

Antioch to Antioch - Acts 13:13-52

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[0 : 00] Go ahead and turn open to Acts 13. Got a bit of ground to cover this morning. And we'll try to make it as painless as possible. But we'll see how this goes.

We'll be looking at verses 13 to 52 this morning. Join me in prayer.

Father, it is as always good to gather with your people.

And to gather, to worship you, to consider you, to hear from you.

We want to have right thoughts about you, Father. We know from the pages of Deuteronomy that you are revealed as a God who is a consuming fire.

[1 : 01] That you indeed are a jealous God. From 1 Timothy 6, we see that you dwell in unapproachable light.

And Father, this morning we want to calibrate our hearts to you and have a proper reverence.

Would you speak to us now from your Word? Thank you that we can know you.

Because of, and only because of what you did on our behalf. Through your Son. So we celebrate and we worship Jesus this morning.

We give you this time. Let our time before your book be worship for each of us.

[2 : 04] Might we hear from you? And might we be different because of it? It's in your precious name we pray, Lord Jesus, and all guys and people said, Amen.

I do want to welcome you if it's your first time here. Our lead pastor, Pastor Scott and Wendy, are finishing up a week of vacation.

And I love the fact that we can gather and worship and we can give our senior pastor the freedom to be able to be gone. And Jesus is still worshiped amongst his people.

So he will come back refreshed and energized. So look forward to that. Well this morning in our text, we saw from last week as we began chapter 13 that the story shifts in the narrative of Acts. God's eye in a sense, it moves from looking at Jerusalem to now looking at Antioch. And we find that the focus of characters moves from Peter to Paul.

[3 : 17] Additionally there's a shift in the gospel being primarily given to the Jews now extending to the Gentiles. This is the major plot shift in the book of Acts.

Paul and Barnabas called of God. They have launched their first missionary trip. Their first stop, the island of Cyprus. And we know that that is Barnabas's hometown.

The aim of that two year trip preached the gospel. That's Paul's aim. That's his burden. That's his privilege to talk about Jesus.

To talk about the man that he hated with his whole heart and now has been forgiven by.

And Paul is talking about the Lord a lot. And he's doing so regardless of the cost. And mind you there is a cost.

[4 : 21] We learned last week that that is really the central issue where men say to God, use someone else. The cost is always the greatest deterrent from living a missionary life.

Sacrifice, being inconvenienced, maybe being thought of as strange or odd. That's a cost. And many are unwilling to pay it.

Why? Because it's hard. It's hard. G.K. Chesterton said this about the faith.

He wrote Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried. It's hard.

And as we begin the section this morning, we see that there is a cost and not everyone is actually willing to pay that cost as the ministry team shrinks in size.

[5 : 25] So let's just begin starting here in verse 13. Luke writes. Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Panphilia.

And John left them and returned to Jerusalem. So we have a map here. And we have our team leaving the island of Cyprus.

They are now in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey. And we see here too it's interesting because verse 13 it says Paul and his companions.

First time Paul is mentioned first in the stories. It's always Barnabas and Paul and now it's Paul and Barnabas doesn't even get named. It's just his companions. But there's a shift apparently in leadership.

The team that arrives in Asia Minor but John Mark has had enough. And we don't know exactly what it is. We don't know if he's upset that his uncle is no longer the lead guy on the team.

[6 : 33] We don't know if he's concerned about the unsafe travels. We don't know if it's a comfort thing. We know that he comes from affluence because it says in Acts 12:12 that the church was meeting in his house.

And to have a house that size or his mother's house it would mean that you had means in that day. So we don't know exactly what it is that he's unwilling to endure but there's a cost.

And we know that Paul isn't pleased with John Mark because he accuses him later in Acts 15:38 when it's time for the second missionary trip.

Paul accuses John Mark of withdrawing or better translated of deserting which is why Paul and Barnabas they split.

Barnabas takes John Mark and they go south and Paul and Silas go north. And I actually love the fact that we have this recorded in the narrative.

