

>>>>>> Acts - Lesson 23 <<<<<<<

- 1) Last time, we left with a few questions on the table that you were to think about.
- 2) So, let's start by reading the scripture that prompts the first question again.

Acts 13:45–48 (NIV)

- 3) Here, we see the contrasting reactions of Jews and the Gentiles.
- 4) The Gentiles were glad – not that the Jews had rejected the word of the Lord but that they had received it.
- 5) So, here is the question regarding the last portion of verse 48:

“and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.”

When you read this statement, (particularly zeroing in on the word “appointed”) what does it say to you – what do you think it means?

- 6) The root of the Greek word for “appointed” here is *tasso*. It means, in its basic lexical form “designated”.
- 7) The form of the verb here is in the passive which means it is something that has been done to the subject – i.e. they have been designated or appointed.
- 8) In this case I think it refers to that subgroup of rejoicing Gentiles who not only “honored the word of the Lord” but believed.
 - a) Of course, what they were appointed to or designated for was eternal life.
- 9) I will say in conclusion on this, I do not believe this indicates any inference to “predestination”.
 - a) To be honest, in the Greek or the English, it is an awkward sentence.
 - b) Truly, we are speaking again of an emphasis on the fact that the Gentiles have always been destined or appointed to eternal life if they believe.
- 10) If we return to the Genesis and Isaiah quotes that we looked at last time, I think we can easily make the connection.

Genesis 12:3 (NASB 2020)

³ And I will bless those who bless you,
And the one who curses you I will curse.
And in you ***all the families of the earth*** will be blessed.”

Isaiah 49:6 (NASB 2020)

I will also make You ***a light of the nations***
So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

- 11) God is sovereign! He has known from the beginning whose names are in the book of life.
- 12) That fact does not mean that anyone, Jew or Gentile were predestined – i.e. had no choice, it simply means that God knew the choice we would make before we existed.
- 13) And, as we just established, that choice is not that we would turn to Him but that we would finally give in to His pursuit of us.

14) In this case I think it is a distinction with a definite difference!

15) Now, in light of all that, here's a second question for us that is related: ***(Multiple Choice)***

How do we describe our role in our salvation?

- a) ***'coming to Christ'***
- b) ***'accepting Christ'***
- c) ***'making a decision for Christ'***
- d) ***All of the above***
- e) ***None of the above***

Why?

16) Tod Vogt in his writeup for "Listening to God through Scripture, Prayer, and Mission" called "Sanctification: Self-Control or Spirit-Control?" says this:

God created each of us, and God has been pursuing each of us our entire life. ... the truth is, at best we gave-up our attempts to flee from God. These descriptions of our role ***[what I listed as a, b, and c]*** place the initiative on us instead of on God. The initiative is always God's. God laid claim to us long before we accepted that claim¹⁰. It was not our pursuit of God but God's pursuit of us that leads to our salvation.¹¹

17) We must never lose sight of the fact that God's plan has been since the fall of Adam in the Garden to bring us back to that perfect relationship.

18) Living in His kingdom that was established in Christ is the last step before the final renewing or all things.

19) When we finally see what God is doing, stop in our tracks, and accept His love, mercy and salvation through Christ that has been there all along we become part of this present kingdom and are guaranteed a place in the final kingdom that will come with the renewing of all things.

Acts 13:49–52 (NIV)

20) The Jews reject, the Gentiles respond in great numbers, and, in turn, the Jews become belligerent and often physically violent against Paul, his companions, and other Christians.

21) In this particular case, we see the Jews are using their contacts in high places to force Paul and Barnabas out of town.

22) It is interesting, and perhaps significant here that first listed are "influential religious women."

- a) Followed, of course, by the leaders of the city.

¹⁰ Keith Beasley-Topliffe

¹¹ Alive, Mission; Shaffer, Stephen; Carrizal, Steven; Hoover, Jeremy; Vogt, Tod K.; Howard, Lantz. Mission Alive Discipleship Cohorts: Listening to God through Scripture, Prayer, and Mission (p. 34). Mission Alive. Kindle Edition.
Ronald E. McDaniel

23) The result is that Paul and Barnabas are driven out of this part of the country.

24) The LABC comments that

“these women and men may have feared that Paul would disturb their fragile relationship with the Roman government.”

25) This was a sad moment: those so desperately in need of salvation driving from their city the bearers of the Good News—news of forgiveness, of justification before God.

26) As a conclusion to this episode, we have Paul and Barnabas doing something that was a fairly common practice – shaking the dust from their feet.

a) In fact, Jesus had told his disciples to do the same thing when He sent them out back in Mark 6:11.

Mark 6:11 (NASB 2020)

¹¹ Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet as a testimony against them.”

b) This is a symbol of cleansing – cleansing from these folks who did not accept God’s son.

c) The disciples nor Paul and Barnabas were to blame if the gospel was rejected.

i) They had faithfully presented it, that was obvious.

27) In contrast to the paranoid, politicking Jews working hard to rid themselves of the gospel messengers, the believers, most of whom were Gentiles, were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

28) I love the description of being “filled with joy” that the LABC gives ...

“the kind of inexplicable and overflowing joy of one freshly filled with the loving, forgiving Spirit of God.”¹²

¹² Bruce Barton et al., [*Life Application New Testament Commentary*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 521.