

## **Tying Up The Loose Ends From Paul's First Journey – Part 2**

### **Acts 13-14**

#### **Introduction:**

1. We have ridden with Paul and Barnabas on their entire first missionary journey. This was a historic trip in that it was the first church planting missions trip in history.
2. Multitudes of Gentiles were saved as Paul preached the gospel of Christ that had been revealed to Him by direct revelation.
3. But we must remember that Acts is a transitional book. It is a book that takes you from Peter to Paul, from the prophetic program of Israel to the dispensation of grace, from law to grace, from the nation of Israel to the body of Christ, etc.
4. Because it is a transitional book, there can be certain events that cause you to scratch your head and ask questions.
5. During this lesson, we will go back through Acts 13 and 14 and cover some of these issues that we didn't have time to cover when we studied through these chapters. We are going to seek to tie up any loose ends.

#### **First issue: prophets in the church – Acts 13:1**

#### **Second issue: fasting in the dispensation of grace – Acts 13:2**

#### **Third issue: the laying on of hands – Acts 13:3**

1. During the transitional period of Acts, the Holy Spirit - or some special gift of the Spirit - was frequently imparted by the laying on of hands. Example: Acts 8:14-17
2. But the laying on of hands did not necessarily involve anything miraculous. The practice, in Old and New Testaments alike, simply signified identification.
  - **Example:** Leviticus 16:21 – The high priest identified himself and the people with the scapegoat by placing their sins, symbolically, upon the head of the goat.
3. There is no indication in our text that the leaders at Antioch imparted to Barnabas and Saul any miraculous powers or gifts by laying their hands upon them.
4. The leaders at Antioch were simply identifying themselves with these men publicly, and by laying their hands upon them they were saying, “We recognize this divine calling on their lives and we stand behind them in it.”
5. We still do this today, but it is not out of a biblical command or out of a belief that something miraculous happens when we do this. It is purely symbolic.

#### **Fourth issue: to the Jew first – Acts 13:5, 14; 14:1**

1. It is clear from the scriptural record that Paul was sent to preach the gospel primarily to the Gentiles. Acts 14:27, 15:3, 12; 22:21; Romans 11:13; Galatians 2:8
2. Here is the obvious question: “Why did Paul always make it a habit in the book of Acts of going into the Jewish synagogue and ministering there first?”

3. After the book of Acts is complete, we do not see this anymore. While in prison in Rome, Paul made a final, declarative statement of judgment at the end of the book of Acts (Acts 28:27-28). We do not see Israel or the Jews mentioned in any of Paul's prison epistles after this. Paul calls himself "*the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.*"
4. So why does Paul incorporate the principle "*to the Jew first*" in the book of Acts? Romans 1:16
  - First, it was to give all the Jews living outside of Israel an opportunity to know about and trust their long-awaited Messiah.
  - Second, so that Israel as a whole might be without excuse before God when He set their prophetic program aside for their rejection of Christ.
  - Third, so that they might have no reason to complain when salvation was sent to the Gentiles apart from Jewish instrumentality. They refused it, thereby disqualifying themselves as the agents of God's blessings to the nations.
    - Three times in the book of Acts Paul rebukes them and lets them know that he is sending the good news of Christ to the Gentiles because Israel had spurned it. Acts 13:46, 18:6, 28:27-28; cf. Romans 11:11-12
  - Fourth, it was for a very practical reason. Every synagogue would have a copy of God's Word. Paul had high credentials in Judaism, having been a Pharisee. The synagogue would be a place where Paul could take God's Word and explain the good news of Christ to a large group of people, both Jews and Gentiles. It was a wonderful open door and served as a springboard to reach the community.