[7 : 38] The fact that there is this split that occurs because it tells us hey leadership is fallible. As godly as Paul is.

As incredible a leader as we read him to be he is still fallible. And my sense is that Paul was wrong. And I believe that because of the way that Paul then talks about John Mark later in some of his other books where he commends him. Just like he realizes man this guy is useful.

He says that in Colossians 4:10 tells the Colossians welcome John Mark. In 2 Timothy 4:11 he says he John Mark is a useful instrument.

He's useful for ministry to me. And I appreciate the fact that we see whether we are leaders whether we are followers we all are dependent on the Holy Spirit and we're all fallible.

[8 : 50] Well let's continue look at verse 14 says but they went from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisitias.

Now this is a different Antioch. Antioch in Turkey or southern Galatia versus the Antioch where they began their mission from which is Antioch on the Orontus which is a river or Antioch in Syria.

And this Antioch it's interesting because they don't spend a lot of time on the coast they the first kind of record of what happens on this leg of the journey is what happens in Antioch and you wonder how did they why did they decide to go immediately there what was it and we don't specifically know but you have to wonder if at this time Paul was suffering some medical ailment.

We read in Galatians 4:13 he says to the Galatians I'm preaching in this city as a result of an illness.

And Antioch is located there in southern Galatia so he is going there and it looks as though he is going there because he's got to get out of this sea level city perhaps dealing with malaria or something and Antioch there in Turkey this is a city that is in the mountains it's 3600 feet above sea level and it may be that he went there to get away and to heal.

And I just love the fact that God's will can be such a mystery how the pieces of our lives fit together and here we have an instance where it may be that Paul's next place of ministry occurred because of an illness that he had and I love that some of you may be are in that space you're like how is the Lord going to use this I don't know but he'll use it he's used it in my life the fact that I lost my health for an extended season so I began to drive Uber.

[11 : 10] It's also why I was able to move to Spokane and it's how the Lord moves us and it's just it's the details it's the things of life it's things that we often think are just so ordinary and yet God's hand is in it.

Well continuing here in the second part of verse 14 says on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down after the reading from the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent a message to them saying brothers if you have any word of encouragement for the people say it I mean you don't have to give Paul an invitation twice and Paul's just his typical method is to go to visit synagogues in new cities it's theological it's where you're going to find Jews

the the gospel to the Jew first it's also smart because he knows there's God fears there there are Gentiles who know something about the God of Israel and Paul here he gets an invitation he probably has an invitation because he's known he is this famous rabbi he studied under the famous rabbi Gamaliel and so to have him in your synagogue man he's a guy that he's got the PhD in the mosaic law we want to hear from this guy so he's got an invitation and of course when they say would you like to speak he's like I would love to share a word and so what we have here this morning church is we have a record of Paul the Apostles very first sermon recorded so verses 16 to the end this is the first sermon of Paul and this morning what we're going to receive from this are three truths to build a life on and I think as we build a life on these three truths there will be a commensurate amount of joy that will follow so let's look here beginning in verse 16 so Paul stood up and motioned with his hand said men of Israel so here we are speaking to the Jews and you who fear God we have there the

Gentiles listen verse 17 the God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt and with uplifted arm he led them out of it and for about 40 years he put up with them that's a actually a difficult phrase to translate it could either mean he endured or he carried them along kind of more in the positive I would take the former I think he endured with them and I'll tell you why in a moment for 40 years he put up with them in the wilderness verse 19 and after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan and we have a list of the nations in Deuteronomy 7 verse 1 the Hittites the Gurgoshites Amorites Canaanites Parasites Hivites and Jebusites he gave them their land as an inheritance and maybe some of you are thinking well that doesn't seem so fair

