

3.5. May 13, 94 A.M.

THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 13

INTRODUCTION:

The Middle East has been a focal point in history - even of the current events. Since the Jews have returned to Israel, events have come in a full circle. This is where Christianity began. Where the explosion of the Gospel first occurred. In the book of Acts we have the joyful account of the Gospel moving out to a pagan society, capturing the interest in the hearts of men, awakening hope in a hopeless world. Changing lives by transformation of behavior and outlook.

The account of the missionary journeys of Paul can be traced to the establishment of the church in many places. The church is intended to live in the atmosphere of the book of Acts - and in the same manner of accomplishments today. Here is the hinge of history. Acts 1:8 outlines geographically how the witness would proceed. Beginning at Jerusalem, then in Judea, then Samaria, and finally to the utter most parts of the earth.

With this we have the introduction of the first missionary journey by Paul. On this journey, he did three things.

First, he preached the Gospel with great insight, passion, and power.

Second, he helped in the creation of Christian communities and in the organization of Christian churches.

Third, he endured hardships and dangers without murmuring. He showed that he was able to stand up and to go on with his work inspite of danger,

misunderstanding and persecution. On this ground Paul became a missionary leader.

There are 3 or 4 good divisions in Acts 13 - concerning the beginning of the first missionary journey. First, they were sent out. Second, they had success at Cyprus. A sermon of Paul's is recorded in V. 13.

And lastly ^{Segment -} V. 41 concluding at the end of the chapter.

I. SENT OUT - V. 1-4

Barnabas and Paul were sent out from the church in Antioch. Acts 13:1-3. Tells us that Jerusalem was the center of activities of the Apostles and the Disciples of Jesus. And Antioch now becomes the center of the new activities. In spreading the Gospel.

V. 1 - Barnabas and Saul were separated and set apart as a special task. We see that there were prophets and teachers that are noted here in V. 1. And it has been suggested that Simeon is the same man of Simeon of Cyrene. Jesus cross was carried by him. Luke 23:26. It would be a wonderful thing if the man whose first contact with Jesus was the carrying of the cross. A task which he probably bitterly resented. And now that he is one of the men, namely and directly responsible for sending out the story of the cross, to the ends of the earth.

These men are a collection of men from all over the world. V. 1.

V. 2 - The using of their gifts, while these men were using their gifts - busy at work doing what God had equipped them to do in the church. God spoke to them.

Here is the action of the Holy Spirit - making known his will to the people.

It is in co-operation to the church. The choice was left up to the Holy Spirit. We have a list here of the teachers and the prophets that were in the church at Antioch. Barnabas and Saul were among the group.

They were busy working for the Lord. They had seasons of prayer. And during one of these seasons of fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit spoke - "separate thee Barnabas and Saul for the work." This is a special called service by the Holy Spirit. God calls men to preach. I am sure he does. No man can go unless the Spirit calls him. No man can be the right kind of minister - he must be called of the Spirit. This ought to be very definite with the individual.

Now people have confused and are uncertain today about the circumstances under which God will lead them. They think they must isolate themselves in a cave or a convent, or be outdoors with nature, or get on some high mountain peak away from everything and some retreat - in order to hear God speak. They expect God to speak in some dramatic fashion. But God does not often call people in this way. Usually he calls them when they are busy exercising their gift. Right where he is. This is what these men were doing. They were busy working in the church.

We don't know exactly how the Spirit spoke to these men. Or it may have been well that he spoke to many people that day. There was a deep conviction shared by everyone in the group. That the Spirit of God desired a certain thing. This is often the way God works. At any rate, he spoke to men who were already at work - doing what they knew. That's the point.

You can steer a ship or a car if it is moving. But it is very difficult to steer a car when it is sitting still. And that is the point in the Christian life today. If you want God's leadership and the Holy Spirit to direct you, you better

get busy. He can't do much with you when you are sitting on the sidelines. There are two things to notice here - he chose the men and also, he chose the work. He said separate Barnabas and Saul for the work. Which I have called them. He didn't tell the church what the work was. But there was a deep concern to reach the world. Now they are instructed to sit aside.

