

October 3, 2021 by Steve Brandon



The Beginning of the Mission to the Ends of the Earth

Acts 13:4-12

1. Travels (verses 4-6)
2. Preaching (verses 5-6)
3. Bar-Jesus (verses 6-11)
4. Sergius Paulus (verses 7, 12)

Last week, I began telling you the story of William Carey (1761-1834). I told you the story how he grew up in a rural village in England. I told you of how he was converted to Christ through the witness of his friend, a fellow shoe-making apprentice named John Warr. I told you of his heart for those in foreign lands who had never heard the gospel before. I told you of how he helped to form the Baptist Missionary Society. and how (in 1792) he and John Thomas were sent out to go to India with the gospel.

This society was the first of its kind. Never before in modern history, had Christians bonded together to raise funds, and send out believers to distant lands, with the mission of spreading the gospel, to those who had never heard. And William Carey was the driving force behind the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, which transformed modern missions! And that's why William Carey is known as "The Father of Modern Missions."

Now, I told you the story of William Carey last week because his story parallels what we see in the first three verses of Acts 13. We see some men banding together and sending out others to distant lands, with the mission of spreading the gospel, to those who had never heard. Let's read the first three verses of Acts 13.

Acts 13:1

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

And that's where we left off last week. we left off as Barnabas and Saul were sent off by the church to bring the gospel to the nations, in fulfillment of the great commission and in fulfillment of the prophecy given by Jesus in Acts 1:8, "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."

We see Barnabas and Saul being sent out on their mission to the end of the earth. But this is just their beginning. This is where I get the title of my message this morning: "The Beginning of the Mission to the Ends of the Earth."

Some ancient Chinese philosopher said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." And what we see this morning is the first step of a long journey. which takes us from Acts 13 through Acts 28. But even in Acts 28, the mission isn't complete. They hardly reached the ends of the earth. But it was a start.

The first missionary journey began in Antioch. Remember, this is the city in which was the great church, where "the hand of the Lord was with them" (Acts 11:21). In Antioch, many were turning to the Lord (Acts 11:21). When the news of what was happening in Antioch reached those in Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to check it out (Acts 11:22). He was encouraged greatly. He went to Tarsus and brought Saul to minister to the church as well (Acts 11:25-26). After Barnabas and Saul and been with them a whole year, teaching the church, the events of Acts 13:1-3 take place. They are sent out by the church (Acts 13:3).

Let's read our text this morning. It's the first step on the first missionary journey of the church. Or, as I have said, "The Beginning of the Mission to the Ends of the Earth."

Acts 13:4-12

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. 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. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of

the Lord

The first thing that we see in our text is that the Holy Spirit sent Barnabas and Saul out on their journey (see verse 4). But in verse 3, we read of how the church sent them out. This is no contradiction. Rather, it's the way that the Holy Spirit works in the life of the church. We act, but it is really the Holy Spirit behind our actions (if, indeed, we are in the center of the will of God. The Holy Spirit isn't acting in our sin). But the Holy Spirit, indeed, acts through our actions. We will see this later in Acts 20, when Paul speaks to the Ephesian elders. He will tell them that "The Holy Spirit has made you overseers" (Acts 20:28). Yet, certainly, it was Paul and other leaders who appointed them.

Anyway, in verses 4-6, we see their ...

1. Travels (verses 4-6)

Acts 13:4-6

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. 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.

If you look a map in the back of your Bible, you can clearly see where Barnabas and Saul went.^[1] They began at Antioch. Then, "they went down to Seleucia." This was about a 15 mile journey to the coast. Seleucia was Antioch's "seaport to the Mediterranean" (Lovett, p. 212). It's where they received many of their supplies. It was a common travel route for those in Antioch, to go the seaport and trade commodities.

One commentator even suggests that it was likely that "a large group from the church" accompanied them to the coast.^[2] I think it's likely. But at that point, those from the church are simply those in the church shouting out "Bon Voyage!" as Barnabas and Saul off on their journey.

Now, it is worthy to note at this point that Barnabas and Saul had a traveling companion. At the end of verse 5, we read, Acts 13:5 And they had John to assist them. We have heard of John before. In chapter 12 and verse 12, we find that his other name was "Mark." That's why he is often called, "John Mark." It was at his house (or, to be precise), his mother house, that the prayer meeting for Peter took place. We read in Colossians 4:10 that he and Barnabas were cousins. According to chapter 12 and verse 25, Barnabas and Saul had brought him back when they traveled back to Antioch from Jerusalem.

