

Notes on the First Missionary Journey Acts 13-14

Acts 13:1-3 – Barnabas and Saul called by the Holy Spirit for a new task

Prophets and teachers – more positions in the church? (cf. 12:27, 30)

- Some connect Simeon (Niger) with Simon of Cyrene (Luke 23:26, connecting with Acts 11:20)
- Manaen, a member of the court of Herod the Tetrarch (that is, Antipas), but now a leader in the church!

“The Holy Spirit said...” – to whom and how? – Does the church send (13:3) or does the Holy Spirit send (13:2, 4)? – “the Divine Call”

Acts 13:4-12 – At Cyprus (Home of Barnabas)

From Antioch to Cyprus via Seleucia (Antioch’s port city) – this is Barnabas’s home island (4:36)

First proclaimed the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews (a pattern that will follow)

Paphos – on the southwest corner of Cyprus, the seat of the government

- A magician (*magos*, cf. Simon 8:9ff.), a Jewish (!) false prophet named Bar-Jesus (means, Son of Salvation) – who is “son of the devil” (!) (13:10) making crooked the straight paths (cf. Luke 3:5, Isa. 40)
- Sergius Paulus – proconsul (like a governor) – a man of intelligence and at last a believer (13:12)

John (Mark) (12:12, 25, a cousin of Barnabas, Col. 4:10) is also there (he leaves to go back to Jerusalem in 13:13 which becomes a contentious point in 13:37ff. leading to Paul and Barnabas going in different directions)

Saul magically becomes Paul (13:9) – note this is not a name change at the time of his conversion (Acts 9) – usually explained that Saul is his “Jewish” name and Paul is his Roman name, cf. John Mark

Acts 13:13-52 – In Antioch of Pisidia (Near Paul’s home in Tarsus)

Paul’s sermon in the synagogue is comparable to Peter’s:

- Old Testament preparation for the Messiah (13:16-25)
- The death and resurrection of Jesus (13:26-37)
- Their choice between life and death (13:38-41)

This is the background one should keep in mind when reading the Epistle to the Galatians

The crowd’s reaction is not entirely favorable, nor is it altogether negative. Some invited Paul and Barnabas back to hear more, while others grew jealous. So Paul is ready to turn to a more inviting audience: the Gentiles (Isa. 49:6).

The crowds stir up persecution and kick Paul and Barnabas out of the town, so the pattern begins.

Notes on the First Missionary Journey Acts 13-14

Acts 14:1-7 – In Iconium – Chased out before being mistreated and stoned!

Starting again at Jewish synagogue, successful response from Jews and Greeks

Unbelieving Jews stir up the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas

Paul and Barnabas leave when the Jews, Gentiles and the rulers seek to mistreat and stone them

Acts 14:8-19 – In Lystra – worshipped then stoned!

Paul heals a crippled man who had never walked and the crowds honor Paul and Barnabas as Hermes and Zeus

Amidst language confusion, Paul and Barnabas refuse the sacrifices being offered to them and try to turn the conversation to the one true God

Jews come Antioch and Iconium make their presence known and persuade the crowds to stone Paul and drag him out of the city

Acts 14:20-21a - In Derbe

They preached the gospel and made many disciples

Acts 14:21b-23 – The return from Derbe back to the coast

Then they return the way they went, going through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch

“strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God!”

They also appointed elders (*presbyters*) in every church, committing them all to the Lord

Acts 14:24-28 – The final passage out of Asia Minor

From Pisidian Antioch to Perga and then to Attalia (the port) where they sailed back to Syrian Antioch

Back in Antioch they report on all that God had done with them, and how God opened a door of faith to the Gentiles

What did Paul and Barnabas leave these churches? Apostolic instruction, pastoral oversight, and divine faithfulness.

How do Luke and Paul emphasize the Holy Spirit’s key role in this whole missionary journey?

The Holy Spirit was the one who told the church of Antioch to set Barnabas and Paul apart, who sent them out, who led them from place to place, and who gave power to their preaching, so that converts were made and churches planted. The apostles then entrust these same churches to the Spirit’s care.