

2010 ACTS #15 CHAPTER 13 A PHOTO ALBUM OF FAITH

Acts 13:13-43 Video

Today Paul's message is a reminder of what God has done.
We all need reminders. Because we all forget things.
Researcher Karen Bolla from John Hopkins listed
the things people most often forget are.

1. Names 83%
2. Where something is 60%
3. Telephone Numbers 57%
4. Words 53%
5. What was said 49%
6. Faces 42%
7. And not remembering what you just did 38%

Remembering remind us who we are.
Remembering remind us what God has done.
Remembering remind us what we are to do.

A man borrowed a book from a friend and as he read it,

He was intrigued to find parts of the book underlined
with the letters YBH written in the margin.

When he returned the book to the owner, he asked what the YBH meant.

The owner replied that these were sections of the book defined

Where he needed to improve his life and the letters YBH stood for "Yes, but how?"

We all have places in our lives that we have marked YBH (Yes, But How?).
And we need people to remind us how we can do it.
and apply what we have learned.

The rulers of the synagogue have just read the law and the prophets,
And they too had written in the margins YBH (Yes but How.)
So when Paul came to their synagogue
The leaders said to them.

"Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak."

Acts 13:15

First Apostle Paul opens the Photo Album of the Jews and shows them

I. PICTURES OF FAITHFULNESS

We learned in our Truth Study last Monday night
Just how important it is to have a photo album.
Because pictures remind us of the stories in our lives.
And it connects us to our family,
This is my family and these pictures bring back memories of who I am.
Don't we all have those kind of pictures,
That ties us to a family, or church or basketball group.
We know who we are from the past.
How do you know I graduated- I have the picture to prove it.
And this picture also shows me what in the last 42 years
Of a wonderful marriage.

Paul wants to connect the people of faith to
The past and to open them to the future.

16 "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me! Acts 13:16

Paul addressed the Jews first, and then Gentiles.
He wanted to reach both.

The first picture he showed them
was of their 400 yrs of captivity in Egypt
where they were making bricks in slavery
And with the use of 10 plagues and with

17 The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country, Acts 13:17

The next picture showed them the Time of the Judges

21 "After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. Acts 13:21

Then the pictures got a little dark
When the people got disgruntled and discouraged,
They asked for a king.

Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. Acts 13:21

But that didn't turn out like they thought.
Kings have a tendency to not only take charge, but
To take sons and daughters,
They want to dominate, rule, and conscript your property.

When they disobeyed God they took all of Israel into a period of apostasy.

King Saul contacted the witch of Endor and violated the laws of God.

He lost the Spirit.

God displaced him and made David their king,

After removing Saul, he made David their king. And found 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' Acts 13:22

Well we know that David didn't always do what God wanted him to do.

Isn't that the story of our lives as well?

We, too, haven't been all what God has called us to be.

The world out there isn't much help either if you noticed lately.

One man said: Oh ya, the world helped me turn my life around.

Before I was depressed and miserable,

Now I've turned around to being miserable and depressed. ~Harry Kalas, on Garry Maddox, 1981

The world isn't going to help you,

As far as I know on the eighth day of creation,

God didn't say, "Okay, Murphy, you're in charge!" ~Author Unknown

I like the verse

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

But the real question as I look back over my life is,

What have I allowed Christ to do through me?

What I discover is we all share one thing in common

and that is that we are sinful.

And don't live up to half our expectations.

Saint Augustine once wrote, "Whatever we are, we are not what we ought to be."

Mark Twain, with a sense of humor about our human failures said:

"Man was made at the end of the week, when God was tired."

God could have reached down formed man out of the dust of the earth,

Then look at him and said: Look Toyota...the run away man.

This reminded me of a young family in a Lutheran church who brought up their baby for Holy Baptism. The baby was very quiet, as the water was being poured. But when the pastor lit the baptismal candle the crowd heard the Three year old brother says: "Un-oh! That's gonna hurt. Joyful Newsletter, The Lord's Laughter. Aug.-Sept. 2002.

The Photos Paul was displaying were to show us

How woefully short we are on obedience,

Next Paul reviewed the

II. PICTURES OF PAST FAILURES.

¹⁷The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country, ¹⁸he endured their conduct for about forty years in the desert, Acts 13:17-18

After God went to all that trouble to rescue and deliver the Israelites,

They wined and complained, even sought to overthrow Moses.