V. 3 - The co-operation of the church. The Spirit is called. And now the church's business is to co-operate. They had a very simple ceremony of prayer. And laying on of hands. Now Paul quite often repeated that his authority was from God.

This ordination is not because these two men were eminent. I don't think it was because they were outstanding, successful ministers. It wasn't, in the third place, because they had a certain amount of training. And I don't think it was because a group of bishops decided that it would be a good thing for these two fellows to do this work.

I think that the Holy Spirit did this because, these men were submissive to the Spirit's activity and the Spirit still works through the church.

The purpose of God in his church here is really a picture of an assembly able to discover his will without a doubt, without uncertainty.

These believers were all fasting. This was not because they were over-weight. But it was that they were spiritually concerned. They were people who were willing to set aside the normal demands of life in order to concentrate for a time on what God wants. It may be too bad that fasting has largely disappeared. We need an expression of spiritual awareness. These men were concerned and the whole church recognized this. I think the whole church was involved as one body to support them with prayer. And second, to support them financially. And the whole

church was behind this choice.

They finally have three members of the group - Barnabas was from Cyprus, Paul was from Tarsus, and Mark was from Jerusalem.

V. 4 - When they had prayed, they sent them away. This was a divine personal call, and a call that met the approval of the brethren. This was a solemn doing of the will of God. I don't know, I think sometimes, some of the modern things that we have may be a scandal to the cause of Jesus Christ. These people were fasting. They layed their hands upon them in a solemn service. They prayed and they sent them forth. This was on their hearts. And we read the words that they went down and they sailed to Cyprus. The spirit did not tell them to go to Cyprus. But this was the choice of Paul and Barnabas. The Spirit had told these men to move out and the men decided to move. It was perfectly proper. I think Paul later wrote - work out your own salvation with fear - or your own solutions with fear and trembling. For God is at work, both the will to do. For his good pleasure. Phil. 2:12. When they thought over the situation, they decided that Cyprus was the logical place to start. They didn't wait for the Holy Spirit to write out some map on the wall, or the sky - this is the way to be led of the Spirit. Your heart is impressed with some need, some ministry that is out before you. You feel impressed to do it and perhaps, others will join you in doing it. But you may not know how to get started. (What do you do.) Now if you do like Paul and Barnabas, you begin by looking at the natural thing to do. Being confident that God is going to lead you. And so they began. And they began in the synagogues. Why did they start there? Was it because they were Jews. They knew the other Jews that had the Scriptures would listen to them. Was it simply the most natural place to start. We learn that this is the way Paul began and he followed this plan.

I believe this happened because of the activity of the church. The church was busy serving and they were worshipping God. You will remember that when Isaiah received his call, he was in the temple worshipping God. And he saw God high and lifted up. And the outcome of that worship was - that there was work to be done. And that's what happens when people begin to worship God. And numbers begin to serve. And the combination of these two things put together. The Spirit speaks. Perhaps they did not hear a voice. He made his will known. Perhaps the same individual in that assembly, as he does in a quiet way today. God reveals some special need to some individual. And God commissioned Paul.

Now here today, some one person may feel the call of God. He comes to the church and says, I have a definite call, I believe from the Lord. I want to turn my back on all else, to go in the name of the Gospel. Now this is a time of rejoicing for any church. They sent out their missionaries. They were responsible. And they supported those missionaries. They backed them up. And every one of us can have a part in carrying the cross overseas. We can send others - our tithes and offerings. Our Foreign Mission gifts.

Sometimes Christians get an idea that they are just like robots. It is something automatic. All they have to do is sit still and wait and the spirit is going to move them out.

