

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for December 7, 2014

God's Faithfulness in Retrospect
Acts 13:14-25

After the departure of John Mark from Perga, Paul and his companions travelled 100 miles north to Pisidian Antioch.

Pisidian Antioch was an important destination for ministry because it was:

- accessible via a Roman road
- a Roman colony, the highest status as a capital city
- a large Jewish population, around 2,000 families

Paul went to the synagogue on the Sabbath because:

- it was the pattern of Christ and the apostles
- it allowed him to preach to the most prepared people
- if he went to the Gentiles first the Jews would not accept him

Those that Paul addressed at the Pisidian Antioch synagogue included those “who fear God,” which is a term referring to Gentiles who believed in God but were not full proselytes to Judaism.

There is far more similarity between this address and Peter's in Acts 2:14-40 and Stephen's in Acts 7:2-53 than with his own later address in Athens in Acts 17:22-31. The difference is therefore not with reference to the speaker but rather with reference to the hearer.

1. God picked His people (13:17)

One obvious theme in Acts 13:17-23 is an emphasis on what God does, where a dozen different events are directly attributed to God. Every good thing is from God (James 1:17), beginning with His sovereign choice of His people.

2. God prospered His people (13:17)

God's ability to bless His people is unhindered by our circumstances.

3. God put up with His people (13:18)

When we are faithless, He remains faithful (2 Timothy 2:13).

4. God placed His people (13:19)

The seven nations are listed in Deuteronomy 7:1 as a testament to God's promises and God's power. The 450 years covers 400 years in Egypt, 40 years in the wilderness and 10 years of conquest of the inherited land.

5. God provided for His people (13:20-23)

We should be thankful when God does not give us what we pray for but rather what we need.

Acts 13:23 references Isaiah 11, which promised the Messiah would be a descendent of David, and was fulfilled in Christ.

Acts 13:17-23 provides a divinely inspired Old Testament survey.

6. God prepared His people (13:24-25)

Paul skipped 1,000 years of history between David and John the Baptist.

Some followers of John the Baptist may have been present, such as we find in Ephesus in Acts 19:1-7. John made it clear that it was Jesus alone who should be followed.

May we always remember where we came from, what we are destined for, and the One who is responsible for it all.