

THE CHURCH'S WITNESS TO THE WORLD
Paul's First Missionary Journey - Acts 13, 14

Memory Verse: *"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:14, 15a NIV).*

Background Helps:

This week we begin the second half of the book of Acts. The center of activities has changed from Jerusalem to Antioch, the key figure from Peter to Paul, and the main target group from the Jews to the Gentiles. The Gospel is about to go "to the end of the earth" as prophesied by our Lord in Acts 1:8. The assigned chapters from Acts concentrate on the first missionary journey of the Apostle Paul.

Lesson Helps:

Thus far, our lesson applications have concentrated on personal or local evangelism. Now our attention will be focused on the missionary activity of the church - reaching other nations with the Gospel. As you study Acts 13 and 14 this week, use some of these discussion questions to help your class discover some fundamental missionary principles:

1. What is a missionary? What is a missionary call? Who sends the missionary? (Acts 13:1-4) Notice the parts played by the Holy Spirit and by the local church. What were Paul and Barnabas doing before they began their missionary work?
2. What kind of people does the Holy Spirit choose as missionaries? What were Barnabas and Paul doing before they were sent?
3. What is the goal of missions? (14:21-23) The making of Christian disciples and establishing them in local churches. Point to examples of our own missionaries engaged in this work. Other "missionaries" in support role functions aid in this primary task.
4. What is the strategy of missionary work? Notice that Paul and Barnabas did not settle down in one place and become pastors. They moved from one place to another winning converts; then, returned again to the new believers to build them up and to appoint leaders from among them (14:21-23) so that they became self-sustaining churches.
5. What is the purpose of the missionary furlough? See Acts 14:26-28.
6. What is the missionary message? Compare 13:16-41 with 14:15-17.
7. What is the missionary's source of power (13:9).
8. What are the results of missionary work? 13:42-52; 14:1-7, 11, 12, 19-23.


Methods:

Use map #8, "The Mediterranean World in the Time of Paul," and chart #18, "The Church Goes Abroad," to help your class trace this first Missionary Journey of the Apostle Paul.

Applications:

1. Pray that God will send out some as missionaries from our own church. Is He calling you? Does the church confirm this calling?
2. Pray for our missionaries now on the field that through them our own church will bear fruit for God.
3. Examine your giving, your praying and your writing. Are you making a real contribution to missions? Are you keeping up on what is happening to our own missionaries and to missions world-wide?
4. Are you a witness for Christ to your own "circle of influence"?

Home Assignment:

 Read Acts 15:1-16:5

 Memorize Romans 3:28