God displaced a people let me just say as an aside this is a desperately wicked people these aides that we just read about their wicked nations some of what was going on was child sacrifice worshiping the God of Mollach and without getting into specifics there'd be a statue of Mollach with our outstretched arms and that's where an infant would be placed and that's as much as I'll share because it's horrifying it's horrifying the activities that were taking place in these nations and so the Lord gives Israel this land as their inheritance and in a very real way God by removing these nations he's cleansed the land look at verse 20 all this took about 450 years and we know Israel was enslaved in Egypt for 400 of those years wandered in the desert for about 40 and then the conquest of the land took about seven to ten years for you get your number about a hundred and fifty or 450 and after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet then they asked for a king so this is why I say I believe that the Lord endured with them because they asked for a king God we don't like your leadership we want to be like the other nations God accommodates and God gave them Saul the son of Kish a man of the tribe of Benjamin for 40 years and when he had removed him he raised up David to be their king of whom he testified and said I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my own heart who will do all my will you guys didn't know you're getting a history lesson this morning but the first truth that I want us to see here is this God God God is the author of this story truth number one to build a life on God he is author and that's what Paul does here to those in the synagogue he's saying God is writing a great story and in fact this is where the gospel begins you know Francis Schaefer back in 1974 presented a position paper at the international Congress of World Evangelism and he he wrote this salvation is bowing and accepting God as creator and Christ as Savior I must bow twice to become a Christian

I must bow and acknowledge that I am not autonomous I am a creature created by the creator and I must bow and acknowledge that I am a guilty sinner who needs the finished work of Christ for my salvation see why do I need a Savior if I reject premise number one if no God then no need of rescue who am I being rescued from and from what we've rebelled against no one and Jesus becomes irrelevant first truth to be your life on God and we live in a land that's been enchanted for the past 160 years with the notion that there's not a designer there's not a maker this is a world without God see Darwin gave us a permission slip to discard God because they man now we're free but the freedom is so very costly because when you have no maker you have no morality no God I can do whatever I want I can sleep with whatever I want I can be as hardworking or as lazy as I want I was driving yesterday around the city picking up folks with Uber and this is a land without God because the bars are full this weekend in preparation for St. Patrick's Day that's like a week away the party's begun no God I can just do what I want but here's the thing killing God has massive social implications because even the evolutionary thinking that is what fuel the eugenics movement and if you don't know what eugenics is it's it's practices aimed at improving the genetic quality of the human population if it's all about evolution well let's help out inspiring Nazi ideology

leading to the Holocaust and the death of six million Jews

[20 : 59] Planned Parenthood no God Margaret Sanger she divided the world into two groups the fit and the unfit and she loved to put clinics in less fit communities those that were impoverished and racial minorities if you destroy God there are implications you know New York City that is the abortion capital of our nation there are more African American babies that are aborted every year than are allowed to be born in that city and you look up the stats every year and my point is this the denying God is has very real and catastrophic repercussions and what Paul is first declaring here to all those are listening is this God is author in fact God is and I love the fact that as he explains Israel's history it's not that

God simply is that he exists but he's writing the story whose story is it this is God's listen to Paul's language here this is in the text I just made a list this is what he wrote God chose God made God led God put up God destroyed God gave God appointed God removed God raised up God testified and as we're going to about to read God has brought a savior so whose story is this really fourth it's not ours we're characters in a story that God is writing he is author and to live in a world that denies this actually according to Paul is out of touch with reality and I believe that we do a disservice to people when we point to the sunset and we don't cry out thank you God when we don't talk about the maker we don't talk about the God who designed that who gave it as common grace as a gift to all men we see God's brilliance and we think that we're somehow clever because we simply observed it and then we chalk it up as well that just that's just spontaneously happened I don't know if you've heard of this area of science or engineering called biomimicry but it is the science of applying nature inspired and I would say God inspired design in human engineering church God's a genius and the world is figuring that out but they're not saying thank you God they're saying oh nature did that and we have examples of where man has looked at God's creation in architecture the building in Zimbabwe the East Gate Center imitated a termite mound in order to regulate the temperature it was just a passive system saving a ton of money how did God do it let's imitate that or in the medical field in Japan they have designed a hyperdermic needle that causes no pain and they base it off the serrated snout of the common mosquito energy there's a wind turbine company that is taking God's design of the humpback whales flipper the way God designed it there's bumps on the flipper which allow the whale to actually grab water and is far more agile so this turbine company said let's imitate that now they have turbines that don't stall and they create more power as a result my favorite it's a bullet train in Japan this train when they engineered it it would come through a tunnel and it was traveling so fast you'd hear a sonic boom when it would exit the tunnel like how do we fix this thing well let's look at how God did it they look at the kingfisher bird beak how it's able to just pierce water it's just still so they designed the nose of the train just like the kingfisher bird beak the train comes through those tunnels quiet and it now runs 10% faster oh let's just see how God did it so church let's not be shy in giving God credit

