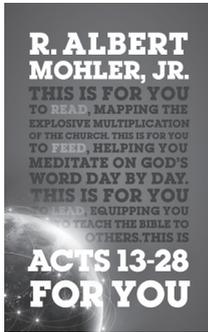




# **The church multiplies**

**ACTS 13-28**

by R. Albert Mohler, Jr.



## Acts 13-28 For You

If you are reading *Acts 13-28 For You* alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of *Acts 13-28 For You*:

Study One → Ch 1	Study Five → Ch 6-7
Study Two → Ch 2-3	Study Six → Ch 8-9
Study Three → Ch 3-4	Study Seven → Ch 9-11
Study Four → Ch 5-6	Study Eight → Ch 12

Find out more about *Acts 13-28 For You* at:  
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The Church Multiplies

The Good Book Guide to Acts 13-28

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# Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home or in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, moms and tots, students, businessmen or teens. That's why we've designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the “big picture” of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to appropriately apply what we have discovered to our lives. Let's take a look at what is included:

- ☞ **Talkabout:** Most groups need to “break the ice” at the beginning of a session, and here's the question that will do that. It's designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** The Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. The **Leader's Guide** contains **guidance for questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional “follow-up” questions.
- 🗨️ **Explore more (optional):** These questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to fit it all together like a jig-saw; or occasionally look at a part of the passage that's not dealt with in detail in the main study.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you'll keep coming across **apply** sections. These are questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. 🗨️ **Getting personal** is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have learned.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God's word—in line with his concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader's Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God's word.

# Why study Acts 13–28?

In Acts 1:8 Jesus said to his disciples:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The church’s obedience to our Lord’s command is dramatically revealed in this second half of Acts.

Chapters 1–12 chronicled the birth and growth of the Jerusalem church, from Jesus’ ascension and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost to the martyrdom of Stephen and the conversion of Saul, and finally to the coming of the gospel to the first non-Jews. Now, chapters 13–28 recount how the gospel began to extend to the ends of the earth. We travel with Saul (now called Paul) throughout the Roman Empire as he preaches the gospel and plants churches, then is arrested and put on trial for his faithfulness to Christ.

Discipleship means difficulty—a life of ease, comfort, and prosperity does not await people zealous for God’s kingdom. Yet Acts also reveals the glorious grace, mercy, and power of God. When Paul faced what seemed like certain death, he pressed on with an unspeakable joy, knowing that he lived as a citizen of heaven. Paul lived zealously, relied upon the Spirit, trusted in the promises of God—and changed the world.

But the book of Acts is not only the story of the apostles and the earliest churches. It is also the story of the worldwide church: a story that now continues in your church.

These eight studies will reveal what every Christian needs as we go out as ambassadors for Christ. May God make us more zealous for his kingdom, show us our need for his Holy Spirit, and help us to trust him as we face trials and suffering in the cause of the gospel. May he encourage, strengthen, and equip us to be witnesses of Jesus Christ wherever and whoever we are: even to the end of the earth.



# BIBLE TIMELINE

Where does the book of Acts fit into the whole story of God's word?

## ACTS c. AD 35-60

- c. 35 Paul converted
- c. 48 Paul's first journey
- c. 50 Council at Jerusalem
- c. 50-52 Paul's second journey
- c. 53-57 Paul's third journey
- c. 58 Paul arrested in Jerusalem
- c. 60 Paul reaches Rome



# 1

Acts 13:1 – 14:28

## MISSION COMMENCED



### talkabout

1. Think of a time when you have had good news to share. What responses did people have?

- How would it have felt if they simply hadn't believed you?



### investigate

#### Read Acts 13:1-12

2. What starts Saul and Barnabas off on their missionary journey?

#### DICTIONARY

**Prophet (v 1):** God's messenger.

**Tetrarch (v 1):** a Jewish ruler under the Romans.

**Fasting (v 2):** going without food.

**Proconsul (v 7):** important Roman official.

3. What is the missionaries' strategy to begin with (v 5-6)?

4. Trace the responses of the proconsul and the magician through the passage.

➔ **apply**

5. Consider how we see God working and how he uses people in this first part of Paul and Barnabas' mission. In what ways might this affect how we think about and do evangelism ourselves?

⬇ **investigate**

➤ **Read Acts 13:13-52**

6. What is Paul's concluding message (v 38-41)? How do you think you would have felt to hear it?

**DICTIONARY**

**Sabbath (v 14):** Saturday, a holy day for Jews.

**The Law and the Prophets (v 15):** the Old Testament.

**I have begotten (v 33):** I am the father of.

**Corruption (v 34):** the rotting of a dead body.

**Devout (v 43):** pious, committed.

**Reviling (v 45):** rejecting.

**Gentiles (v 46):** non-Jews.



**explore more**

optional

*Look more carefully at the rest of Paul's sermon. Can you map out his argument? Try dividing it as follows:*

*Verses 16-22; verses 23-25; verses 26-27; verses 28-37.*

In verse 46, Luke records a watershed moment in the Acts narrative. The gospel will now advance to the non-Jewish world. In verse 47, Paul establishes his mission in the prophetic witness of Isaiah 49:6: it was always God's plan to send Paul to the Gentiles.

7. After the gospel is preached, who feels joy, and why?



### getting personal

Paul reveals the significance of our response to the gospel. Why do Christians sometimes leave out the need to respond when they talk about their faith with others? When you share your faith, how can you call people to respond?

#### ▶ Read Acts 14:1-7

8. What patterns do you notice in the way the gospel is preached and received? Try comparing these verses with 13:1-12, 48-52.

#### DICTIONARY

**Signs and wonders (v 3):** miracles.

**Apostles (v 4):** disciples sent by Jesus as his representatives.

**Stone (v 5):** attack and kill by throwing rocks.

#### ▶ Read Acts 14:8-20

9. What is different about what happens in Lystra, and what remains the same?

#### DICTIONARY

**Zeus (v 12):** king of the Greek gods.

**Hermes (v 12):** Greek messenger god.

**Vain (v 15):** empty, pointless.

**Tribulations (v 22):** suffering.

10. How would you sum up all that has happened to Paul and Barnabas so far in these two chapters?

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▶ **Read Acts 14:21-28**

11. How do Paul and Barnabas themselves sum up their mission (v 27)?

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**DICTIONARY**

**Pisidia, Pamphylia (v 24):** regions in modern-day Turkey.

➔ **apply**

12. How do these chapters encourage us to keep on sharing the truth about Jesus?

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- How can we help each other to remember these encouragements?

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**getting personal**

Choose the aspect of the mission of Paul and Barnabas that has most struck you.

What would following their example in that aspect look like in your own life this week?





## **pray**

Spend time worshiping and praising God, like the disciples in 13:2.

Pray for one another that the Spirit might equip you to go out and present the gospel faithfully, and to take joy from serving the Lord in this way.

Pray for someone you would like to share the gospel with this week.

Ask that, like the proconsul in 13:12, they might be “astonished at the teaching of the Lord”, and that, like the Gentiles in 13:48, they might believe, rejoice in, and glorify the word of the Lord.

