

Promise Fulfilled

Part 2

Acts 13

Promise Fulfilled for Salvation!

- Acts 13 outlines the incredible mission that God had for Paul and Barnabas, a call to a specific work, which involved extensive travel and opposition, and his commandment to them, echoing the prophesy about the Messiah in Isaiah 49:6:
- “I have made you^[f] a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”
- The Word Salvation Means “Rescue”.
- This Salvation extends to every aspect of our personhood (including our body, mind, emotions, personality) and to the world that God created.

Good News!

The Kingdom of God is Arriving

Jesus is the King! He Reigns! He will Return!

Because of the Good News – Everything has changed..

Characteristics of the Kingdom

Love

Justice

Mercy

Healing

Shalom, Peace, Well-Being

It's Important for us to remember what God has and hasn't promised. He hasn't promised that we won't experience any pain or sorrow. But in the midst of the pain and sorrow, His loves us and is with us.

There is Work for us to do!

Acts 13:1-3 (NIV)

- ¹ Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Early Church Leaders in Antioch - Facts are Key!

The Church in Antioch: Antioch is a city in modern day Turkey.

Along with Barnabas and Saul, there were prophets and teachers including:

Simeon called Niger. “Niger” means black. Simeon was apparently a dark-skinned man.

Lucius of Cyrene. Cyrene is a city in modern day Libya in North Africa.

Some of the earliest Christians, some of the earliest leaders of the Church were from Africa. Philip shared the good news with the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8.

Facts are Key. Lies can indicate idolatry!

Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch). Manaen is thought to be either the foster brother or the close friend of Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great.

“Tetrarch” is Herod Antipas’ title and it means “ruler of a quarter of a country or empire” That’s because after his death, Herod the Great’s territory was divided between four people: his three sons Herod Archelaus, Herod Antipas and Philip and his sister Salome.



The Church is not a Building!

- It's the people that follow Jesus! It's the Body of Believers. The church at Antioch are the followers of Jesus in the city of Antioch.
- Believers came together in larger groups and in smaller ones. We know from Acts 2 that believers met together in the temple courts and in their homes. At Life Church we will meet together both on Sundays and in life groups.
- Here some of the leaders of the church are together, worshipping, fasting and praying.

Acts 13:4-5 (NIV)

Then Paul and Barnabas are sent out on their Journey

On Cyprus

⁴ The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.





Opposition will come

- As we are on our journey, as we are running with perseverance the race marked out for us, as we fulfill our calling as followers of Jesus and any specific calls to a work; at some point - opposition will come. Hebrews 12:3 (NIV) reminds us: Consider him (referring to Jesus who endured the cross) ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.
 - This is important for us remember as we face the challenges of today: sin, instability, injustice, racism, oppression, economic pressures, sickness, family issues, work challenges, etc.; it's important to remember this when we're transfixed by travesty or tragedy.
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Two Tales of Opposition – First in Acts 9

- Acts 9:1-20 New International Version
- **9** Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"
- ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.
- "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."
- ⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.
- ¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered.
- ¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."
- ¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."
- ¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."
- ¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.
- Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰ At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.
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The Second Tale of Opposition in Acts 13

- **Acts 13: 6-12**

- ⁶ They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, ⁷ who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. ⁹ Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ¹⁰ “You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? ¹¹ Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.”
- Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. ¹² When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord

Saul and Elymas: Compare and Contrast

Saul

- Responsible for the death of Stephen. Persecuted the Church
- Heard: Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? Asked who are you Lord? And Heard I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.
- Was struck blind for a while
- Scales fell from his eyes. He was filled with the Spirit and could see again.
- His sight marked the beginning of his ministry.

Elymas

- Tried to turn the governor against away from the faith.
- Heard: You're full of trickery and every kind of villany! You're a son of the devil!
- Was struck blind for a while
- His blindness led to the governor believing.

God is not Limited! Some Respond to God and are Able to See and Be Used By Him. Others Remain Blind and God is Able to Use Even Their Blindness for His Purposes. He can be glorified in our Suffering and in our Deliverance. To Deal With Opposition, We:

- Draw Near to God – Hebrews 10:22-23:
- ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.
- Come together with other Believers— Hebrews 10:24-25:
- ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.



Draw Near To God and Worship Him

- Hebrews 12:28 (New International Version)
 - ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe
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Come Together with Other Believers, Filled with the Spirit

- Ephesians 5:15-20 New International Version
- ¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- In Greek the present tense is used to represent continual action so the idea here is to be filled on an ongoing basis. You’re not filled once and that’s it. Rather, the idea is to be filled again and again by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit and under the influence of the Spirit.

Filled, Empowered by and Under the Influence of the Spirit. How Do We Get There?

- Ask To Be Filled – Follow Jesus and Just Ask!
- Give Thanks and Sing Songs To God
- Relate to One Another with Psalms, Hymns (Songs of Praise) and Songs led by the Spirit
- Luke 11:11-13 (New International Version)
- ¹¹ “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for ^[a] a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”
- Colossians 3:16 (New International Version)
- ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.
- Psalms include Praise and Lament. Psalm 61:1-3
- ¹ Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.² From the ends of the earth I call to you,
I call as my heart grows faint;
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
³ For you have been my refuge,
a strong tower against the foe.

Let's Discuss and Pray For Each Other:

- What are Some of the Ways You are Dealing with Opposition in Your Life?
- What is the Lord saying to you about dealing with opposition by:
 - Drawing near to God
 - Drawing near to other believers
 - Expressing Lament and Praise
 - Operating in the power of the Holy Spirit