I read about a fellow work that way. He would stop at the foot of a staircase and ask God, to show him whether he should go up on the right side or on the left. He would pray about whether to put his hat on in the morning or not. You know if God ran our lives like that, we would be nothing more than just a mechanical machine. He wants us to understand that he lives within us. He will direct us. He will open the doors and make a way for us. And you can't improve upon what the Holy Spirit was able to do here. The problem is, we are forever wanting a conference,

or a retreat, or a plan to decide what we ought to do next. We always try and structure some of the organization for God's work. Some carefully planned lives. The whole thing depended on us.

We know the reason why the church falters along today. It is because we have lost the excitement in knowing that the leadership belongs to the Holy Spirit, He is the only one who knows how we can reach this community or this city. And he has planted us here and there to proclaim his truth.

I read a story about a situation that happened out in San Francisco. The Christian World Liberation Front was trying to do something about the topless and the bottomless bars in San Francisco. They organized a protest. They walked down in front of those nude places carrying signs. Thursday night is family night. Another sign read - bring the child up in the ways of God. Customers became so embarrassed, at the signs, that they stopped entering the bars. The management was angered at the marked decrease in attendance. They sent out a bouncer to order the Christians off the sidewalk. They claimed they had a right to orderly protest - and refused to leave. One night a bouncer got so angry he hit one of the leaders right in the mouth. But the Christians were back the next night. This time the bouncer came out and ordered them to go. They wouldn't leave unless they could go in and pray for the people first. The manager agreed to invite them in. There was absolutely dead silence - the Christians stood on the stage - surrounded by naked girls. And they led the whole place in prayer. One fellow said he peeked while the rest were praying, and he saw the bouncer going around and quietly closing all the doors. So they wouldn't be disturbed by the noise from the street. They had a tremendous opportunity to speak the truth to these people who became utterly different in their behavior when they were confronted with that kind of contrast.

We find this kind of leadership of the Holy Spirit throughout the book of Acts.

We are co-laborers with God. And Luke doesn't tell us everything that Paul and Barnabas did, as they went through the island of Cyprus.

A young woman who was a missionary to the lepers was going to make a trip - but she learned that there were lions along the road and the trip was dangerous. However, she felt that she must make that trip - and a native Christian begged her to let him go with her. He was a poor weak fellow. And he knew that he would be of little help in time of danger. So she asked him, what would you do if we were attack. He answered, I could give a life. May many of our young people today, rise up and say, I will give my life.

II. SUCCESS AT CYPRUS

V. 4 - They went down to Seleucia. It was a military fortress and a seaport town. And set sail on a mission. Here we stand at the source of an historical movement. Here we see the beginning of a movement which profoundly influenced the history of civilization. And especially the life of the western world. We stand at the fountain of Christianity. Jesus had meant more to the world than Washington to Americans. Napoleon to France. Bismark to Germany. He left great ideas. The work and experience of the missionaries at Cyprus - their first stop, was the home of Barnabas. It was famous for its copper mines and its shipbuilding industry. It's name means happy isle. The climate was perfect, the resources were there. Necessary for the happy life within the bounds of man.

V. 5 - They preached the Gospel in the synagogue, and then moved on.

V. 6 - They came to Paphos. They had gone through the whole island.

And now they come to the capitol. And this attracts the attention. They were invited to preach to the pro-council, the governor. They had a difficult experience with the sorcer. But Paul proved his ability to handle a difficult situation. And from this time on, Luke usually speaks of Paul first instead of Barnabas. And uses the word Paul instead of the word Saul. In the capitol city, they worshipped Venus, the goddess of love. This became a by-word for lustfull immorality.

The governor, Sergius Paulus, kept a private wizard by the name of Elymas, the sorcer.

V. 7 - The governor, Paul sought to win to Christ. This sorcerer, who was a Jew, and forsaken his faith, had become a magician. And he complicated things. Then he saw that the governor was interested in Christianity, therefore, he tried his best to divert him from a decision.

Preacher was sitting at home in Tenn. mts - "a little big best nudging him & feeling Pantley - said - "That's a very affectionate pig" - you said that "You're eating out of his bowl!"

