

# The Gospel & Temporary Faith

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Acts 13:42-52

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**Romans 1:16**, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it {the gospel} is the power {dynamis} of God for salvation {preserved from the harm of judgment} to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

The Gospel is the “power (*dynamis*) of God” –a power that is not just potential, but active and forceful. This ‘*dynamis*’ is not a power that we possess, but one that belongs solely to God, exerting force in performing the function of salvation.

**What is the Gospel?** The word gospel means good news. But for there to be good news, we must first acknowledge the bad news. We will never fully appreciate the good news if we don't first accept the terrible news—that man is conceived and born in sin and has broken God’s laws. The good news, encapsulated in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures {at this time, Old Testament}, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.* This is the Gospel, a message we all desperately need.

This power is associated strictly with God (**Romans 1:4**, *And was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord*, **Romans 1:20**, *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*)

The most troublesome fact of the Gospel is not whether or not Jesus is the Son of God, or that there is a God that created us. It is not that Jesus was born of a virgin and led a sinless life. The trouble with the Gospel is not whether Jesus, as the Son of God, was crucified and buried. It is also not whether he was resurrected or not. No, it is not any of these Scriptural facts that are the most troubling and offensive of all the Gospel facts. The most offensive element of the Gospel is the reality that given all these facts to be true, a man or a woman is unable to do anything to save themselves. They are dead in trespasses and sin and have zero merit or worth to save themselves. *But in this bleak reality, there is a beacon of hope—a person’s salvation is the grace (unmerited, unconditional, undeserved, unearned) of God.*

The reality of man’s inability exposes him as entirely helpless and strips him of any self-righteous pretense and aspirations. That stripping will often infuriate, divide, and offend those who reject the message. Consider these examples:

**Jesus told us in Matthew 10:34–36**, *“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household.* **John the Baptist was rejected as told in John 1:11**, *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.* **Paul faced opposition from the Jews in Damascus Acts 9:20–23**, *And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” 21 And all who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?” 22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ. 23 When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, Herod murdered James and imprisoned Peter Acts 12:1–3a*, *About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. 2 He killed James the brother of John with the sword, 3 and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Paul and Barnabas faced the opposition of Bar-Jesus Acts 13:6–8*, *When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. 7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.*

Paul and Barnabas are now in Pisidian Antioch. The gospel would be divisive here, as well. We will see different reactions to the message Paul proclaims in **Acts 13:16-41**. The response initially seemed positive, but the latter response was mixed.

## I. The Immediate Response (Acts 13:42-44)

- A. The people begged (begged, requested earnestly, implored, encouraged, pleaded) (Acts 13:42)
- B. The people engaged Paul (Acts 13:43a).
  - 1. Jews- nationally, by circumcision.
  - 2. Devout converts (proselytes) – full converts to Judaism, including circumcision.
- C. The people professed (Acts 13:43b)
  - 1. What is the mark of a true believer and a temporary believer? Perseverance
    - a) **1 John 2:19**, *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.*
    - b) **John 8:31**, *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,*
    - c) **John 15:1-6; Colossians 1:21-23.**
  - 2. The false syllogism
    - a) Those who put their faith in Jesus Christ will be saved.
    - b) You have put your faith in Him.
    - c) Therefore, you are saved.
      - (1) The second premise cannot be immediately proven. It can only be proven by a person’s perseverance in the faith (Perseverance does not produce faith; faith produces perseverance)
      - (2) A danger exists when we attempt to bolster our false faith with works and Law keeping
        - (a) **Galatians 5:4**, *You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.*
- D. The people were present (Acts 13:44)

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### **Key Doctrine**

#### **God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. (See John 1:12-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.)

## II. The Subsequent Response (Acts 13:45-49)

- A. For some, it was negative (Acts 13:45-47)
  - 1. It was prejudicial (Acts 13:45a; Jonah 4:1-3)
  - 2. It was jealous (Acts 5:17)
  - 3. It was contradicting (Acts 13:45)
    - a) To contradict *-antilegō-* the Jews were refuting Paul’s message.
    - b) This opposition comes to a head in Acts 18:6.
      - (1) **Acts 18:6**, *And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”*
      - (2) **Matthew 7:6**, *“Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.*
  - 4. The antinomy (tension of conflicting laws) of God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility.
- B. For others, it was positive (Acts 13:48-49) (“Order of Salvation” or “ordo salutis.” Grudem)
  - 1. **John 6:65**, *And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”*
  - 2. **Colossians 3:12**, *Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,* (2 Tim 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; Romans 8:33; Eph 1:4; Rev 13:8
  - 3. *“The matter of human will and divine election is so inscrutable, so incomprehensible to our minds, as to demand that we believe both without being able to comprehend how they fit together in God’s mind.”*

## III. The Profound Impact (Acts 13:50-52)

- A. The painful persecution (Acts 13:50; 2 Timothy 3:11; 2 Cor 11:24-25)
- B. The repulsive rejection (Acts 13:51)
- C. The joyful filling (Acts 13:52)