



Handout for week of 5/6/19 John 10: 22-30 Acts 13: 14, 43-52

[www.theark1.com](http://www.theark1.com)

Connie May © 4/5/19

Drawing with permission by Fr. Robert Beck

Fr. Robert Beck ([subscription](#))

[More Fr. Beck](#) (With permission)

Stone, Naomi. [Song of the Shepherd](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Powerful Voices Within](#)

[New Melleray Abby Homilies](#)

[Another take on voice recognition](#)

Acts 13: 14 Then Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia.

43 When the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and 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 blaspheming, they contradicted what was spoken by Paul. 46 Then both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you reject it and judge yourselves to be unworthy of eternal life, we are now turning to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, 'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'" 48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and praised the word of the Lord; and as many as had been destined for eternal life became believers. 49 Thus the word of the Lord spread throughout the region. 50 But the Jews incited the devout

women of high standing and the leading men of the city, and stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region. 51 So they shook the dust off their feet in protest against them, and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.



[Jewish Annotated New Testament](#)

**COMMENTARY:** Acts 13: 43: Many Jews respond positively (14.1; 17.4,11–12; 18.8). 45: The Jews, Acts presents Jewish opposition as persistent (17.5,13; 18.12; 20.3,19) and irrational (5.17; 17.5). Blaspheming, perhaps meaning “swearing falsely.” 46: Spoke out boldly, see 4.13. Just as Jesus’ death results from both divine will and Jewish malevolence, so the mission to the Gentiles results from God’s plan (10.1–11.18) and Jewish rejection. 47: Isa 49.6. Paul takes himself and his companions, rather than Israel (T. Levi 14.3; Sib. Or. 14.214), to be the light. 48: Destined for eternal life, proven worthy of becoming part of God’s kingdom. 50: Jews are the source of enmity. 51: Shook the dust, Lk 10.11; cf Mt 10.14. Iconium, present-day Konya, 75 mi (120 km) southeast of Antioch. Pg. 226. [The](#)

**Devout proselytes.** A proselyte is a Gentile convert to Judaism who would renounce paganism and idolatry, be circumcised (if a man), keep the law of Moses, and worship in the synagogue every Sabbath —becoming a Jew though not of Jewish descent. Jesus said to the Jewish leaders of his day, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Mtt 23:15).

**Receiving or rejecting.** Paul’s message in the synagogue (Acts 13:13-41) polarised the Jewish religious community. Many followed Paul and Barnabas, eager to hear more, and a huge crowd turned out the next Sabbath to listen. The rest, however, opposed Paul and Barnabas, unreasonably contradicting their teaching.

**Blasphemed.** We might expect some of the Jews to contradict the gospel, but we would not expect them to blaspheme, even though angry and jealous. They regarded blasphemy as a sin worthy of death (Mtt 26:64-66). Perhaps Luke is not referring to blasphemy against God as such, but rather to insulting Paul and Barnabas. However I think Luke might well be thinking of blasphemy against God—in the person of Jesus. The Jewish opponents of Christ would be likely to say blphemous things against Jesus, but they wouldn't think it blasphemy, because they didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God.

**To the Jew first.** Jews were now living all over the world. They had meeting places called synagogues where their local congregations met and were administered. It was Paul's practice, when he came to preach in a city, to first go to the synagogues. There he would hope to preach the gospel to the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles. One of Paul's mottos was, "to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom 1:16, Rom 2:9-10). He saw this practice as "necessary" (Acts 13:46).

**You thrust God's word from you.** Paul lays blame upon these jealous Jews. They were able to accept the gospel; their own scriptures spoke of Jesus Christ; but they thrust the message from them. This made them fully responsible for any judgment against them that they were not made worthy of eternal life. Pilate once asked a Jewish mob of the same ilk, "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" (Mtt 27:22). They wanted him crucified.

**Behold we turn to the Gentiles.** Paul had done what was necessary for the Jewish community in Antioch. Now he could reach out to the pagan Gentiles and bring to them the light of the gospel. This mission had already been acknowledged by Peter and the apostles in Jerusalem, because of the experience with Cornelius. Peter said, "In every nation, the one who fears God and does what is right is accepted with God" (Acts 10:34-35). The point is that this can be true without having to become a Jewish proselyte. A Gentile would need to renounce paganism and idolatry certainly. But being circumcised; keeping the law of Moses; and worshipping in the synagogue every Sabbath; these were not required of the Gentile Christian. That, however, was to cause Christianity's first serious controversy.

**"As the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God.** As many as were designated for eternal life believed. The word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region." (Acts 13:48-49).  
Glorified the word of God. The Gentiles were overjoyed that they could have salvation and life without the yoke of the Jewish law being laid on their necks. This gospel spread rapidly

**Stirred up persecution.** Although Paul and Barnabas were now not preaching to the Jews but to the pagans, the Jewish leaders still perceived that they were suffering losses. Many Jews and proselytes would be delighted to take salvation to the

Gentiles and to desert the synagogues in favour of the Christian assemblies. So the Jewish leaders used their influence in the city to have Paul and Barnabas driven out. The city officials would be more than happy to avoid a commotion or uprising—for which the Roman rulers would punish the city chiefs. So they forced Paul and Barnabas to leave town. Paul and Barnabas turned this persecution into opportunity: the work in Antioch can go on without them, because nobody could kick the Spirit of Jesus out of town! There are other towns anyway, so they went to Iconium.

**Shook the dust off their feet.** This was what Jesus had told his disciples to do when a city rejected them (Mt 10:14-15). It was a symbolic act, as though to say, "We will leave this town; we are free of obligation to you now; and we won't carry with us any burden from you; not even the dust from your road that has got on our feet and sandals."