V. 8 - This man who called himself BarJesus - therefore, he was claiming to be a follower of Jesus. Everything he taught was absolutely contrary to the teachings of Jesus. He was in other words, the first in a long line, of Christian cultess - who ceased upon the name of Jesus and the name of Christianity as a cloak for utterly unChristian teachings. Many have followed him - so today, you have Mormans, Jehovah Witnesses, and many next sects who claim the name of Christianity but teach the most unChristian doctrine. Because this man was such a fraud, he very greatly provoked the Spirit of Paul.

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V. 9-10 - Do you see what is happening. Paul was declaring the straight paths of Jesus. But this man was teaching deviations. Misleading the governor. So Paul said in these rather blunt, direct words, you son of a devil. You enemy of all righteousness. Full of all deceit. You had better stop what you are doing. Perverting the straight paths of the Lord.

v. 10 Paul said the Lord will strike you blind. Immediately his eyesight was gone and someone had to lead him by the hand. When the governor saw this - he was astonished. It made such an impression upon him that he gave his heart to Christ.

Perhaps this would startle us today but we are not accustomed to such language. We never think of addressing a man outside or inside the church with such words. Paul did not say it about him - he said it to him.

v. 9 - We must note, another man's salvation was involved. A representative in the government was seeking the truth. He desired to hear the word of God. And Paul's words are not too severe. There was a false prophet. He was saying things that were untrue. And Paul describes this false prophet because Paul was filled with the Spirit. And it enabled him to see into the very heart of the man. Who was confronting him. He described his character in full. Full of guile. You are trying to pervert the right way.

v. 11 Blindness was a material symbol of this man's spiritual condition.

v. 11 - This often happens when the Spirit of God works. There is some man used of the Devil to divert.

How many times does it happen. A man hears a sermon. And it convicts him. And the invitation is given, in the church. And then somebody sitting next to him decides that it is time to leave. He pushed his way out and the man's attention is diverted. And the service is soon over and the man goes back to the world lost.

Here is someone who listens to a sermon and somebody near him begins to talk. And his attention is diverted. He hears the Gospel. And he looks up and he sees

there is a hypocrite. The man is ready to go forward - and Satan says to him - you have a long time to live. You have plenty of time - go on and enjoy your sins for awhile longer. And hinders him.

V. 13 - Mark returns. We discover the party moves on to Perga. And Mark returns to Jerusalem. He was the son of Mary. In whose house the prayer meeting was being held in the release of Peter from prison. He is probably the Mark that wrote one of our Gospels. This Mary was also the sister of Barnabas. He went out with them on the first missionary journey. Why did he leave them? Was it because he was homesick as has been suggested. Because he lacked the power of endurance - he was a coward? Because he was discontent - or because he did not like the authority being given over to Paul. The last thought may be most accurate. Barnabas should head up the evangelist party. But we find later that Barnabas wanted to take Mark along - but Paul objected to it.

III. THE SERMON BY PAUL - V. 14-41

V. 14 - Mark has returned home. But we will discover about 20 years later that he is a man who has redeemed himself - because Paul wrote to the Colossians. Receive Mark if he comes to you. 2 Tim. 4:11 - He wrote again that - take Mark and bring him with you.

One great preacher said - no man needs to stay the way he is. By the grace of God, the man who was the deserter became the writer of the Gospel. Paul wanted his friendship and his fellowship. Now we move on to the point - where they - V. 14 - they go to Antioch Pisidia. It stood at 3600 feet above sea level.

To get to it, Paul had to cross a range of mountains. One of the hardest roads - the most dangerous of all journeys. Many people asked why he didn't stay and preach in Pamphylia. Why did he leave the coast. With the Word unproclaimed and set out on a dangerous way. Well, many think, it was because he was sick of body. He was a sick man. And he wanted to get away from the low country. At this point in the journey, Paul preaches a memorable sermon. That is recorded - the contents of this sermon. The things that he used in preaching were references to his mission. And it was the message of John The Baptist. And he emphasizes the sonship, and the death of Jesus. At the hands of the Jews. And at the rulers hands, Pilate. And then the resurrection, and forgiveness of sin, and justification by faith.