You can easily picture Barnabas and John Mark connecting in Jerusalem, and having a conversation about all of the wonderful things that the Lord is doing in the church in Antioch. and that it would be great for him to see the working of the Lord in that place. So, Barnabas, being the encourager that he is, thought that Mark would be encouraged by joining with the church in Antioch. All of a sudden,

Mark is joining them on this journey as a "traveling companion." More precisely, he came along as their "assistant." Better yet, he came along as their "servant." It is unclear whether John Mark fulfilled the role of a pastoral assistant, helping to counsel and care for those in Cyprus, or whether John Mark was more of an administrative assistant, running errands, securing places to stay, and obtaining food for the traveling team. My personal guess would be the latter. We will hear more about John Mark next week, as he left them on the next leg of the journey (Acts 13:13), which caused some conflict between Barnabas and Paul in future journeys.

Anyway, from the sea port (Seleucia), "they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 13:4). Cyprus is a beautiful large island off the coast, about 60 miles from Seleucia. I heard that on a very clear day, you can even see this island from the coast. You could sail there in a day. I can picture these three, departing in the morning hours of the day, and arriving on the island in the evening.

In verse 5 we read of how they arrived at the city of Salamis. Salamis was a port city on the eastern side of the island. They disembarked and proceeded to travel across the island by foot. They traveled "through the whole island as far as Paphos" (Acts 13:6). Paphos was on the western side of the island. The island is about 60 miles across, so this would have taken a few days of travel to traverse the island. If they lingered in any one place, this could have taken a much longer time to travel.

Of course, they were in no hurry in their travels. They were there to speak with people, not see the sights. Seemingly, the stops they made along the way were in the synagogues that were scattered across the island. "They proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews." (Acts 13:5). The traveling adventures of these men in our text ends in Paphos, with Barnabas and Saul and John Mark there.

It would be helpful for you to put the whole journey of Acts 13 and 14 in your minds. We will look at these chapters over the next few weeks. In most Bibles, you can find a map that looks just like this in the back of your Bible. This is known as "Paul's first missionary journey."

Next week, we will look at how they board another boat and sail up to Perga in Pamphylia. From there, they head north to another "Antioch." This is the Antioch in Pisidia, often called, "Pisidian Antioch" in contrast with "Syrian Antioch" where they began their journey. (That takes us all the way through the end of Acts 13).

In Acts 14, we find them arriving at Iconium. From Iconium, they travel on to Lystra. From Lystra, the travel on to Derbe, which is sort of "end of the line," because, they retrace their steps on the way back home. They travel back through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. And all along the way, they are preaching the gospel, making disciples, and planting churches. A good summary of their activities comes in Acts 14:21-23.

Acts 14:21-23

When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

It's a great summary of what Barnabas and Saul were doing on this missionary journey. They are preaching the gospel, making disciples, and planting churches. These are activities that we should be involved in as well: preaching the gospel, making disciples, and planting churches. Anyway, upon their return to the region of Pamphylia, they set sail from Attalia to head back to home base: Antioch.

I have found it helpful to put a little box around every city where these missionaries traveled. That might be a little homework assignment for you. Back in chapter 13, I have a little box around "Antioch" in verse 1. I have a little box around "Seleucia" in verse 4. I have a little box around "Salamis" in verse 5. I have a little box around "Paphos" in verse 6. These boxes help me to see in my Bible where we are in any given passage.

Today, we have read of Barnabas and Saul and John Mark as they traveled from Antioch to the sea port of Seleucia, where they sailed to the island of Cyprus, landing at Salamis, and traveling across the island to Paphos. These are their travels on "The Beginning of the Mission to the Ends of the Earth."

Now, this island was the perfect place for Barnabas and Saul to begin their missionary journey. Barnabas was from Cyprus. Acts 4:36 tells us that "Barnabas [was] a Levite, a native of Cyprus." This means that Barnabas had a lot of contacts on the island. There were many on the island who knew Barnabas. This would have especially been the case in the synagogues. Cyprus was a Roman province, which means that most of the people on the island were subject to Rome, perhaps many of them being Roman citizens. But there were a good number of Jews on the island as well. We know this, because there were a number of synagogues on the island. In order to have a synagogue, you had to have a fair number of Jews in a locality to support such an assembly.