And God endured their conduct for 40 years.

Then snakes were sent to kill them,

The earth opened up and snuffed them,

Plagues ravaged them,

And still God took care of their enemies the seven nations around them,

¹⁹he overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. ²⁰All this took about 450 years. Acts 13:19-20

You would have thought they would get it right,.

But they failed to obey

And didn't completely destroy their enemy,

They picked up idolatry, false gods, temple prostitution,

even sacrificing their children to Moloch the god of fire.

God allowed for 2 million Israelites to die or be killed in the wilderness.

Only their children entered the Promised Land

How often must God remind us,

To be obedient,

That sin has consequences.

Even when things were going good.

How God had answered their prayer,

When their clothes and shoes did not wear out for 40 years in the wilderness.

God fed them every day.

Jeff Pospisil Conference Director of Finance and Administration,

Gave a devotional where he pointed out that

Exodus 16:18 states that each person gathered on average 2 quarts of manna per person (double on Fridays but nothing on Saturdays).

2 million people X 2 quarts/day X 365 days/year X 40 years =
58.4 billion quarts of manna.

The average train car holds 3,500 bushels of grain.

It would take 180 train cars full of manna each week to feed the Israelites.

When the quail came it says in Numbers 11:32

They went out and gathered ten homers of quail, or about 60 bushels of quail each.

If a quail is equal to a gallon that means they collected about 450 quail.

If only one in ten Israelites went to gather quail

that would be about 90 million quail were gathered.

How often do we need to be reminded of God will provide for us.

How many prayers does he have to answer?

How many hurts does he have to heal?

How many sins does he have to forgive?

We all know we can't lift ourselves up by our bootstraps.

Any more than we can save ourselves.

We need a Messiah. A Savior.

And to prepare us for the messiah.

The Apostle Paul points us toward the ministry of John the Baptist.

Who is the one who prepares the way for the Messiah.

I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.' Acts 13:25

The apostle Paul didn't want to leave out anything important.

Like the mother of a large family was explaining why she dresses her children alike, right down to the youngest baby. "When we had just four children, I dressed them alike so we wouldn't lose any of them." "Now," she said, "that we have nine children, I dress them alike so we won't pick up any that don't belong to us."

Lastly, Paul shows us the

III. PICTURES OF THE FUTURE

He appeals to both the Jews and Gentiles.

"Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. Acts 13:26

Note he changed his approach from third person (They) To second person (you).

Isn't that the way it is

When things start to relate to us personally, we perk up.

He has gone from showing photos --To taking photos.

Paul wanted them to know what will happens next.

The leaders in Jerusalem didn't recognize

That Jesus fulfilled the words

²⁷The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. Acts 13:27

Including the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth,
When they couldn't kill him, so

28Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. Acts 13:28

They crucified him,
Then they took him

29When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. Actys 13:29

But what distinguishes this Photo Album of Christianity
from all the other religions of the world,
is that we have a picture of an empty tomb.

There are no bones in the grave.

No casket in the cemetery.

But God raised him from the dead, Acts 13:30

This crucial event.

Was seen by over 500 people.

31and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. Acts 13:31

If Jesus as the Messiah, had died and remained dead,
The covenant could never be fulfilled.

Therefore Jesus had to be raised from the dead or the covenant would prove false.

They are now his witnesses to our people. Acts 13:31

Every year I have the privilege of meeting someone
Who is lost, who is unsure of their salvation,
Who is searching for some light and some hope.
And every year I get the opportunity to share
Jesus with them, and see persons come alive.

The grave of their emptiness open up,
The tomb of their despair is broken up.
And The risen Savior our Lord Jesus.
Does for them what God did for Jesus,
That he raises them from the dead.
Thou we have died. Yet shall we live.
Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

The famous patriot Patrick Henry said:

“I have now disposed of all my property to my family. There is one thing more I wish I could give them and that is faith in Jesus Christ. If they had that and I had not given them a single shilling, they would have been rich; and if they had not that, and I had given them all the world, they would be poor indeed.” -

That is the hope that Paul was sharing.
That's the hope that God has given,
That is the hope that we can receive and believe.
What does the picture of your faith look like?
Is New Life in Christ included in your Photo Album?