SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Week of August 17, 2025

Acts 13:42-52

42 As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath. 43 And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God. 44 The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. 45 But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. 46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'" 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. 50 But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. 51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

1. In our passage this week, we see two very different responses to the gospel. Some eagerly listened and believed, while others opposed and rejected the message. What do you think was the main reason for the different responses?

2. There were some who, upon hearing the gospel, begged Paul and Barnabas to teach them more. What is it about the gospel that makes believers want to hear more about it week after week? Why do you think it is so important for believers to learn more and be reminded and encouraged by the gospel message week after week?

3. Should it surprise us if some initially receive the gospel with great joy and enthusiasm, but later fall away? Do you know anyone like this? What do you think was the reason for their falling away, and do you think you will see that person one day in heaven? What about you…what will keep you enduring in your faith until the end?

4. Why do you think some Jews rejected and opposed Paul and Barnabas? Why would some turn away from such good news? What is it about the gospel that makes it so threatening to most people?

5. When Paul and Barnabas were rejected by the Jews they were not deterred. Rather, they pivoted and took the message of salvation to the gentiles. What do you think drove these missionaries to push on with such endurance in spite of rejection, danger, and difficulty? What did they know and believe with all their hearts about God that inspired such zeal?

6. In spite of persecution which drove Paul and Barnabas out of Antioch of Pisidia, our passage this week ends by saying *"the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit."* Describe this kind of joy. What generates it? Why is it so enduring? Does this kind of joy fill you? Explain your answer.