* Why do you think Paul chose King David to transition into to the Ultimate King and Messiah Jesus Christ?

5. We first see “*the seed*” of the future Messiah being referred to in **Gen. 3:15**. What two parties were battling here? How do we see King David’s seed at work in **2 Sam. 7:12-16**? Why is the illustration of parallel railroad tracks a good illustration for the difference between King Solomon and King Jesus? Are both of these men David’s seed? If so, how? (See **Matt. 1:1-18; Luke 3:23-38**)

6. What major Bible character did Paul use in **verse 24** to point the Jews toward Jesus as the Jewish Messiah? Was John the Baptist well known by the Jews? Is so, why? (See **Matt. 3:1-12**) How was John’s baptism different from that of believer’s baptism today?

7. If you were asked, “*Who was the greatest prophet under the Old Covenant?*” What would your answer be? Moses? Elijah? Elisha? Or would it be somebody else? Who did Jesus say was greatest? (See **Matt. 11:11-15**) For a season, John the Baptist was better known than Jesus. What can we learn about John’s importance compared to Jesus from **verse 25**?

Part III: The Good News of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 13:26-39)

1. What important message did Paul share with the descendants of Abraham in **verse 26**? (See **Gen. 12:2-3**) Did those charged with sharing the good news with others (the Jews) recognize Jesus when He came to earth (**vs. 27**)? Why did they condemn Jesus (**vs. 27b**)? According to Josh McDowell, how many Old Testament prophecies and ramifications were fulfilled during the first advent of Christ? When will the rest be fulfilled?

2. What did the Jewish religious leaders do to Jesus despite the fact that he never sinned (**vs. 28**)? (See **2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5**) **Verse 29** is a clear reference to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. How could the Jews not see Jesus in the Hebrew Scriptures? (See **Psa. 22:16-18; Isa. 53:5; Zech. 12:10; Isa. 6:8-10**)

3. How tragic it would be if Jesus had of remained in the grave. What do we learn from **verse 30**? Why does Christianity stand or fall on the resurrection of Christ? How many people saw Jesus after the resurrection (**vs. 31**)? (See **1 Cor. 15:5-8**) Who were the only unbelievers, if any, to see the resurrected Lord? (See **Matt. 28:3-4**)

4. In essence, Paul says in **verse 32**, *"We declare the Good News that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise that God made to our fathers."* According to **verse 33**, what specifically proved that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and the fulfillment of God's promises? (See **Rom. 1:1-4**) What does the word *"begotten"* mean? What is the meaning of this word when it is used of Jesus? What famous Messianic prophecy (prophecy about the coming Messiah) was quoted by Paul in **verse 33**. What was this famous Psalm about? (See **Psalm 2:7-8**)

5. Several people were raised from the dead in the Bible. What do we learn from **verse 34** about the resurrection of Christ that makes His different from any other? What did God promise in reference to the Messiah (**vs. 35**)? How can we know that David, the writer of this Psalm, was not talking about himself (**vs. 36**)? Can the grave of King David still be visited in Jerusalem today? Who is the only person to die and rise again never seeing corruption (**vs. 37**)? Why did the body of Jesus not decay? What condition causes decay?

6. What can the sinner who believes in Jesus find because of the resurrection (**vs. 38**)? Why is it important for us to explain the bad news of sin to people before sharing the good news of the gospel? How would you share the gospel with someone if you had the opportunity? How can the following three Bible verses help you in getting the message across? (See **Rom. 3:23; 1 Cor. 15:5-6; John 3:16**)

7. What incredible truth do we learn from **verse 39**? What is the meaning of the word *"justification,"* and why is it so important to our salvation? What does the Apostle Paul teach us in **Rom. 3:19-20** about the law? If this is true, what is the purpose behind the law? (See **Gal. 3:24**)

8. John MacArthur writes, *"The atoning death of Jesus completely satisfied the demands of God's law, making forgiveness of all sins available to all who believe. Only the forgiveness Christ offers can free people from their sins."* Explain the importance of the following three aspects of our salvation: 1) Our justification; 2) Our sanctification; and 3) Our glorification.

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- ☐ The desertion of John Mark turned into a magnificent lesson on "*failing forward*."
- ☐ Failing forward means to learn from our mistakes and to become better because of it.
- ☐ When witnessing to people, we need to meet them where they are at spiritually.
- ☐ For the Jew, we need to walk them through the Old Testament Scriptures pointing out the prophesies about Jesus to them.
- ☐ For the unbelieving Gentile, we need to start with General Revelation (meaning creation).
- ☐ King David is the natural transition point for Paul to point the Jews toward King Jesus.
- ☐ Believing in the sinless life, atoning death, burial, resurrection, ascension of Jesus into heaven, and future return are all essential to a person having saving faith.
- ☐ The three aspects of our salvation are: 1) Justification; 2) Sanctification; & 3) Glorification.