We read in verse 5 that Acts 13:5 [Barnabas and Saul] proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. This leads nicely into my second point.

2. Preaching (verses 5-6)

That's what they were doing as they traveled across the island. They went city by city, synagogue by synagogue, preaching. One commentator said that Barnabas and Saul were on "a preaching tour through the whole island."^[3]

I suspect that right here was where Barnabas played a crucial role in traveling through Cyprus. I would guess that he knew people in every city along the way. Not merely because the island is relatively small, but because the Jewish community was even smaller. And that was their target, the synagogues, where the Jews gathered. Perhaps, Barnabas and Saul even stayed with some of Barnabas' friends and acquaintances. It was much more common in those days to stay in the home of friends than it was to stay in hotels.

Further, I believe, the home territory of Barnabas would have helped to give him and then, Saul, credibility in speaking with others. "I'm from here. Your people are my people. Here's my friend, Saul. Listen to what he has to say."

This is a great point of application for us all. As you speak with others, your point of contact with them is very helpful. If you are a complete stranger, you have very little credibility with others, especially when it comes to speaking of religious things. They can easily dismiss you as some religious fanatic. But if you know someone or if you have a friend in common, you can gain some credibility.

Furthermore, your contacts are not my contacts. Your friends are not my friends. There are people at your work, that I could never reach. There are people at your school, that I could never reach. There are people at your gym, your sports teams, your band, your quilting group, or your family that I could never reach. I have the same. There are people in my pool league, that you could never reach. There are neighbors in our neighborhood, that you could never reach.

That's why I have a reminder on my phone set for 10:02 in the morning: That reminds me to pray Luke 10:2 for you all every day. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." I pray every day for your witness in your network of friends.

This is what Barnabas and Saul were doing on their journey. Barnabas had a lot of friends, or at least acquaintances, or at least some relation to these people on Cyprus. They were preaching to them. They were preaching to them about the good news of how forgiveness of sins is found in Jesus. We are all sinners, and stand condemned before God. The way to be made right with God, is not by trying to correct our bad deeds with good deeds. That will never work. The way to be made right with God is through faith in Jesus, and his sacrifice for our sins upon the cross.

Just as our fighter verse^[4] for this week says:

Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Now, it's interesting here to note that we don't know any details of their "preaching tour through Cyprus." All we know is that they went through the island and "proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews" (Acts 13:5). This is important to note, because Luke as he writes the book of Acts, isn't putting together a detailed travel log of all that happened as the church expanded in the first century. Rather, he's putting together snippets of events that are important for us to know.

On the one hand, I wish that he had written a travel log. I have so many questions! I would love to know where they stayed. I would love to know where all the synagogues were. I would love to know of all the conversations they had. But I am thankful to know and trust that all we need to know has been given to us. (Let us know it well!) All that's important for us to know as Barnabas and Saul traveled across the island

is that they “proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews” (Acts 13:5).

But in verse 6, with them arriving in Paphos, Luke details the interactions of Barnabas and Saul with two men: (1) Bar-Jesus and (2) Sergius Paulus. These two men form the basis of my final two points. First, we see the interaction with Bar-Jesus described in verses 6-11. We begin with ...

3. Bar-Jesus (verses 6-11)

Here’s what we know of him:

Acts 13:6-11

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. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.

Bar-Jesus was an evil man. His name means “Son of Jesus.” He was far from a “Son of Jesus.” In fact, even Paul calls him a “son of the devil” in verse 10. You couldn’t betray your name any worse than this.

We read in verse 6 that he was a “magician.” Not the sort of magician that we think of, who performs for crowds with sleight of hand to amaze us, and cause us to think about how exactly did he do that. No. He was a sorcerer, engaged in the black arts, dabbling with the dark powers of this world. This is something prohibited in the Old Testament. In fact, an activity so evil that he should have been put to death. “A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon them” (Leviticus 20:27). Bar-Jesus knew better, as he was Jewish. He betrayed his heritage. Luke rightly identifies him as a “false prophet.”