and talking about him just in the everyday I don't even think about it anymore I don't know where the person is that I'm speaking to had a gal in my car I said hey she was struggling with trying to make a decision I go to college I'm not going to college I'm like what do you love what do you like to do what do you she started sharing I was like you know what God gave you those skills God gave you those talents and I was encouraged her to pursue going back to school I don't know what she thought oh maybe I should never thought that God gave her those things I don't know this week I had a very important trip for my wife I went to North 40 and I stood in line to get us some chickens and I was number third and it was like 30 people I I'm just telling you I I have credits going out my ears right now gentlemen and I'm in line I got two women in front of me and we're just talking and you know killing time until we can go get our chickens and I was like man I love the rooster you love the rooster yeah I was like man I love how God designed this bird to wake us up in the morning and I don't you know it's just it's God did that let's talk about that and it's not this sort of weird like platitude it's just reality church and let me tell you this it's the first step and put it in a pebble in someone's shoe because once they recognize and they think about God well what's next let me tell you his name

Christianity is a faith where man bows twice well as an aside I am thankful that God is writing the story amen I am thankful that God is writing the story amen because it gives us great comfort in days of great unease and we need to be reminded that the Lord is on his throne and that he is the God of history and he is writing a grand narrative of drawing a people unto himself regardless of what politicians and armies are happening to do God well back to the text here those listening the

Jewish leaders they're hearing Paul they're probably loving the message actually they're probably applauding smiling giving him a nod like yeah God yeah Yahweh God's plan go Israel and then what does Paul do he drops a live grenade right in the middle of their gathering look at verse 23 of this man's offering speaking of David God has brought to Israel a savior Jesus as he promised you know the priests and the elders they're in the synagogue I have no doubt they're probably just they're

God's man they don't know what to do we got this PhD he's an academic he's a rabbi he is Jesus and all of a sudden he's like I worship Jesus like who gave him the mic what's going on here this is the greatest critic of Jesus and now he's saying that that Jesus is the apex of God's story pretty much pretty much look at verse 24 before his coming John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel and as John was finishing his course he said what do you suppose that I am I am not he no but behold after me one is coming the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie brothers sons of the family of Abraham and those among you who fear God to us has been sent the message of this salvation and I have no doubt that some of these leaders present are like message what message we didn't get the message actually you did and in fact you were just reading about it and you read about it every time that you gather because Paul continues in verse 27 for those who live in Jerusalem and the rulers because they did not recognize him or understand check this the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath fulfilled them by condemning him so what's Paul saying he's saying the Old Testament prophets they've been talking about Jesus this whole time and you missed it you missed it 300 plus prophecies and you missed it and actually this is what so in I mean Paul is he sharp because like actually the fact that you missed it that's another prophecy fulfilled because isn't Isaiah 53 he was despised and rejected by men which is what he just said you fulfilled even a prophecy by condemning Jesus second truth to build a life fine God is author and Jesus is the hero God is writing a story and Jesus is the hero and now Paul what he's going to do is demonstrate that Jesus is not an afterthought this has been God's plan from the beginning it's replete in the Old Testament it's not like God was like oh ad hoc man wow lot of rebellion I'm gonna have to create something here no God is author God is not chess player he writes the story look at verse 28 it's been his plan since the beginning Luke writes and though they found in him no guilt worthy of death they asked Pilate to have him executed and when they had carried out all that was written of him they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb but God raised him from the dead and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem who are now his witnesses to the people and we bring you the good news the evangelical on the gospel life death resurrection and what God promised to the father so there it is the gospel is in fact in the Old Testament