He began his sermon - V. 16, 17 - with the history of God's chosen people. He talks about the goodness of God in dealing with his people. Paul's model sermon. It is very much like Stephen in his outline as to what he used. It is a very similar sermon to the one Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. He begins with the history of God's chosen people. He tells of their deliverance. V. 18. And he describes, V. 19 - how they made entrance into the promise land. He portrays the destruction of the seven nations. V. 20 he talks about the judges that served in Israel. V. 21 - He speaks of the kings coming on the scene. This speech has the simplest divisions. He talks about the mighty goodness and power of God to lead his people. The history of the past.

One main thing to keep in mind is, God is at work. And this history ought to be written. It ought to be repeated. He tells of the instances in which God works. God chose the people. God led the people out of Egypt. He bore them through the wilderness. He destroyed the seven nations. He gave them the land. He provided the judges. He gave them kings. And he raised up David. What an account of God's goodness in history.

The second section of his sermon is the provision of God's grace. As he speaks of David, V. 22 - 23 - he begins to talk about God bringing forth to Israel a saviour, Jesus, as the promised. He speaks about the Bethlehem experience that we will be celebrating this week.

V. 24-25 - He tells about John The Baptist, who had come and preached The Messiah.

V. 27 - They knew him not. Paul gives us the answer to a question that many people are still asking today - how is it if Jesus was the Messiah predicted by the Old Testament Scriptures, if he fulfilled these when he came, that the Jews did not recognize him. Why? Paul said there were a couple of reasons.

First, he did not really see Jesus. They were misled. They looked at his trade. He was just a carpenter. They looked at his background. He had no money or influence, or standing in society. He had no prestige. He had no great school to recommend him. So they just wrote him off and paid no attention to it. They didn't hear his words and they didn't really see his miracles. And Jesus lived the most magnificent life and yet they did not recognize him.

The second reason why they are blind, as Jews in the past and people today, and they did not understand the Scriptures. Here were people who had heard the utterances of the Prophets read to them every Saturday in the synagogue and they didn't understand them. They didn't take the Scripture seriously. The reading of Scripture was just a performance. They went about doing as they had in the past. Not recognizing the Messiah.

V. 27 - They knew not Jesus.

V. 28 - They desired the death of Jesus.

V. 29 - They buried him in a tomb.

V. 30 - We discover there was a resurrection.

V. 31 - He was seen of many.

V. 32 - He was declared as the promise. He was fulfilling his office. This was the message and ministry of Jesus Christ, brought to the highest office. Although men in their blind following, rejected and crucified Jesus, God could not be defeated in his purpose and his power.

It has been once told that there was a strong wind blowing and a child said to his father in awe, God must have lost his grip of the winds tonight.

The resurrection is proof that God never loses grip. That in the end of his purpose, the supreme reign will take place.

V. 32 - The fulfillment of prophesy became a promise. That was made for David. Fulfilled in Christ. The coming of the message of Christ was good news.

V. 33 - The promise of the 2nd Psalm - that the son of God would be begotten as a man and come into humanity.

V. 35 - Psalm 16 clearly predicted the coming of the man who would never see corruption. Whose body would never decay.

Now many skeptics look at this and they would say this Psalm does not refer to Jesus. And it refers to the experience of David. Now David wrote the Psalm. And it is a beautiful description of the crucifixion. Which opens with the words of Jesus on the cross - My God, My God, Why has thou forsaken me.

✓ V. 36 - In other words, you cannot apply Psalm 16 to David for it points to someone who would come later. Who would never see corruption when he died. Witnesses saw Jesus alive, after he died. He saw no corruption.

V. 39 - Jesus forgives sin. This was a shattering statement. Here were men who honored the law of Moses, taught The Ten Commandments as the greatest words of God. They were trying their best to live up to them. Paul thought the way to God was to obey these commandments. And Paul declares that we never find acceptance with God that way. The Commandments will condemn you because you cannot fulfill them, no matter how hard you try.

