



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Three Handicaps in Evangelizing Capital Communities

JUNE 1-3, 2016

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Acts 13:13-19 *“Now Paul and his companions sailed from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John [Mark] separated himself from them and went back to Jerusalem. 14) But they [themselves] came on from Perga and arrived at Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue there and sat down. 15) After the reading of the Law and the prophets, the leaders [of the worship] of the synagogue sent to them saying, ‘Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation or consolation or encouragement for the people, say it.’ 16) So Paul arose, and motioning with his hand said, ‘Men of Israel, and you who reverence and fear God, listen! 17) The God of this people Israel selected our forefathers and made this people great and important during their stay in the land of Egypt, and then with uplifted arm He led them out from there. 18) And for about forty years [as a nursing-father] He cared for them in the wilderness, and endured with their behavior. 19) When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He gave them [the Hebrews] their land as an inheritance—distributing it to them by lot; [all of which took] about four hundred and fifty years.’” (Amplified)*

“I HAVE BEEN ON FREQUENT JOURNEYS, IN DANGERS OF RIVERS, DANGERS FROM ROBBERS, DANGERS FROM MY COUNTRYMEN, DANGERS FROM THE GENTILES, DANGERS IN THE CITY, DANGERS IN THE WILDERNESS, DANGERS ON THE SEA, DANGERS AMONG FALSE BRETHREN.”
2 CORINTHIANS 11:26

How could John Mark possibly abandon this team after he has only enjoyed the Hawaii of the Mediterranean? Did John Mark

fear the dangers, difficulties or differences that lay ahead? Why did they leave Perga so quickly? Was there a disease spreading there? What is the elevation of Antioch in Pisidia? Were these cities capitals? How does Paul begin his first recorded sermon?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- > JUNE 8-10: ACTS 13:20-28 *THE PRIVILEGED RECIPIENTS OF THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION*
- > JUNE 15-17: ACTS 13:29-41 *SALVATION OFFERED IN JESUS CHRIST ALONE*

Self deprivation was not new to the church at Antioch and especially their leaders. They had sacrificed what they had to bless the church in Jerusalem in time of famine. Their leaders were given to fasting and prayer, as well as the entire church, and they were willing to give up their founding pastors for the cause of world missions. Barnabas and Saul were prepared to face whatever may come to give the Gospel to their own countrymen and the Gentiles. On Cyprus the only real obstacle had been overcome as Bar-Jesus was struck with blindness as he attempted to lure the king from eternal truth. Nothing could have excited the team more than winning the king over the entire island and Paul takes the name of the king and carries it the rest of his life as a trophy of the fulfillment of his personal commission by Jesus Christ. But they have no idea of the hardships that lay ahead.

“THESE THREE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS CHANGED THE HISTORY OF EUROPE FOREVER AND AS A RESULT THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.” JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE

I. UNACCEPTABLE DESERTION

ACTS 13:13

It becomes obvious that Barnabas has relinquished the leadership of the mission team to Paul and possibly there are some from Cyprus who have joined them to sail over to Perga, because now the team is referred to literally as *“those with Paul.”* Mark must not have been consulted as

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 7:30AM – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3 & 12:00 NOON – WOODBRIDGE – BOB EVANS – 14490 SMOKETOWN ROAD

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM – BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY’S AT RT. 10 (IRON BRIDGE ROAD) & 301(12531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY)

FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM – BIBLE STUDY – NORFOLK – GOLDEN CORRAL, 6103 N. MILITARY HWY, NEAR THE NORFOLK AIRPORT

Virginia

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Barnabas promoted Paul as leader of the team. When John Mark had first chosen to accompany them, even from Jerusalem, his cousin Barnabas had always been the leader. John must have resented this change in leadership because the word for “*separated*” means “to desert or withdraw from” and it is from two words meaning “turn away from” and “having or making room in your heart or mind for,” thus presenting a hostile departure with unconcern for those who remain. This verb is only used in Matthew 7:23 and Luke 9:39 where it implies even a violent departure. In fact, this was so confrontational that it later divided these closest friends, Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41). Harsh words must have accompanied such a dramatic defection. Thus, they quickly leave this third capital and wisely reserve the Gospel proclamation for their return at the end of their trip (Acts 14:25).

*“YOU KNOW THAT BECAUSE OF PHYSICAL INFIRMITY I
PREACHED THE GOSPEL TO YOU AT THE FIRST.”*

GALATIANS 4:13

II. UNTOLD DIFFICULTIES

ACTS 13:14

Since Antioch in Pisidia is the capital of southern Galatia, it has been presented in numerous commentaries that Paul must have contracted malaria or some similar disease and moved to higher elevation to reduce his continued risk. Pisidian Antioch is about 3600 feet above sea level, dramatically reducing his risk. Not only would there have been two dangerous rivers to cross, but 100 miles and steep climbs with such sickness would have been extremely difficult. Also, the trails up the mountains were sometimes impassible and these mountains were known to be filled with bands of robbers who preyed upon those who chose such a difficult journey. Because these dangers were well known in the ancient world, Luke only emphasizes them with the middle voice, “*they themselves*” and simply presents the overcoming of such immense difficulties with the statement of their arrival.

*“THE MISSIONARIES ENCOUNTER SEVEN DIFFERENT
SOCIAL LEVELS OF PEOPLE: SYNAGOGUE OFFICIALS, JEWS,
PROSELYTES, GOD FEARERS, DEVOUT WOMEN OF HIGH
STANDING, GENTILES AND LEADING MEN OF THE CITY.
THEIR MESSAGE PENETRATES ALL LEVELS OF SOCIETY.”*

ECKHARD SCHNABEL

III. UNEXPECTED DIFFERENCES ACTS 13:15-19

When Paul and Barnabas finally reach Pisidian Antioch they continue to first evangelize in the synagogue. Their attendance is sufficiently conspicuous so that the leaders of the synagogue wish to hear from them. The word meaning “*exhortation, consolation or encouragement*” is the reason for Barnabas’ name—“*son of encouragement*,” yet he humbly still prefers Paul to be the leader, so Paul stands, motions his hand for silence and addresses the congregation with so many differing kinds of people. In order to arrest the attention of everyone, he begins, “*Men of Israel, and you who reverence and fear God, listen!*” Paul’s message was the most important that they would ever hear. Following the example of Stephen in his message to the Congress of Israel, the Sanhedrin, Paul’s first point is God’s gracious work on behalf of His chosen people. God is the gracious actor in every sentence: He sovereignly “*selected*” or chose them, “*made*” them “*great*,” delivered, “*cared for*,” “*endured with*” them, destroyed their enemies, and “*gave them their land*.” All must have gratitude to God for His loving and mighty work on their behalf.

*“DO YOU DESPISE THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS,
FORBEARANCE, AND LONGSUFFERING, NOT KNOWING
THAT THE GOODNESS OF GOD LEADS YOU
TO REPENTANCE?”*

ROMANS 2:4

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Do you keep doing what God wants you to do though you may be deserted with hostility by those closest to you?
- 2) When you meet with difficulties beyond your control and maybe even your ability do you continue to present the truth?
- 3) Have you recognized the goodness of God and repented of your sin and lead others, different from you, to do the same?