[33 : 33] God promised Jesus through the prophets look verse 33 this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus as also it is written and now what Paul does is gonna give us some examples Jesus in the Old Testament will let me share with you written in the second Psalm you are my son today I have begotten you to quote from Psalm to verse seven Jesus is in the Psalms verse 34 and as for the fact that he raised him from the dead no more to return to corruption he has spoken in this way I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David from Isaiah 55 3 Jesus in the major prophets for 35 therefore he says also in another Psalm you will not let your holy ones see corruption Psalm 16 verse 10 you love your hero David

David wrote about him for 36 for David as after he had served the purpose purpose of God in his own generation fell asleep and was laid with his father's and saw corruption what is corruption it's decay it's what happens to a corpse verse 37 but he whom God raised up did not see corruption church do you see what is being spoken of here and maybe you've never seen this before but Psalm 16 verse 10 actually it's teaching resurrection the resurrection is in the Old Testament it's right there he whom God raised up did not see corruption you should never read your Old Testament the same again because it's stories they all converge upon the Messiah and his name is Jesus maybe you're like Jay man why did God do it this way you want me to dive into the mind of God I mean why didn't Jesus just show up a lot sooner you had to read us all those verses like why the need for the mosaic law what all those regulations I had you know I read Leviticus well so what Paul has to say on the matter related to why the mosaic lovers 38 to 41 says let it be known to you therefore brothers that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of

Moses beware therefore lest what he is said in the prophets should come about look you scoffers be astounded and perish for I am doing a work in your days of work that you will not believe even if one tells it to you Paul they're quoting from Habakkuk 1 verse 5 and the immediate context in Habakkuk and by the way prophecy can be difficult to understand is very enigmatic right sometimes you read something like how did I didn't see Jesus well you know what what's concealed in the Old Testament and the New Testament is revealed and it sheds light so we understand then oh Philip explain Isaiah 53 I get it and so sometimes with prophecy you have a dual fulfillment called the census plenair which is there's an immediate occurrence happening and this this word speaks to that but it's also speaking about yet future events and here in Habakkuk 1 the immediate context was the approaching of the Syrian army and Israel scoffing what Habakkuk wrote look you scoffers be astounded and perish you think a serious not going to take you out go ahead and scoff it'll never stop it happened and now you perish and what Paul is saying here is just like then don't be a scoffer by rejecting Jesus as your Messiah don't be another fulfillment of prophecy don't be a fulfillment of what Habakkuk says because he who has a son has life he who rejects Christ does not have life two types of people in the world notice Paul gives a reason for the mosaic law here verse 39 he says you could not be freed by the law of Moses why did God do it this way because you needed the law in order to understand that you needed to be freed because before it you didn't know you didn't understand Paul says in Romans 3 20 the law what does it give us it gives us knowledge of what sin is that's the why the mosaic law because you saw oh this is what God defines the sin and we're not meeting up to it and we're having to continue to bring sacrifices and we need help we need a final solution we need a savior mosaic law just tells you you're a sinner so God did it that way to prepare the way for Christ mosaic law is like a it's just like a road sign it's like a speed limit sign why do those exist to tell you you're a sinner right because you look at that thing and you're like oh I didn't have any power to rescue you but you kind of realize yeah and some of you are bigger sinners than others that's how you can think of the mosaic law it feels that you are a trespasser you are a rule breaker well let's consider the response to all those who are listening to Paul's first sermon verse 42 to the end is how they respond as they went out the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath

that's a pretty good response amen yeah bring this preacher back verse 43 and after meeting after the meeting the synagogue broke up many Jews and devout converts of Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas who as they spoke with them urged them to continue in the grace of God the next Sabbath now almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord church this is revival it's incredible but as we know when the Lord works in a person's life does the enemy delight in that absolutely not did that person's unbelievable friends delight in that oftentimes not first Peter 4 tells us you're no longer going to engage in debauchery with me I'm gonna cuss you out I'm gonna malign you make fun of you yeah