✓ V. 40 - Paul tells the people God found a way to accept mankind. Even though man cannot be good enough in himself. And that is through this man, Jesus Christ. Today, this doesn't shake us. Those people never heard anything like that before. It is the amazing news of God - everyone who believes is justified.

1.38 What does it mean to be justified. Most people thinks it means to have your sins forgiven. Which is true. But it means more. It means to have your sins forgiven in such a way that God's honor and integrity are preserved.

Someone has illustrated this as a serviceman being in the Navy for a tour of duty. And then receiving an honorable discharge. Now that meant that he was discharged. He was through. The Navy had no further claim upon him.

But the event of the word honorable - means an honorable way. That anyone who looks at the discharge papers could see there was no blots, nor stain, on his discharge. That he had behaved well. Now there are men who get a dishonorable discharge. They are just separated from the Navy. And there is the blot of the discharge.

Paul is saying, if God forgave in the way most people think he does, if he would say concerning our sins - oh, forget about it. That is alright. Don't worry about it. You are just a great fellow and I love you so much that I am just going to ignore it.

Then God's honor would be in jeopardy. His character would be defiled by this kind of forgiveness. He would no longer be regarded as the God of justice and truth. He would be a partaker in our sins. But God has found a way through Jesus to lay the guilt of our life and heart upon his own son. Thus he preserves his character, his honor, and his integrity. This is justification - because of the cross - nobody will ever be able to point to God and say, ah, you let people off who were guilty. In the cross of Jesus, God poured out all his judgement upon his son. In the cross, the agony and the anguish of it - the world can see a picture of how faithfully God obeys his own laws. And carries out justice to the last degree. This kind of love is incredible - again and again, we shake our heads, that can't be. I've got to do something. The only way God can find me acceptable is for me to make myself acceptable. But no one can ever make himself acceptable to God by trying to live a good life.

V. 41 - I don't think these words were spoken in sharpness - but I think they were spoken in sadness. As you listen and you hear - that these people had heard the incredible word of grace. And God had found a way to love them, without fornification. You can accept it and live in glory. Or you can reject it and be people who reject

turned away forever.

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Ray Stedman who is a minister in California said one day, as he was sitting in his church study, suddenly heard a woman's voice crying and shouting. And he came out to see what was wrong. He found a young married woman that he had talked to the week before. Walking up and down in front of the cross before the platform. She was looking at the cross saying, yes, there is a God. Yes, there is a God and he will forgive me. I know he will. I know he will. She was in torment.

He says I didn't know what to make for a moment as I listened. Then I moved in to speak to her and she crumbled down. He said, we sat on the first pew and talked. She had told him about her marriage. Although she professed to be a Christian, she was having an affair with an older man. She had justified thinking it was something that would contribute to her happiness. He said that he tried to help her to see that the things she were doing to herself. And on this certain day, the man had called her and told her that he was through. It shattered her and crushed her with guilt. And she was trying to find release. And suddenly it dawned upon her what she had done to her family, what she had done to her husband, and to herself. And now she had hurt every one involved. She came trying to find forgiveness - crying out to God. But as the minister talked to her, she didn't really believe the forgiveness that was offered. Even though the Scriptures were offered. She thought there was something that she must do. There must be something that she must atone for. There was so much condemnation in her life. Finally she calmed down a bit - and she called her husband and talked it over. In her distress, finally she wound up in the hospital. And two days later, on the 10th floor of the building, she cast herself to the pavement below which crushed her body.

Now this is the awful pressure of guilt. If you do not find a way to relieve

it - it will ~~destroy you~~. And that's why this message with such power in this city as Paul put it out before them. The fact that the only way to be freed from guilt was the accept the work of another. On your behalf. God's love.

IV. SEQUEL TO THE MISSIONARY MESSAGE - V. 41-52

V. 41 - This meant good news for some but there were some who would not believe. There is an excuse for a man who has never had a chance. But there is no excuse for the man who has seen the splendor of the offer of God. And who has rejected it.

