

# Paul & Barnabas at Pisidian Antioch

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 06 April 2025

Preacher: Kent Dixon

[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome here for this Sunday, April 6th, 2025. My name is Kent Dixon and it is my joy to be the pastor here. I love it when I look up and I see all the people I know and then I see new people that I don't know.

So I look forward to connecting and encourage all of our people to connect with new people. That's a good thing. Our focus passage this morning. So as we're continuing in the series, the in the book of Acts, Acts to all the world.

We're exploring the New Testament book of Acts and for people who are here and don't know, this is an ongoing series that we have been in for a chunk of time because the book of Acts is important and we want to study it in detail together. So you can go to our website and catch right up from the beginning.

So we're preaching exegetically through the book of Acts to see what we can learn, see the history of the church and some of those critical events and people that we can see there.

So our focus passage this morning is found in Acts 13, and this is a big one again, verses 13 to 52. So go ahead and grab a Bible from the pew in front of you.

[ 1 : 11 ] As a pastor, I had once said, turn your Bible on, open your Bible app, whatever you have. So whatever you need to do, however you connect with the word in this moment, do that.

That's the passage on the screen. And I'll also read it for us so you can just listen as well. From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem.

From Perga, they went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath, they entered the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the law and the prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent word to them, saying, Brothers, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, please speak.

Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said, Fellow Israelites and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me. The God of the people of Israel chose our ancestors.

He made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt. With mighty power, he led them out of that country for about 40 years. He endured their conduct in the wilderness, and he overthrew seven nations in Canaan, giving their land to his people as their inheritance.

[ 2 : 22 ] All this took about 450 years. After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul, son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled 40 years.

After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him. I have found David, son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.

From this man's descendants, God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel.

As John was completing his work, he said, Who do you suppose I am? I'm not the one you're looking for. But there is one coming after me whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.

Fellow children of Abraham and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus.

[ 3 : 30 ] Yet in condemning him, they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed.

When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the cross and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead. And for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem.

They are now his witnesses to our people. We tell you the good news. What God promised our ancestors, he has fulfilled for us their children by raising up Jesus.

As it is written in the second psalm, You are my son. Today I have become your father. God raised him from the dead so that he will never be subject to decay.

As God has said, I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David. So it is also stated elsewhere, You will not let your holy one see decay.

[ 4 : 29 ] Now when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep. He was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed. But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus, The forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him, everyone who believes is set free from every sin.

A justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses. Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you. Look, you scoffers.

Wonder and perish, for I'm going to do something in your days That you'd never believe, even if someone told you. As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, The people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath.

When the congregation was dismissed, Many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism Followed Paul and Barnabas, Who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath, Almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

[ 5 : 35 ] When the Jews saw the crowds, They were filled with jealousy. They began to contradict what Paul was saying, And heaped abuse on him. Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly, We had to speak the word of God to you first.

Since you rejected and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, We now turn to the Gentiles. For this is what the Lord has commanded us. I have made you a light for the Gentiles, That you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

When the Gentiles heard this, They were glad and honored the word of the Lord, And all who were appointed for eternal life believed. The word of the Lord spread through the whole region, But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing, And the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, And expelled them from their region. So they shook the dust off their feet as a warning to them, And went to Iconium.

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. There you go. That's it. Have a great Sunday. It's a great sermon, right? It's a great sermon.

[ 6 : 46 ] It is a great sermon. So I will now do my best, Thousands of years later, To do justice to Paul. So as we considered last week, Following their ministry on the island of Cyprus, Do you remember that?

Saul, who's now known as Paul, Remember I talked as well about the switch that happened, Flipped, And they arrived in Perga, We hear in scripture.

A city that was the capital of the Roman province of Pamphylia. And we learned briefly that John Mark leaves, He leaves Paul and Barnabas, And he returns to Jerusalem.

But it happens really fast, And there's no reason given for him leaving. So we'll learn in Acts 15, 36-40, That John Mark's departure there, Would later become a point of conflict, Between Paul and Barnabas.

And we'll see that in the weeks ahead. So our sermon this morning is titled, Paul and Barnabas at Pisidian Antioch. So they left Perga, as we just heard, They went to a city called Antioch of Pisidia, Or Pisidian Antioch.

[ 7 : 55 ] So this is different from the Antioch That we already learned about in this series, right? It's a different city named Antioch, In a different place. So at some point, We learn that Paul may have become ill.

So either in Perga, Or on the way to Antioch, Pisidian Antioch, Because he mentions this, In Galatians 4, 13. So Paul is talking in Galatians 4, About this trip, In a different context, And there's an illness that he mentions.

But Paul was clearly determined, Absolutely determined, Because neither sickness, Nor physical danger, Prevented him, From carrying out, This mission that God had given him.

