
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES



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“Acts 13”

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COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
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SERMON RECAP

In Acts 13, Pastor Gary highlighted a major turning point in the life of the early church. The church in Antioch is no longer made up of only one background, ethnicity, or cultural story. God is weaving together a diverse family into one Spirit-led church. In that setting, the believers are not primarily gathering to consume, but to minister to the Lord, fast, pray, and listen for the direction of the Holy Spirit.

A central pastoral burden of the message was the need for believers to practice separation from the constant pressure of the world. Pastor Gary warned that we live in a consumer-driven, hyper-personalized culture that constantly shapes what we think, want, feel, and pursue. But Acts 13 calls us to step away, gain perspective, and be consecrated for God's purposes. Christians are not called to be absorbed by the world's agenda, but to be set apart, Spirit-filled, and sent into the world with the gospel.

Pastor Gary also emphasized that souls are worth battling for. When Elymas the sorcerer tried to keep Sergius Paulus from hearing the gospel, Paul confronted him with spiritual authority. This moment reminds us that believers must not be passive when someone is being kept from Christ. At the same time, Paul's confrontation was shaped by deep self-awareness, he remembered his own blindness, sin, and need for grace. The message called us to be honest about our capacity for sin, confident in our identity in Christ, and increasingly astonished by the power of God's Word.

 STUDY GUIDE

Key Points

- The church ministers to the Lord before it ministers to the world.

Acts 13 begins with worship, fasting, prayer, and attentiveness to the Holy Spirit. The church's mission flows out of communion with God.

- Believers must practice spiritual separation.

"Separate to Me Barnabas and Saul" reminds us that God consecrates people for His purposes. We need rhythms of stepping away from the noise of the world so we can hear, think, pray, and obey.

- The world is always discipling us unless we resist its pattern.

Pastor Gary warned that consumerism, technology, advertising, and cultural pressure shape our minds, wills, and emotions. Christians must intentionally refuse conformity to the world.

- Souls are worth fighting for.

Elymas tried to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith. Paul recognized the seriousness of that spiritual interference and confronted it. We should prayerfully and courageously stand against anything that keeps people from Christ.

- Self-awareness is part of spiritual maturity.

Paul knew what it was to oppose Christ and be struck blind. His past made him humble, watchful, and dependent. We must be honest about both our weakness and our identity in Christ.

- God's Word should astonish us.

Sergius Paulus was amazed not merely by the sign of judgment on Elymas, but by "the teaching of the Lord." The preaching and teaching of Scripture should shape, correct, encourage, and transform us.

Key Scripture

Primary Sermon Text

- Acts 13:1-40 The sending of Barnabas and Saul, the ministry in Cyprus, the confrontation with Elymas, and Paul's gospel preaching in the synagogue.

Verses and Passages Mentioned by Pastor Gary

- Acts 13:1-3

The church at Antioch ministers to the Lord, fasts, prays, and the Holy Spirit sets apart Barnabas and Saul.

- Acts 13:4-5

Barnabas and Saul are sent by the Holy Spirit and preach in the synagogues of Cyprus.

- Acts 13:6-12

Paul confronts Elymas the sorcerer, who is trying to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith. Sergius Paulus believes and is astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

- Acts 13:13-15

Paul and his companions travel to Perga and then Antioch in Pisidia, where they enter the synagogue and are invited to speak.

- Acts 9

Pastor Gary referenced Saul's conversion and blindness on the road to Damascus as a background for understanding Paul's confrontation with Elymas.

- Acts 26:11

Pastor Gary referenced Paul's former life of persecuting Christians and trying to force them to blaspheme Christ.

- Matthew 18:6

Jesus warns that whoever causes one of His “little ones” to stumble faces severe judgment. Pastor Gary connected this to the danger of keeping people, especially children, from the truth.

- 2 Timothy 3:16

Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. Pastor Gary used this to emphasize the correcting work of the Word.

- Hebrews 4:12

The Word of God is living and active, sharper than a two-edged sword, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Pastor Gary alluded to this when describing the power of biblical preaching and teaching.

- Romans 12:2

“Do not be conformed to this world.” Pastor Gary used this as a key warning against being shaped by worldly patterns.

- Romans 8:1

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Pastor Gary used this to balance self-awareness with gospel assurance.

- John 4

Pastor Gary referenced the woman at the well as an example of a familiar and memorable biblical passage.

- John 1

Pastor Gary referenced John 1 as another recognizable passage of Scripture.

- Matthew 11:30

Pastor Gary referenced Jesus' words that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

- Matthew 28:18-20

Pastor Gary referenced the Great Commission as a familiar passage about Christ sending His people into the world.

Other Relevant Verses

- Galatians 2:20 – General thematic tie

“I have been crucified with Christ...” This verse reinforces the sermon's call to move from self-centered consumption to a life yielded and surrendered to Christ.

- 1 Peter 2:9 – General thematic tie

Believers are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.” This verse expands on the idea of being separated and consecrated for God's purposes.

- Colossians 3:1-2 – General thematic tie

“Set your minds on things above, not on things that are on earth.” This passage connects directly to the need to resist worldly formation and cultivate spiritual perspective.