God makes changes in these people's lives and it's an affront to some and this is what we see many are responding but verse 45 says but when the Jews saw the crowds they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul reviling him and Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly saying it was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you first to the Jew that the Jews would be a blessing to the nation and they said no thank you in large measure since you thrust it aside listen to this and judge yourself unworthy of eternal life who's responsible for their damnation they are they chose to reject Christ they deem themselves unworthy of eternal life continue behold Paul says we are turning to the Gentiles this is sobering church God's ancient people essentially saying you someone else you someone else Messiah came from us and we're to share the good news of a savior and we're gonna pass verse 47 so for so the Lord has commanded us saying

[43 : 33] I have made you a light for the Gentiles that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth and when the Gentiles heard this they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord and as many were appointed to eternal life believed we'll come back and the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region but the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and leading men of the city I don't know what was going on the women had influence right the man is ahead the woman's the neck and she will bend the head where she wants it so they get the women influential women leading the men of the city stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of their district but they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to the next town Iconium and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit here's the third truth church

God's writing a story God is author the hero is Jesus and the third truth everybody's welcome everyone is invited and just as an aside for our young preachers out there here's your blueprint every sermon God Jesus is the hero everyone's welcome everyone's welcome at his table and as we know and as we read here some repent others do not and the response of Paul and Barnabas as they leave says they shake the dust right from their feet they shake the dust that would have been a very inflammatory gesture to these religious leaders because when does the Jews shake the dust off when they leave a Gentile city unclean got to get that off before I get back to Jerusalem and so what is Paul and Barnabas communicating by shaking the dust off of them they're saying hey you the verdict is in and you are unclean because you have rejected Jesus your Messiah well let me conclude by addressing a couple things here first is the one that you want me to talk about and the second one is the one that I want to talk about the first yours okay we read in verse 48 it says as many were appointed to eternal life believed why was it necessary for God to be so sovereign related to salvation why did God have to elect I think we have a picture of why from Matthew 22 and we have the scene of a banquet feast and the invitations go out it's beautiful the church the gospel is beautiful that a sinner could be forgiven that a sinner could have a brand new life that they could be called a new creation that they could be brought from being an enemy of God not just to neutrality but they could be brought into adoption as actually like a son or a daughter you now belong forever and you get God it's beautiful it's like this wedding feast who doesn't want to who doesn't want to show up the general call goes out and none respond I don't want to be at the feast and if man is left unto his own devices he just has simply no taste buds for God Jesus said it John 3 18 light is coming to the world people loved the darkness rather than the light Paul says it in Romans 118 by their unrighteousness men suppress the truth you prefer to suppress truth by just piling more and more and more sin on and so the only way for some to be rescued who didn't really want to be rescued is for God to initiate J that's not fair I mean let's just not have that conversation this morning right and if you have somebody who's like well that's not fair you know what at that point you just simply say you know what stop belly aching and repent and then at that point you have judged yourself worthy of eternal life yes

there's a mystery here church and hopefully Scott will pick this up because there's a next the section in the next chapter speaks about how many responded because they spoke in such a manner there's a mystery here and it's been a mystery for many many many centuries and I'm not going to like untangle that at this point this morning now let's talk about what I want to talk about and we have to reread verse 47 for so the Lord has commanded us saying I have made you a light for the Gentiles that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth you know what Paul is quoting here Isaiah he's quoting Isaiah chapter 49 this is the second of four servant songs recorded in Isaiah there are four chapters in Isaiah devoted to Jesus Isaiah 42 Isaiah 49 Isaiah 50 and the one that we all know Isaiah 53 end of 52 into 53 these four servant songs are about the Messiah they are prophetic and you can in your Bible chapter heading whatever you just write Jesus this book it's one story