So now we come to Paul's sermon, This sermon, Which I mentioned briefly last week. Remember I teased, Here it comes, And there it goes, right? We just started it. So Paul's synagogue sermon.

So as we noted last week, It was Paul's standard approach, This is his MO that we see Throughout the New Testament, That when he came to a new city, He began by visiting the local synagogue. [ 9 : 03 ] And we've already seen that, We'll see it again today, And even more in the future, As we consider other trips that Paul goes on. And then we learned this morning, That Paul is invited by the leaders of the synagogue, To speak to the people.

This is a pretty big deal. So what does Paul say to them? Good question. So let's look at some of the highlights. Well, Paul spent some time, If you remember, As I was sharing this sermon, And you were reading along, He focuses a lot on God's dealings with Israel, Right?

He talks about the history. It's a great history lesson, For the children of Israel. He proclaims in that sermon, That Jesus is the promised savior. Did you miss that part?

It's in there. He then reviews Jesus' death. He talks about the events around it, How it happened. And then he talks about the evidence, For Jesus' resurrection.

Pretty good pre-Easter sermon, I think. He proclaims then, That forgiveness is now offered to them, To the audience that's listening, Through Jesus.

[ 10 : 11 ] Jesus is the way. And then he also takes a moment, Maybe you caught this, He warns the audience, He warns his listeners, Not to fulfill a prophecy, Where people actually reject God's work, In and through Christ.

He says, Here's what I'm telling you, By the way, Don't be this. Don't fulfill this prophecy, By rejecting what I've told you. So it's interesting to me, As I was looking at it again, Paul's sermon reflects many of the key themes, That were preached by Peter, In Acts 2, Verses 22 to 36.

So that's a while ago for us, Right? And then again, Peter preaches a very similar message, In Acts 3, 12 to 26. So there's common themes, Thankfully, Right?

These are resonating themes, That the apostles recognized, As being critical to communicate. And then also, Paul includes, Some of the themes, That Stephen gives, When he, Remember, He's called, Called on the carpet, By the Jewish leaders, To appear before them, To justify his actions, And the things he said.

Do you remember that? Paul, Or Peter was, Off preaching, And they said, Yeah, You need to come back. Sorry, Stephen, Peter, Getting all my apostles crossed. So, He's called back, Right?

[ 11 : 36 ] To the Jewish leaders, And they say, Okay, You need to explain, What you've said, What you've done. So you can probably remember, As well, That the response, To what Peter and Stephen said, Was unpleasant, To say the least.

Remember, It was not good. And ultimately, It was brutal. It was final judgment. So how did Paul, With some of the same content, Right?

How did his listeners, Respond to the sermon, That he gave? Well, Let's consider it. Well, At first, There seems to have been, A very enthusiastic response.

We heard that, Right? They were, People were excited, To hear this. We learned that the people, Who heard the message, Were actually eager, To learn more. That's the best sermon possible, Right?

Leave them wanting more, Not wishing they hadn't shown up, Right? Not wishing, Oh, I wonder if the roast is ready. Hmm. You want people, To hear the message, That God has for them, And feel like, Oh, Wait a minute.

[ 12 : 38 ] I want to hear more. I want to hear more. And then we also learn, That many Jews, And devout converts, Followed Paul and Barnabas. They went, Wait a minute. These guys have something to share, And we want to follow them.

And they began to urge, Paul and Barnabas, To share more, To tell them more, About what they had heard. So the very next week, The next Sabbath, Just one week later, Almost the whole city, We hear, Of Pisidian Antioch.

Now, I don't have any census data, I don't know how many people that was. It was a lot, For an entire city to show up, Even if it's red deer, That's a lot of people. So, People came, To hear the word again.

They heard, Probably, News spread. And so they, Even more people, Showed up just a week later. So the entire city, Showed up, That must have been, Quite a gathering, Right?

A lot of attention. And it seems to be, Maybe you can relate to this, It seems to be human nature, To want what we don't have. Is that fair? To discount, Our own blessings, Right?

[ 13 : 45 ] Rather than recognize, Human beings tend to complain. So rather than stopping and going, Instead of complaining, I could recognize what God has given me, The many blessings that I have in my life.

But we either ignore that, Or discount it, Or look to what someone else has, And say, Oh, I don't know, I have, Maybe I have this, But I want that. I want what I don't have.

So we learn that the Jews, Were jealous of the crowds, That were gathering for Paul and Barnabas. We hear that, Right? Did they want, Bigger gatherings in their synagogues, When they taught the law and prophets?

Or was it something else? Was there another weird motivation there? We don't really know, What the motivation was, It doesn't explain, But they were complaining about it, And they weren't unhappy about it, And that's not a great look, Right?

They were jealous, They began to resist Paul and his message, As we see happen to people who share the gospel often. The Jewish people had the privilege of receiving the gospel first.

