

## Acts 13 Bible Study

1. Who is usually involved in the process of someone becoming a Christian?

*Just let this go as a discussion starter – but for later reference: Primarily, God elects and calls the person, but the person usually hears the gospel through at least one Christian, perhaps many, and lastly, the person themselves must believe and repent.*

2. Read Acts 13:1-4. This is the Christian missionaries being sent by a church – so far in Acts, the mission of the gospel has been advanced by Christians fleeing persecution! Who is involved in the first missionaries being sent?

*The Holy Spirit – vv 2, 4; the church – vv 2, 3, and the missionaries themselves!*

3. What was the cost to the church of this missionary work? What model is there for us here?

*The church lost 40% of the key leaders! This surely would have left a big hole in the church. We must always be ready to send out some of our most gifted leaders for the work in other places.*

4. Read Acts 13:5-12. What do you think of what Paul says to Elymas? Is he being “judgemental”??

*It is certainly very harsh! But Elymas “opposed them” and wanted to keep the Proconsul from being saved – these are no trivial matters. Such things are **worthy** of God’s judgement. Paul’s words and actions serve to warn Elymas, but Paul does not himself condemn him, and the blindness was most likely temporary – how Elymas responded after that (eg would he repent?) was up to him.*

5. What was it that convinced the Proconsul to put his faith in Christ? How is this an encouragement to us?

*We can only guess such things - but it is important to realise God doesn't It was not the miracle of Paul making Elymas blind, though no doubt that caught his attention! But Luke writes that he was amazed at Paul's teaching. It was the gospel message that persuaded him (v7, 12), the same message that we can share, without the need to perform miracles!*

6. Read Acts 13:13-41. Summarise below the main points of Paul’s sermon. Which things would you need to emphasise when explaining the gospel to your friends?

*16-20 God’s choice and blessing of the people of Israel and giving them the Promised Land.*

*20b-22 God’s choice of a King (so now God’s people are in God’s place under God’s rule).*

*23-25 Jesus is David’s descendant, Saviour.*

*26-37 Jesus is the fulfiller of God’s promises; even the condemnation by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem served to fulfil*

*God’s purposes. Jesus is now shown to be \* God’s Son (Ps 2:7); \* David’s Successor (Isa 55:3); \*The one who did not see decay and so now lives (Ps 16:10)*

*38-41 So in Jesus forgiveness of sins is now offered; through faith in him we are put right with God, something obedience to the Law could never do; and it means that we must take this message to heart and believe or else God’s judgement awaits us.*

*The sermon was preached to Jews who knew the Old Testament. Many of our friends would know little of this, but to explain the person and work of Jesus and call to believe and repent must always be central to what we say. If some unbelieving friends are familiar with the Old Testament (eg church schooling etc) it might be worthwhile showing how the Old Testament is consistent in pointing to Jesus.*

7. Read Acts 13:42-52. How do you explain the Jews response of first asking the apostles to speak again, but then talking abusively against what Paul said? Have you ever seen any kind of behaviour like this?

*The turning point is their “jealousy” at seeing the crowds – they were happy to hear of Jesus in the boundaries of their religious understanding and lifestyle, but the town (Gentiles) also wanted to hear and were clearly not interested in becoming Jews. They did not want Jesus as an alternative, they did not want to change anything. When they realised the gospel would require **them** to change, they became abusive against it.*

8. Read v48 again and reconsider Q.1. Read also Heb 4:12-13; Rom 1:16-17; 2 Tim 3:16. How should this help shape our prayers and our attitude about unbelieving friends? Pray for those who are on your heart.