

TABLE TALK

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE for August 21-27, 2022

ACTS IN 30 Chapter 13: *Fasting, Forgiveness, Freedom, and A Fulfilled Life in Christ*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW: Acts 13 begins a “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8) journey that becomes the focus for the rest of the Book of Acts. The chapter begins with a “behind the scenes” look at how the leadership team of the church at Antioch **fasts** and prays for direction and the Holy Spirit answers. The Holy Spirit directs them to “*set apart*” (meaning “appoint”, or, “dedicate”) Paul and Barnabas to embark on missionary journeys telling people everywhere that Jesus is the Messiah. The Good News (Gospel) that Paul shares with them is that now in Christ people everywhere can receive **forgiveness** for their sins (13:38), experience **freedom** from bondage (v39), discover true joy and **fulfillment** with life in the Holy Spirit (v52). These are 3 great themes we should share with others today as well!

DAY 1: The Antioch Church Leaders Fast and Pray for Divine Direction

READ: Acts 13:1-3

REFLECT: Throughout the history of the church, it would be difficult to find a great move of God that did not begin with people dedicating themselves to a season of prayer and **fasting**. **Fasting helps us disconnect from the temporal so that we can reconnect with the eternal.** There are many ways you can personally fast such as a **physical fast** of certain foods or a “**soul**” **fast** of entertainment, social media, video games, etc... Taking time to fast with family members can be a powerful spiritual experience as well. You may also want to participate in season of fasting with your local church community. The Antioch church discovered divine direction through fasting.

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Do you think it is important for church leaders (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors & teachers) to fast? If so why?

Application Question: As a spiritual leader in your home, do you feel that it is important for you and those around you to fast? If yes, what are some potential benefits that you could experience? If you don’t think fasting is important, why not?

DAY 2: Another Sorcerer Gets Humbled and an Influential City Leader Becomes a Believer

READ: Acts 13:3-12

REFLECT: In this passage, we read of Paul and Barnabas sailing to Barnabas’ hometown of Cyprus for their first of 3 missionary journeys covered in the Book of Acts. There they meet a sorcerer (“*magician and false Jewish prophet*”) (v6) who was an advisor to the highest-ranking Roman official (Governor) in all of Cyprus. Paul confronts the sorcerer for his deceitfulness and God strikes him with temporary blindness (v11). The Governor – Sergius Paulus – ends up becomes a believer (v12) as he was “*astonished*” at the teaching of the Lord.

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: City officials often have great influence on public policy. In your opinion, do you feel like it is important for political leaders to be believers, as we read here in vs. 12? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Application Question: Paul is led by the **Holy Spirit** to confront the deceitful sorcerer for corrupting the Governor. If the **Holy Spirit** led you to confront someone who is having an ungodly influence on someone else, do you feel like you could do it? Why or why not?

DAY 3: Paul Shares the Good News that Jesus is the Messiah First in Synagogues

READ: Acts 13:13-43

REFLECT: Paul’s ministry to foreign lands often begin with him attending a synagogue and asking to share. This follows a ministry method he writes about later in the book of Romans, “*to the Jews first*” (see Romans 1:16; 2:9 and 2:10). The Good News (Gospel) that Paul shares with them is that now in Christ people everywhere can receive **forgiveness** for their sins (13:38), experience **freedom** from bondage (v39), and discover **fulfillment** with life in the Holy Spirit (v52). Sometimes they received him and sometimes they did not.

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Do you feel like it was important for Paul to bring the Gospel, “*to the Jews first*” in new cities? Why or why not?

Application Question: Which of these topics are most appealing to you: forgiveness of sins (v38) or freedom from bondage (v39)? Why?

DAY 4: The Gentiles Receive the Good News While Many Religious Jews Unfortunately Reject it

READ: Acts 13:44-52

REFLECT: Although “*many*” Jews and Gentile proselytes receive the Gospel, the religious leaders eventually force Paul out of town (v50).

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Read what Jesus told His disciples to do in Luke 9:5. What do you think, “*shake the dust off*” means practically?

Application Question: As you share the Gospel with others, sometimes you may get rejected – like Paul and Barnabas did at the end of this chapter. Although there may be some hurt feelings, how can what Jesus said in Luke 10:16 encourage you?