



**Sermon Text:** Acts 13:4-12

*Sermon Date:* April 8, 2018

On Sunday we returned to our study through Acts, picking up right where we left off. Pastor Justin reminded us of the good, hard grace found in studying a passage about missions and evangelism immediately following Easter. It forces us to evaluate our lives—Do we live like Easter is true?

### **OBEDIENCE**

Our text opens with Barnabas and Saul setting off on their missionary journey by sailing to the island of Cyprus. On this missionary journey they will encounter sickness, opposition, division, and outright hostility. Paul will be stoned and dragged out of the city of Lystra by an angry mob. And yet, they obeyed! Are you willing to go wherever God sends you? In view of the resurrection, who will you tell the good news that Jesus has conquered the grave.

### **OPPORTUNITY**

The obedience to go leads to opportunities to share. The proconsul of Cyprus—the ruling governing official—invites Barnabas and Saul to share the word of God. The juxtaposition between the two Pauls is striking. One man is the most powerful man on the island, invested with the full authority of Rome. The other Paul is a nobody, seemingly powerless, but in reality he is invested with the authority of the risen King.

### **OPPOSITION**

Opportunity is always met with opposition. The first story of the very first missionary journey centers upon a spiritual conflict. Opposition is inevitable. The Jewish, false prophet, sorcerer Bar-Jesus (Elymas) seeks to turn the proconsul away from the faith. So, in a spiritual stare down, Paul confronts him and Elymas is struck blind for a time—his inner condition revealed for all to see.

### **OUTCOME**

The result of this encounter is that Sergius Paulus believes. The teaching of God coupled with the power of God results in the salvation of God. Where God's Word goes, there God will—in his time and by his power—bring salvation. This should give us confidence to share the gospel. J.I. Packer says, "When we evangelize, our trust must be in God who raises the dead. He is the almighty Lord who turns people's hearts, and he will give conversions in his own time. Meanwhile, our part is to be faithful in making the gospel known, sure that such labor will never be in vain."

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. Are you living like Easter is true? What are some areas where you can begin to live more faithfully in the light of the Easter reality?
3. The atheist Penn Jillette has said, "I've always said that I don't respect people who don't proselytize... How much do you have to hate somebody to not proselytize?" Why must the gospel drive us out of our comfort zones to share the truth that Jesus is "the resurrection and the life"?