Now, apparently, Bar-Jesus was in with the Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus (mentioned in verse 7), a high-ranking governor over the island. From best we can determine, Bar-Jesus was a member of his court. That is, one who served as a counselor to Sergius Paulus. In verse 7, we read of how Sergius Paulus heard about these traveling preachers, and invited them to come, so that he might “hear the word of God.”

You have to picture what is going on here: Tony Merida describes it well in his commentary: “These apostles were nobodies compared to the Roman proconsul, yet here they find themselves in front of him, speaking the good news to his heart.”^[5] Obviously, this was the working of God, there is no way that Barnabas and Saul could have planned or arranged for such a meeting on their own. It was the Lord working. And the Lord may work in similar ways in your life as well. You may find yourself having an opportunity to meet with various high-ranking people in this life. So I encourage you to pray, and be ready to speak of the Lord Jesus.

From best we can tell, Sergius Paulus was favorable to what he was hearing. But Bar-Jesus, who was also named Elymas, wanted no part of this. Verse 8 tells us that he “opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.” It totally makes sense that this magician would oppose these preachers. They were a threat to his worldview. They were a threat to his livelihood. If Sergius Paulus came to faith in Jesus, he would lose his cushy job.

Paul discerned this quite well.

Acts 13:9-10

But Saul, who was also called Paul,^[6] filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him Acts 13:10 and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?”

This seems very harsh of Paul to say. This may bring your mind back to Peter’s confrontation of Simon Magus, whom tried to purchase the Holy Spirit from Peter. Peter was strong and stern with him: “May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity” (Acts 8:20-23).

There are times for such bold confrontation. Even gentle and lowly Jesus confronted others strongly at times. Remember how Jesus was very angry at the commerce in the temple and made a whip and drove out the money changers from the temple. The only way that Jesus was able to do that was in a rage. Jesus was very harsh with the Pharisees. He called them fools and blind guides. He called them a brood of vipers and white-washed tombs. He pronounced great woes upon them.

Now, when it came to sinners, who needed forgiveness, Jesus was never harsh. Rather, he was gentle and lowly. But when it came to religious leaders who were leading others astray, Jesus was very hard with them. That’s why Paul was so harsh with Bar-Jesus. He was a religious leader, leading others astray. Bar-Jesus knew better and needed the rebuke.

I can think of a few times in my life when I have been particularly harsh with people. I am often particularly harsh with the false-prophets who show up at my door every now and then. Proclaiming to be the true witness of God, they are peddling lies about my Savior!

I remember one time, shortly before I was married. I was working at a college. I was in the line at the cafeteria. Aman was talking with me,

arrogantly using the Scriptures wrongly, in a way that degraded women. I knew that this man came from a false-church. I strongly corrected him with his misquotation. I strongly rebuked him of his arrogance. I told him that he needed to learn the ways of Jesus. Later, he came up to me said, "You know, I think that you and I got off on the wrong foot." I agree. But I told him that it was because of his arrogance, and because he handled the word of God wrongly. We never did become friends. I only saw him a few times after this. But I believe that he deserved such a rebuke.

I could tell you other times I have been harsh and confrontational with others regarding the gospel. I remember being especially strong toward some wayward parents who were not doing right to their children. I remember being harsh with a woman who had come to our prayer meeting and spewed forth something that was so obviously wrong that it had to be corrected on the spot.

As I reflect upon what has stirred me at times. It has mostly been toward those who would lift themselves up as religious leaders, who are leading others astray. I believe that it has been the leading of the Spirit of God in my life to confront such people so strongly. This was that case with Paul. In verse 9, we see that he was freshly filled with the Holy Spirit. Under God's influence, Paul pronounces upon this man a curse:

Acts 13:11

"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time."

Whenever you pronounce strong words against someone, you don't need to use Paul's words. In fact, I'm not sure that you are able to pronounce such a curse. I have never seen any televangelist, with all of their trickery and deceit, pronounce such a curse on people, because it is impossible to do apart from the power of God. But Paul, being an apostle and living in such miracle-working times was able to deliver on his curse. The proof is seen in the last half of verse 11, ...

Acts 13:11

Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.

Of course, this brings us back to Paul's own experience on the road to Damascus, when he was struck blind as well. You can read about it in Acts, chapter 9. There is some parallel between Bar-Jesus and the apostle Paul. Paul was a pharisee of pharisees, purporting himself to be so religious. Yet, he was a blasphemer and a persecutor. He was a religious leader, pushing his false way, in clear defiance of the ways of God. He was struck blind by the voice of Jesus and had to be led by the hand by others (Acts 9:8).