The result is - that many were converted. And following this sermon -

V. 42 - There were many who said they would like for him to come back and preach again next Sunday. There was a real thirst that had been created in the hearts of many to hear this same message again. Therefore, they wanted Paul to come back and preach again.

V. 43 - After the service, there was much talk and many people followed them down the street. The great trouble is today that people get converted and then they go back into the world. They are not faithful. They do not desire to hear more about the Gospel. You must realize here that Paul did not preach about a good life of Jesus. Or about a miracle, or some healing. But he preached about the death and the resurrection and his sermon was the talk of the town.

V. 44 - He didn't have to advertize in the newspaper or through the mail. When everyone goes out of a church and tells others about what God has said to them - in that service, it will not be long before the house will be filled.

And there will be some excitement.

V. 45 - There was enmity among the Jews. Jesus had said to his Disciples if they have received me - they will receive you. But if they have rejected me - they will reject you.

Everywhere Paul went, he found this to be true. The Gospel was a cutting knife. It awakens, it hits, it divides. And men have to decide. And some decide against it.

V. 47 - He said the Lord was the light to the ends of the earth.

V. 48 - The Gentiles heard the message and they were glad.

God is active and trying to reach out to men. It is not men who are trying to reach and find God. Therefore, do not misread this verse. And as many as believed were ordained to eternal life. God who is already reaching out - here were many who were ordained of God. You can never get away from this wonderful mysterious combination.

The divine sovereignty and the human responsibility. The powers of God are ordained of God.

V. 50 - They are expelled - the Jews disturbed the people and stirred up a scene. Among the woman's liberation front. And they put Paul and Silas out of their coast. You will have to understand this - at that time, the Jewish religion had special attraction for women. In nothing was the ancient world more soiled and lax than in sexual morality. Family life was rapidly breaking down. And the worst sufferers were women. The Jewish religion taught some

Baby - John - Cont
" N. J. - cont - Grad.

And said - Why don't you + I do something about it - 1500

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cleanness of life. Hence, many women gathered around the synagogue. Just what they had so much longed for. They were God fearers. Now the Jews persuaded these women to stir up their husbands. Their husbands may have been rulers. To take steps against the preachers. And so the result was persecution. The Jews were intent on closing the door.

V. 51 - They shook the dust off of their feet. If the people refused to hear, Jesus said, you are to shake the dust off of your feet and go on. This was done as a testimony. These people must meet the testimony again at the judgement bar of God. These people would stand trial before God. And here would be a little hand full of dust - and each man will say, what does this dust have to do with us. The answer on this very dust - God's man stood and preached, to you the word of life - but you rejected it. And the dust will testify against you.

What do when you fail - some people not believe - People don't like you!
Keep your feet and go on - Jesus had practice that, Samaritan village not welcome once - griffin call me.
Get up - Go on!

To hear God's word and yet go on in your sin - many witnesses will rise up against you in the day of judgement. The sermons that you have listened too will condemn you in judgement. Your conscience will rise up and tell you that you have been warned. The providences of God will rise up and testify against you. The Holy Spirit is now trying to convict you of sin. Jesus is saying, I died upon the cross for you. I love you with an everlasting love.

Night Watch - Amsterdam - Protest to paint - Picture they rejected it, we are not present - behind people, artist had painted on Job serving - so painted 2nd - on display in Amsterdam today - can see which is best -

V. 52 - The grace that was triumphant. The Disciples were filled with a joy and with a spirit. God gave them the greatest blessing of filling them with the spirit. And these Disciples were rejoicing. They knew that they were enriched. There was no mention of the gift of tongues in the filling of the spirit. There was the mention of the fruit of the spirit. They were filled with the joy of the Lord. And the love of the Lord. This is the great sign of the spirit of God. First, it floods the heart with love.

Second, it fills the heart with joy.

When we are Christians our hearts cannot help but be moved by the mercy of God toward us. Who deserves nothing at his hands. Yet, has given us so much.