

Dec 10, 2017



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks  
Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
Apply yourself to the Scriptures  
and the Scriptures to yourself

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
To handle the Word of truth  
Takes diligence and care,  
So make the time to study it  
And then that truth declare. —  
Hess

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*But solid food belongs to those who  
are of full age, that is, those who by  
reason of use have their senses exer-  
cised to discern both good and evil*  
(Heb 5:14 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Nov 15, 2011)*

**Series: Faith in Action**

**UNIT: The Early Church Proclaims  
Faith in Christ**

**NEXT WEEK**

**Faith to Persevere**  
(Acts 14:8-11, 19-23)

## Faith to Discern Acts 13:1-12

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson examines the hardships Paul and Barnabas encountered as they displayed their **Faith to Discern**. The **study's aim** is to recognize that there will always be opposition to the preaching of the gospel. The **study's application** is to learn from the example of Paul and Barnabas how to serve the Lord in missions.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

Do you remember the moment when you first had faith? For some, that was a long time ago. For others, it may have been just yesterday or even today. Stop and consider it. What was the moment like when you first realized who Jesus is? Many of us would say that it was a relief, like a weight taken off our shoulders. We might remember the overwhelming joy coursing through us, completely enveloping us. Maybe there was a sense of peace settling upon the heart and soul. Most of us, however, would agree that it left us in awe of our Saviour. What caused us to come to faith in Christ? The answer is discernment, which involves a recognition of something. It is that "aha" moment so many people talk about. This kind of spiritual discernment is unexpected. It is not something you can gain by practice; rather, it is something that happens by God's grace. In this week's lesson text, I am sure that this government official had no intention of making a life-changing decision when he met with Paul and Barnabas. He was probably feeling curious about these religious folks. He likely had heard reports about the believers and wanted to educate himself. But whatever his purpose, he was not expecting to be converted. Yet that is what occurred. When this man heard their testimony, he became a believer. Suddenly, he was moved to trust in Christ as Lord. How did this happen? Scripture tells us that God gives discernment to people. True discernment comes from God and the reading of His Word (Ps. 119:130). This discernment reaches far beyond the wisdom of mankind (cf. Ps. 139:6; Jer. 10:7-8). There is no one on earth who can rival His understanding. God chooses to grant us discernment so that we are able to know what He has for us (cf. Eph. 5:10). When we practice discernment, His will for our lives is revealed (Rom. 12:2). As we seek to follow Him, we will grow in wisdom (Ps. 111:10). We become able to separate what comes from God from what is not from Him (1 John 4:1). Discernment comes from having access to godly wisdom. There are times, though, when we may feel lacking in that. We feel inadequate and do not know what to do about something. When we experience this lack, we can ask God for wisdom. He will freely give it when we seek it (cf. I Kings 3:11-12). He will also choose to take it away when we are able to discern His ways and yet continually choose to go against them. He expects us to use what we are given. Are you feeling the need for wisdom in something? Ask God. When we sincerely ask Him for it through prayer, He will give it to us. If we are in an attitude of reverent prayer, He will reveal it to us. What we need to do is wait on Him to show us His plan. There are times when the waiting may seem to take forever, but it is always worth it when we follow His design for our lives. Remember that God is a loving Father who never fails His children. Whatever you are facing this day, you can come to Him and ask for discernment about it. When you make a decision, do not forget to include Him in it. You will be happy that you did.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **The Preparation (Acts 13:1-3)**

#### *Preparation through leaders (1)*

Leaders appointed by God to build up the Church (Eph 4:11-16)

Leaders that have been given the manifestation of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:7)

Leaders who proclaim Jesus as well as admonish and teach everyone (Col 1:28)

Leaders who are accountable for their leadership (Heb 13:17)

Leaders who bring good news (Rom 10:14-15, 17)

Leaders who are fellow workers with God (1 Cor 3:5-9)

#### *Preparation through the Holy Spirit's guidance (2)*

Guidance into truth (John 16:13-15)

Guidance by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:18)

Guidance into insight (Ps 119:99-100)

Guidance as a light for our path (Ps 119:105)

Guidance into understanding (Ps 119:130)

Guidance into wisdom (Prov 2:6)

#### *Preparation through prayer (3)*

Prayer because the Holy Spirit helps us to pray (Rom 8:26-27)

Prayer because it helps to keep one from falling into temptations (Matt 26:41)

Prayer because it supplies wisdom (James 1:5)

Prayer that "strives" with others (Rom 15:30)

Prayer that is in the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:18)

### **The Opposition (Acts 13:4-8)**

#### *Opposition to preaching God's Word (4-5)*

Opposed to preaching because of itching ears (2 Tim 4:3)

Opposed to preaching to persecute (2 Tim 3:12)

Opposed to preaching because of turning their backs and stopping their ears (Zech 7:11)

Opposed to preaching because rejecting the faith (1 Tim 1:18-19)

#### *Opposition from false prophets (6-7)*

False prophets oppose because of trying to lead others to sin (Mark 13:22)

False prophets oppose because of denying truth (2 Peter 2:1-3)

False prophets oppose because of denying Jesus (Jude 1:4)

False prophets oppose because of trying to start divisions and obstacles (Rom 16:17)

#### *Opposition to reaching those who seek God's Word (8)*

Opposing those seeking God's word because of being hypocrites (Matt 23:13)

Opposition to reaching those who seek God's Word because of keeping knowledge for self (Luke 11:52)

Opposition to reaching those who seek God's Word because of fear of losing leadership (Acts 4:17)

Opposition to reaching those who seek God's Word because of racial concerns (1 Thess 2:16)

### **The Discernment (Acts 13:9-11)**

#### *Discernment from the Holy Spirit (9)*

Discernment from the Holy Spirit to understand what God has given us (1 Cor 2:12)

Discernment from the Holy Spirit to understand the things of God (1 Cor 2:14)

Discernment from the Holy Spirit to know the truth (1 John 2:20)

Discernment from the Holy Spirit to discern insights into the mystery of God (Eph 3:4-5)

Discernment from the Holy Spirit to discern what God's will is (Eph 5:17-18)

#### *Discernment to recognize satanic schemes (10)*

Discernment to be aware of Satan's schemes (2 Cor 2:11)

Discernment to put on the full armor of God to fight Satan's schemes (Eph 6:10-13)

Discernment to be alert because Satan is prowling (1 Peter 5:8)

Discernment because Satan performs signs and wonders as part of his schemes (2 Thess 2:9)

Discernment because Satan blinds the minds as part of his schemes (2 Cor 4:4)

#### *Discernment of God's punishment (11)*

Punishment filled with God's wrath (Rev 14:10-11)

Punishment of being thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:15)

Punishment named the second death (Rev 21:8)

Punishment because of rejection of the truth (Rom 2:8)

### **The Conversion (Acts 13:12)**

#### *Converted because he believed the teaching (12)*

Believed the teaching because of what happened (Matt 27:54)

Believed the teaching because of the authority of the teaching (Matt 7:28-29)

Believed the teaching because of the wisdom of the teaching (Acts 6:10)

Believed the teaching because of the knowledge of the teaching (2 Cor 10:5)