Now, we know how it turned out with Paul. He repented of his sins and came to trust in Christ. The Lord used him greatly in building his church. But we don't know how it turned out with Bar-Jesus. Furthermore, we have no reason to hope that he had the same outcome.

Now, how Paul did this, I have no idea. It can only be attributed to the powers of the apostle. That he could strike others blind upon command. It was a great object lesson. He who was blind to the truth became blind in this world. This was a clear object lesson. What was true on the inside of this man became true on the outside. He was spiritually blind. He became physically blind to the things of this world.

The lesson for us to learn from this is that we need to be spiritually bold at times. There are times when we need to strongly confront error. Particularly, we need to do that when others are arrogantly setting themselves up as spiritual guides and actually making crooked the straight ways of God. Don't do this with people who are broken in their sin. Don't do this with those who are lost in life, just trying to figure out what way is right in this world. Be gentle with them and gracious with them. But when the truth of God is being told and others are trying to deceive, stand up and speak boldly.

Finally, we come to our last point in verse 12.

4. Sergius Paulus (verses 7, 12)

We see his heart warming in verse 7.

Acts 13:7

Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

Somehow, he heard about these preachers who had come to town. He wanted to hear from them, so he requested that they come and speak to him about their message. He was eager to listen to what they were saying. In verse 12, we see his heart believing the message he was hearing.

Acts 13:12

Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

One of the best questions to ask yourself when studying the Bible is this: "What is surprising?" In verse 12, the surprising thing about this verse is the second half. I would expect verse 12 to read something like this: "Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the miraculous power of God!" He saw Paul strike a man blind! Surely, that is great power to follow. But if Sergius Paulus had believed because of the power of God on display, it would simply have been exchanging one spiritual power (Bar-Jesus) for another (Paul). But that's not how this verse ends.

What convinced Sergius Paulus? "He was astonished at the teaching of the Lord" (Acts 13:12). It was the teaching of Paul that astonished him. In verse 7, we read that he was "a man of intelligence." Being a respected political leader, he had some sense about him. Surely, if Paul's message was consistent with what we seen in all of the book of Acts, Paul would have spoken about Jesus living a perfect life and dying an unjust death for our sins. Though he was buried in the ground, God raised him from the dead. He appeared to many, then ascended into heaven and now sits exalted at the right hand of God!

This is what astonished the proconsul: the teaching of the Lord. This ought to be super-encouraging for us. We don't need to go out and perform great miracles like the apostle Paul to convince people of the reality of Jesus. Because don't convince anybody of the truthfulness of God's word. But God uses the word of God, through the Spirit of God, to convict people of their sin and their need of Christ. It is the word of God that made the impact upon this man's life. The word of God is able to amaze, convict, and convert.

We don't know the details of what took place after these things. But, as is true in every convert, the life of Sergius Paulus must have been radically changed. It must have meant good for those on the island of Cyprus. Isn't this what we long for? Don't we long for God to bring people to Christ, that they would be changed and transformed, going about in every good work.

In the book of Titus, we read about the grace of God coming onto an island of evil, lazy, lying people. In their sin, they were "unfit for any good work" (Titus 1:16). But the grace of God came to train them for righteousness and every good work (Titus 2:11-14). We trust that this was evident in the life of Sergius Paulus.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on October 3, 2021 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rockvalleybiblechurch.org.

[1] Here's a good online reference: <https://www.thebiblejourney.org/biblejourney1/9-pauls-journey-to-cyprus-pamphylia-galatia-/paul-starts-his-1st-missionary-journey/>.

[2] C. S. Lovett, *Acts: Personal New Testament Commentary* (Baldwin Park, CA: Personal Christianity, 1972), 212).

[3] William Ramsey, *St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), 73. You can read this book here: <https://archive.org/details/stpaultraveller01ramsgoog>.

[4] See <https://fighterverses.com>.

[5] Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Acts* (Nashville: Holman, 2017), 182.

[6] This is the last reference we have in the book of Acts as Paul being called Saul. Saul was his Hebrew name. Paul was his Greek name. From this point on in the book of Acts, it's "Paul" as his mission is clearly to the Gentiles.