Jesus has always been the apex of God's grand narrative and this servant song from Isaiah 49 it tells us something critical it says I have made you a light for the Gentiles salvation to the ends of the earth God's rescue plan has always always always been for the nations always you even you even look at how God designed and said hey when you make the tabernacle you're in the desert create a space for the Gentiles the temple do the same thing so the nations can be gathered and hear and learn something of the living God God's plan has always been for the nations and you have it here seven hundred years before Jesus Isaiah tells us about the marching orders from Acts 1 8 Jerusalem Judea Samaria to the outermost parts of the earth that's not a new thing that was God's plan seven hundred years before in Isaiah and you can go back even further thirteen hundred years to Genesis 12 and see that that was God's plan from the beginning speaking to Abraham you're gonna be a blessing to the nations and if God's plan is for the nations maybe we should align ourselves there amen doesn't matter who you are doesn't matter what you look like where you come from how much you possess what your your sin profile resume looks like we invite them all we invite them all and then we don't just invite them all here but we go and that's the heartbeat from the elders to the pastors we want forth to be ascending church want that because that's God's plan salvation the gospel to the nations additionally what we see here in this quoting of from Isaiah 49 there's also in there another statement I want to read that Isaiah 49 verse two it's all about Jesus says he made my mouth like a sharp sword the shadow of his hand he hid me he made me a polished arrow in his quiver he hid me away we've already read about the suffering servant we've

already read about the first advent of Christ this section I believe you have both advent's kind of mashed together that you have here actually something that is prophetic it has occurred and it and it will occur and what I want us to know about

[53 : 58] Scripture you have over 1800 references in Scripture of Christ's second coming if you were to compare all of the references related to Christ first coming and the second coming it's eight to one Christ has already come he's made good on that promise you have eight times more data information prophetic word that he will return which means we should live as though it is going to be so that is reality and you can actually see and I'll end with this yeah the one who has a mouth like a sharp sword like a polish arrow here in Revelation 19 sounds very similar to what Isaiah wrote Isaiah 19 verse 15 from his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations God doesn't even need an army he just speaks it you're condemned you have judged yourself unworthy you reject the free offer

I have I have I've done everything necessary for you to know me to be forgiven and to have eternal life from his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty on his robe and on his thigh he has he has a name written King of Kings Lord of Lords three crews to bank your life on God God's the author the author of Israel their story is author of our story Jesus the hero and we need to make sure that we are inviting that's why we're here we're here because we're ambassadors we're not home we're on the job Christ is going to return I believe that with my whole heart let's live as though that is true amen let me pray Father thank you for time to hear your words Lord their true words Father I feel oftentimes that we are just we are so blind to the fact that you have promised so much it's right in front of our eyes these words penned hundreds of thousands of years ago for the time of Christ and you made good on those promises Lord we don't want to be a people that disregard the reality of what you have said is so and Father it starts with us recognizing that you are that you are and that you reward those who earnestly seek after you Father we want to talk about you God we want we want those around us to know that they're not an accident that there is meaning that there is purpose and that there is design behind their individual life and Lord we want people to know that there is a massive rescue plan that you have initiated that any willing to bow their knee to you Jesus that you would receive them they repent of their sin that you would call them son that you would call him daughter Lord I pray if there's anyone here this morning they've never trusted in you Jesus trying to figure this thing out trying to be good enough trying to do the right stuff recognizing they can't they continue to break your laws they see the rebellion in their heart and they know that they need help they need a savior they need an advocate I pray today that they would cry out to you and they would acknowledge Jesus that indeed that you are God and that you are savior that you died for their very sins that they could have eternal life new life and be called your friend your son your daughter Lord I pray that we would be a people not majoring on temporary things but Lord you continue to fuel the urgency and the burden Lord that we would talk about you regardless of the cost regardless of what the neighbors might say or the friends might say God would you embolden us give us courage like we see in Paul and Barnabas because Lord we know that the worst day for the unbeliever has yet to occur to stand before holy God and not have an advocate Lord use for it in your name we pray amen