

Discussion Questions

November 3, 2024

Acts 13:13-39 God Declares Us Righteous

(if time is limited prioritize question 5)

1. Read Acts 13:13-16

Discuss why John-Mark left this missionary journey. What are some personal obstacles or challenges that have made following Jesus difficult for you in your journey? What has enabled you to keep going?

We see a large shift in this chapter in leadership from Barnabas to Paul. How does Barnabas handle this shift?

In what ways does his example challenge you in areas where you may need to pursue the good of others or invest in others?

2. Read Acts 13:17-22

Why does Paul remind his audience of God's faithfulness throughout Israel's history?

What have been the clearest signs of God's faithfulness in your life?

How can reflecting on these moments help you trust Him more in current situations?

3. Read Acts 13:23-27

What is Paul's main point in this passage?

How does seeing Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises impact your understanding of the Bible and God's work throughout history?

4. Read Acts 13:28-37

Jesus' resurrection is usually the central focus for Paul when preaching the gospel. Discuss why this is and how the resurrection shapes our faith and understanding of who Jesus is and what He has done.



5. Read Acts 13:38-39

What does it mean to be justified, and why is this so significant?

James shared of his past struggle with shame and being able to accept that because of Jesus, he has been made right with God and he can finally say, "I am righteous." How do you respond to the idea that, in Christ, you are declared righteous and free from condemnation? Has this truth been difficult for you to accept personally?

James also shared of the significance of being able to finally forgive himself as Christ has forgiven him. Are there things from your past you find difficult to let go of? How might God's declaration of your righteousness help you release that burden and experience freedom?

6. Take time to pray.

Acts 13:14-17 (NLT)

But Paul and Barnabas traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Sabbath they went to the synagogue for the services. After the usual readings from the books of Moses and the prophets, those in charge of the service sent them this message: "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, come and give it." So Paul stood, lifted his hand to quiet them, and started speaking. "Men of Israel," he said, "and you God-fearing Gentiles, listen to me. "The God of this nation of Israel chose our ancestors and made them multiply and grow strong during their stay in Egypt. Then with a powerful arm he led them out of their slavery...

Acts 13:20-23 (NLT)

"After that, God gave them judges to rule until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then the people begged for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.' "And it is one of King David's descendants, Jesus, who is God's promised Savior of Israel!

Acts 13:38-43 (NLT)

"Brothers, listen! We are here to proclaim that through this man Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins. Everyone who believes in him is made right in God's sight - something the law of Moses could never do. Be careful! Don't let the prophets' words apply to you. For they said, 'Look, you mockers, be amazed and die! For I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn't believe even if someone told you about it.'" As Paul and Barnabas left the synagogue that day, the people begged them to speak about these things again the next week. Many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, and the two men urged them to continue to rely on the grace of God.

Acts 13:13-14 (NLT)

Paul and his companions then left Paphos by ship for Pamphylia, landing at the port town of Perga. There John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. But Paul and Barnabas traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia.

Galatians 4:13 (NIV)

"As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you."

**Acts 13:14-15 (NLT)**

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Acts 13:16 (NLT)

So Paul stood, lifted his hand to quiet them, and started speaking. "Men of Israel," he said, "and you God-fearing Gentiles, listen to me..."

Acts 13:13 (NLT)

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Paul's Sermon Outline:

- God has always been faithful to Israel (vs 17-22)
- Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises of the Old Testament (vs 23-37)
- Application: In Christ we are forgiven & declared righteous (vs 38-39)

• God has always been faithful to Israel (vs 17-22)**Acts 13:17-20 (NLT)**

"The God of this nation of Israel chose our ancestors and made them multiply and grow strong during their stay in Egypt. Then with a powerful arm he led them out of their slavery. He put up with them through forty years of wandering in the wilderness. Then he destroyed seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to Israel as an inheritance. All this took about 450 years.

Acts 13:20-22 (NLT)

"After that, God gave them judges to rule until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then the people begged for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.'

• Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises of the Old Testament (vs 23-37)**Acts 13:23 (NLT)**

"And it is one of King David's descendants, Jesus, who is God's promised Savior of Israel!"

Acts 13:24-25 (NLT)

Before he came, John the Baptist preached that all the people of Israel needed to repent of their sins and turn to God and be baptized. As John was finishing his ministry he asked, 'Do you think I am the Messiah? No, I am not! But he is coming soon - and I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the sandals on his feet.'

Acts 13:26-27 (NLT)

"Brothers - you sons of Abraham, and also you God-fearing Gentiles - this message of salvation has been sent to us! The people in Jerusalem and their leaders did not recognize Jesus as the one the prophets had spoken about. Instead, they condemned him, and in doing this they fulfilled the prophets' words that are read every Sabbath.

Acts 13:28-31 (NLT)

They found no legal reason to execute him, but they asked Pilate to have him killed anyway.

"When they had done all that the prophecies said about him, they took him down from the cross and placed him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead! And over a period of many days he appeared to those who had gone with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to the people of Israel.

Acts 13:32-33 (NLT)

"And now we are here to bring you this Good News. The promise was made to our ancestors, and God has now fulfilled it for us, their descendants, by raising Jesus.

Acts 13:33-34 (NLT)

This is what the second psalm says about Jesus: 'You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.' For God had promised to raise him from the dead, not leaving him to rot in the grave. He said, 'I will give you the sacred blessings I promised to David.'

Acts 13:34-37 (NLT)

Another psalm explains it more fully: 'You will not allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.' This is not a reference to David, for after David had done the will of God in his own generation, he died and was buried with his ancestors, and his body decayed. No, it was a reference to someone else - someone whom God raised and whose body did not decay.

- **Application: In Christ we are forgiven & declared righteous (vs 38-39)**

Acts 13:38-39 (CSB)

Therefore, let it be known to you, brothers and sisters, that through this man forgiveness of sins is being proclaimed to you. Everyone who believes is justified through him from everything that you could not be justified from through the law of Moses.

E.J Schnabel - Zondervan Exegetical Commentary

"to "declare righteous" or "justify" means to acquit someone in a trial in which accusations of being guilty of wrongdoing have been made, to pronounce and treat the accused person as righteous.

If an accused person is declared righteous, they are vindicated, not punished.

The image that the Greek terms present speaks of a legal setting in which all human beings, who are all sinners, stand before the tribunal of the divine Judge. Paul emphasizes that the guilt of sinners is removed by God himself through Jesus: God acquits sinners of their sin and guilt as a result of Jesus' death and resurrection."

Romans 3:21-24 (NIV)

*But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known... This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and **all are justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*