

The Apostle Paul – Lesson 9: The First Mission (Cyprus)

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Did we learn our lesson? Study Questions from lesson 8 (Go)

1. According to 1 Corinthians 9:25, what is the nature of the believer's prize?
Answer: To become incorruptable.
2. According to Romans 7:18-19, who is your competitor?
Answer: Yourself (the flesh).
3. According to Hebrews 13:6, who is your helper?
Answer: The Lord, Jesus Christ.
4. According to Acts 11:27-30, why did Barnabas and Saul return to Jerusalem?
Answer: To bring help (provisions from Antioch) in time of famine.
5. Complete the following scripture:
1 Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

True / False

True Saul struggled with his flesh nature. (ROM 13)

False Christ is one of many ways to find God (JOHN 14:6)

True All believers are part of the body of Christ (1COR 12:27)

False Barnabas and Saul were chosen for the mission by the Apostles (ACTS 13:2)

Lesson 9: First Mission (beginning)

Travelling today can be a huge production, as we have accumulated many things and habits (some are good, such as personal hygiene, others are of luxury, such as furniture, and much is distraction, such as television). But that wasn't always the case. In Saul's time, it was common that all of your belongings could be carried at once (poorer – in a sack; middle – on a horse, mule, etc; wealthy – in a cart). But the act of pulling up from all you've known, to go somewhere different, with limited resources and no support, can be a challenging undertaking in any point in history.

We will look at each of Paul's mission trips, starting with the first, to understand the complexity of the act, to know the direction of God, and to take guidance in how God would work on our hearts (you never know – you may have the heart of a mission and not even realize it).

The Route

1. Cyprus (Salamis and Paphos)
2. Perga in Pamphylia
3. Antioch in Pisidia
4. Iconium
5. Lystra
6. Derbe

(the return is the same in reverse)



Acts 13:4-5 – The journey begins

(4) So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

(5) And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to *their* minister.

Saul and Barnabas start their first journey by ship, dependent on trade routes and availability. Typical accommodations include a place to sleep (usually a hammock) and food (Kosher can be difficult when travelling) – That's pretty much it. Often part of the price of travel is to also work on the ship in assisting the deck hands.

The first stop is the city of Salamis on the island of Cyprus.

Note – At this time, Saul is only addressing the Jewish people (those of the promise) in their synagogues – The place to discuss the interpretation of the Word of God (it is there that authority resides), in the hope that those familiar with scripture and prophesy would recognize Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Christ – The Son of God.

The 'John' referenced in Acts 13:5 is John Mark, cousin to Barnabas, and will be referenced later in this trip. John Mark is accompanying Saul and Barnabas as a helper, to tend to the needs of the team.

Acts 13:6-12 – The first obstacle: A false teacher

(6) And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

(7) Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

(8) But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

Barjesus (Elymas: magician, corrupter) – Wickedness in high places

Sorcerer – Known for performing rituals with the intent of using powers of this world

- Magicians (common in this time), performing healings, exorcisms, practicing astrology, possibly having power through Satan, but not of God (see Simon of Acts 8:18-24)
- **Isaiah 8:19-20 - Familiar spirits**

(19) And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?
(20) To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them.

 - o Consulting the dead is not a path to the future – Only God knows the future

False prophet – Known for distorting the truth

- **Matthew 7:15** – The hunger of the false teacher
Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.
 - o Ravening wolves: Ruthless, with an insatiable appetite (cultural history worldwide identifies the wolf as a formidable predator, to be hunted and destroyed)

Influential – Comfortable in a position of authority

- **Ephesians 6-12** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

- The believer faces an adversary that is not only powerful, but in a position of authority in this world.

(9) Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

This is where we will start noting 'Saul' as 'Paul'

1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

- Against such forces, the believer is to challenge darkness with light (challenge the falseness of Satan with the truth of God, through Christ)

(10) And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Paul attributes the characteristics of Satan to Barjesus, as that is who he represents:

John 8:44 – Like father, like son

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

- Christ defined the Pharisees as children of the devil – As children carry on the traits of their parents. Barjesus demonstrated the actions of Satan, for he is a child of the devil
- One error does not make you a 'devil' (even believers do wrong), but it is the unrepentant heart that continually seeks the unrighteous path that is very likely a true child of the devil:

Romans 1:28 – God will allow you to make your choice (even if it is wrong)

And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient

- Barjesus was most likely a reprobate

(11) And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

Matthew 18:18 - In this dispensation (at the time of Paul) the Apostles were given power

Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Today, the believer's power is in the truth of God, in His Word

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

- The power of God is brought to others through believers, as the Word of God is given

(12) Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

The result of a good testimony – Hearts will come to Christ and be saved!

Next lesson, we continue on with Paul to Perga in Pamphylia and Antioch in Pisidia.

Lesson 9: First Mission (Cyprus)

Study Questions

1. According to Acts 13:5, who was ministering to the needs of Saul and Barnabas?

2. According to Acts 13:6, who is the first obstacle, and how are they defined?

a. _____

b. _____

3. According to Matthew 7:15, how is the hunger of a false teacher described?

4. According to Matthew 18:18, what power did Christ give the Apostles (in their dispensation)?

5. Complete the following scripture:

1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the _____, quit you like men, be _____.

True / False

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | The first stop was Paphos in Cyprus. |
| T | F | Wickedness is often in positions of authority. |
| T | F | Our actions reveal who we are a spiritual child of. |
| T | F | The power of believers today is in the Word of God. |