



Approaching God

Read this portion of Psalm 26 and begin with an opening prayer

Test me, LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness. I wash my hands in innocence, and go about your altar, LORD, proclaiming aloud your praise and telling of all your wonderful deeds. LORD, I love the house where you live, the place where your glory dwells. (Psalm 26:3-4; 7-8)

God's unfailing love and his faithfulness is the basis for our innocence in Christ and our ability to approach him today with an open heart. The security of what Christ has done for you, allows you to say, "God search my heart and surface every sin, all my misplaced hopes and desires and let me find cleansing and newness in you." Start by praying through this portion of Psalm 26.

Acts 13:42-52

Passage Introduction: The Gospel Received...and Rejected.

Paul's words (13:16-41) made a deep impression on his hearers, both on Jews & (especially) on Gentile God-fearers, and a large number of them believed the gospel. The Gentiles spread the news among their friends, and next sabbath day there was a great influx of Gentiles into the synagogue. This was not altogether to the liking of many members of the regular congregation, who found themselves crowded out. The orderly procedure that had marked the service the week before broke down on this occasion. Paul is heckled & contradicted as he begins to speak, and the meeting breaks up in disorder. What would your reaction be? What was the disciples'?

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Use the space in the margin to jot down notes, or themes/ideas that stand out as important.

Acts 13:42-52 - 42 As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. **43** When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. **45** When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. They began to contradict what Paul was saying and heaped abuse on him. **46** Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. **47** For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

quoted from:
Isaiah 42:6 &
Luke 2:32

“I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

vs.51 - “shake off the dust from your feet.” A sign used by Jews after leaving a Gentile region. For the missionaries it is a sign of judgment on those rejecting the gospel.

48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. **49** The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. **50** But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. **51** So they shook the dust off their feet as a warning to them and went to Iconium. **52** And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- What are 2-3 things you learn or observe about God in this passage?
- What are 2-3 things you learn or observe about you, other people, humanity in general?
- Are there any commands to obey in this passage? Are there any examples to follow or avoid? What in this passage applies to your life today?

Key Takeaway:

As you read today’s passage, what are 1 or 2 main takeaways that you wrote down in the margins? How would you briefly summarize your observations and meditations for today?

Close in Prayer:

1. **Rejoice:** - What did God show me today that I can **rejoice in**?
2. **Repent:** - What did God reveal that I need to confess or **repent of**?
3. **Requests:** - What prayer **requests** do I have as a result of my time with God today?