[ 14 : 53 ] Remember that? But the Jews who didn't believe, Judged themselves to be unworthy of eternal life. Can you relate to that? Do you ever feel like, Lord, I know you have this amazing grace for me, But I really don't deserve it.

At what point does your desire, Your sense that you are undeserving or unworthy, Start to lean on the grace of God in an uncomfortable way?

So if God says, You are worthy, You are forgiven, You are my child, Don't argue with them. Fair? So Paul and Barnabas seem to have become even more bold.

So likely through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, That's what we get, A sense there. They started to turn their focus to the Gentiles, As God had commanded through the prophet Isaiah.

So we learn that the Gentiles who heard the message were glad. They glorified the word. And we hear there as well that many people believed. Many Gentiles believed in the gospel.

[ 15 : 59 ] And as we've seen a few times already, We'll see it again, There was a mixed reaction to the preaching of the word of God, Right? That happens far too often than we'd like to admit.

And it would become increasingly common. We'll see this more and more. That the reaction this occasion actually resulted in Paul and Barnabas being forced to leave.

So the word of God is being spread throughout the region. We've heard that. But the Jews, we also hear, Stirred up, it says, God-fearing women of high standing, And the leading men of the city.

They stirred these people up against the men, Paul and Barnabas, And their message. So we learn there that Paul and Barnabas were persecuted. They were expelled from the region.

They were run out of town. And actually, Paul refers back to this persecution in 2 Timothy 3, verse 11. Again, sometimes in his other letters, And it makes sense, right?

[ 17 : 04 ] He's referring back to things that happened at other times in his ministry. And this is one of those. So as Jesus instructed his apostles in Matthew 10, 14, We hear this.

Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet, right? Do you remember Jesus giving the apostles that direction? Go, preach the word, preach the truth, And if people don't want to hear it, And are giving you a hard time, Walk away.

Just walk away. So they shook the dust off their feet. They took Jesus' advice. They were probably nursing some actual physical wounds, right? They were persecuted.

Not just, people weren't just fingers shaking at them. They were persecuted. They were probably beaten. So then they head to a new city called Iconium. So if you, in your life, when you've had hard times, Do you think, Huh, I'm going to look for hard times to happen somewhere else now.

Right? So this is their experience. They've been mistreated quite badly. They've been kicked out By people who said They wanted to hear their message, right?

[ 18 : 11 ] That's, it doesn't really fit. So our passage this morning actually wraps up. It wraps up the whole story By telling us that the disciples, It says in scripture, Presumably referring to Paul and Barnabas, They were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Do you ever feel like you've been mistreated and go, Wow, I am so joyful. I feel great to have been treated so badly. Does that strike you as an odd reaction To literally being run out of town?

So perhaps they were rejoicing Out of recognition That they had suffered for righteousness' sake. Right? Perhaps. We can also recognize That they were likely empowered with joy, With peace, With faith By the Holy Spirit.

So regardless of the reason, Paul and Barnabas Were in the center of God's will. Maybe there was a storm raging around them, But they were in the eye of that storm.

You ever heard about being in a tornado? So people will talk about Somehow winding up in the center of a tornado, Which is not a great place to be. But they look up to the sky, And it's clear blue sky.

[ 19 : 29 ] And there's silence In the middle of a storm. To me, that's the center of God's will. The storms may be raging around you, But when you are in God's will, You will, You can find peace.

So whether facing good times or challenges, Hopefully we can all recognize Times in our own lives When being in God's will Felt pretty great.

Right? Despite the circumstances. In Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas Experienced What the apostles experienced In Jerusalem.

They experienced a degree of success. They won many converts to Christ. They also experienced a persecution For preaching Christ.

But leaving a strong church behind When they moved on. They planted seeds. I have a few questions For each of us this morning. If you had been in Pisidian Antioch At that time, How might you have responded To Paul's ministry?

[ 20 : 34 ] Would you have wanted to learn more? Would you have been willing to believe And rejoice despite persecution? Would you have been envious Of Paul's success?

Easily stirred up And willing to join in Persecuting him. Where do you stand When you consider Your own eternal destiny? Have you somehow judged yourself As being unworthy?

Unworthy of eternity? By rejecting the word of God In some way? Hopefully not If you're here this morning. It's a good indicator That you're here. That's not your story.

Or by believing in Christ Do you consider yourself To have eternal security In him? If you want to be filled With joy And the Holy Spirit Then you must become And remain A faithful disciple of Jesus Who died for your sins And rose from the grave.

My friends, In the words of Jesus himself Come to me All you who labor And are heavy laden And I will give you rest.

[ 21 : 48 ] Take my yoke upon you And learn from me For I'm gentle And lowly in heart And you will find rest For your souls For my yoke is easy And my burden is light.

Rest in Jesus. Amen. Amen.