

Study Guide Questions

Acts of the Apostles 13:13-41

1. What is your take on John Mark's departure from Paul and Barnabas (13:13)? Why do you think Paul referred to his departure as "desertion" (15:38)? Are there moments when you identify with John Mark? Do you ever feel like disengaging from church, from fellowship with other believers, from service to Christ? Tell the group about such times and how you were able to overcome them.
2. Pastor Alan stated that Christian life and ministry is *not for the faint-hearted*? Do you agree? Are there examples in your life that illustrate tough times to which you were exposed because you were a follower of Christ?
3. When you committed your life to Jesus, did you imagine life would be easier or more difficult? What caused you to recognize the truth? How would you advise a young believer to prepare for the hard times in Christian service?
4. What do you feel could have happened for Paul to say at the end of his life that John Mark was useful to him in ministry (II Tim. 4:11)? If you have experienced failure at a Christian, in what ways do you find this outcome helpful?
5. What do you think prompted Paul and Barnabas to keep going without John Mark and to take the 100-mile foot trek across the Taurus Mountains to spread the gospel in Pisidia? What difficulties did they face on the journey (cf. II Cor. 11:25-26)? How would you rank the level of your determination against theirs?
6. Paul took advantage of an invitation to speak in the local synagogue in Pisidian Antioch. His lengthy sermon contains clues about ways to engage non-Christians in speaking of Jesus. How would you unravel some of those clues? To whom did Paul speak? What material did he use and why? How did he address his audience (verses 26 and 38)? How did he introduce Jesus into his message? What elements of Jesus' life did he specify (verses 27-37)?
7. How did his audience respond to what Paul told them (38-43)? What was his final plea (verses 38-39)?
8. How does Paul say one can be justified? Who can be justified? In what way was Paul's message radical in nature? How did the Jews think they would be justified (verse 39)? In what ways do people today embrace the same idea? How is one justified? Do you fully understand and accept that proposition? Do you believe it to be in keeping with the rest of Scripture (see Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 3:21 - 4:25)?