

## 33b ACTS

Let's resume our study now in Acts chapter 13. We are at verse 48. And not to be drawn toward the last part of the verse, in light of what we studied in our first session tonight, notice when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad.

This is good news. This is something that ought to motivate us. It ought to encourage us.

It is a cause for celebration. It's not just a dry piece of theology. The fact that there is forgiveness, there is cleansing, there is getting past our failures in a way that the law could never do.

We have the gift of the Holy Spirit. We have the cleansing power of God. We live a life that the Old Testament saints could only look forward to and they will catch up with us in the Millennial Kingdom.

The Gentiles heard this. What is this? It is the good news of cleansing and forgiveness. The Jews hear it and meet it with envy, with contradicting, with blaspheming.

They opposed the things spoken by Paul. This is good news, and yet people find something to be mad about, something to contradict, something to oppose, something to create blasphemy over. This is another thing to tuck away in the memory center of our soul.

Many times you find yourself expressing the divine viewpoint of life. You find yourself expressing a biblical point of view, a scriptural point of view, and it is met with unexpected hostility. Someone will suddenly really take a dislike to what you are saying and may even attack you personally.

And of course, ad hominem is the last refuge of the exhausted mind. So when people don't have any more arguments, why would they attack you? Sometimes they don't even wait to exhaust their arguments, they just attack you because they've heard something they don't like. But think about this.

This is the greatest message in the world. It is being preached by one of the all-time great preachers on the planet. The Apostle Paul is delivering the good news of Jesus Christ.

People hear it and their reaction... There are two things that happen when the Word of God comes out. It never just has no effect. It always makes some kind of an effect.

The Word of God never leaves people neutral. They will either respond or they will react. These Jews see the multitudes, are filled with envy, they contradict, they blaspheme, they oppose the things spoken by Paul.

They're arguing against it, they're using what they think are scriptural rebuttals and so on. So do not be surprised and do not be discouraged if even in a quiet, meek and mild way, even if you just are living out your faith in the light of the Scriptures, if you don't suddenly find yourself confronted with hostility, with some sort of unwarranted anger, it will happen. It has happened ever since the good news came out.

It happened to the Apostle Paul. It happens to us. However, God knew these people were going to reject Him and yet He still sent them the Apostles.

He still sent them the message. It was necessary, Paul says, that the Word of God should be spoken to you first. It was a promise.

They are first in the plan of God. They get first crack at it. But they judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life.

Then we come down to our current verse. The Gentiles heard this and were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord and as many as had been appointed to eternal life, believed. The first thing that I will point out in this verse is that it is largely translated correctly, at least on the surface.

There's not a blinding, glaring problem in the translation like you have in Acts 1.8 or even in the preceding verse that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth. You can stretch the vocabulary and find examples where these words are used in that way, but the normal, usual meaning of the words is until the end in terms of time, not in terms of distance. People who argue on the other side of this will quote verses that talk about making a geographical reference and they'll go back to the Old Testament and the Septuagint translation of it where in Genesis it's talking about they traveled until they came to Michmash or until they came to Gilgal.

Well, in the Hebrew mind, trips were measured in terms of their time and they weren't saying as far as or to the ends of Michmash. They were saying they traveled until. We traveled until we came to Dallas.

We traveled until we came to Tulsa. That's more really of a time measure. It's a time-distance symbiosis, but the vocabulary is the vocabulary of time.

Yes, you can stretch it. Obviously, I'm not the first person to look at this and all of the translators treat it as distance, but it's not the normal and usual use of the words. Normal and usual is until the end of the world.

It has colored the translations. The New American Standard in verse 47, by the way, says that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth. So they've started with an assumption about what the ends of the earth are and then in the original Hebrew it says that you shall be for salvation.

You will be. Hayah. It's the infinitive.

To be for salvation. This is the appointment of the divine servant of the Lord, the Lord Jesus. The same kind of thing has happened here when you get to verse 48 and the second half of it.

As many as had been appointed to eternal life belief. On the surface of it, on the face of it, with this translation, you'd have to believe what Arthur Pink said that I read earlier. Let me give you a little bit more.

This is a man named John Colard III. He quotes this verse. He says, according to Acts 13, 48, only those individuals who were ordained to eternal life in eternity past by God the Father ever come to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior.

To be, quote, ordained to eternal life means to be appointed to salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. This verse emphatically does not teach that individual human beings are ordained to eternal life in the course of time by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Instead, it teaches that ordination to eternal life precedes and does not follow or occur simultaneously with belief or faith.

Does everybody understand the argument? God ordained at first. Because this is a past perfect. As many as had been ordained.

That is the tense of the verb. The ordination precedes the believing. That is the normal and usual Greek usage.

So there is no problem with that understanding. The action of that verb that is translated ordained precedes believing. Then he quotes Arthur Pink.

I read this. You know, every artifice of human ingenuity has been employed to blunt the sharp edge of the Scripture. But basically, it means four things.

Believing is the consequence of God's decree. Only a limited number are ordained. This ordination is not to some kind of Christian service, but it is to salvation itself.

And fourthly, that all of those who are ordained will believe. Nobody can slip out of the net. If you are ordained, you will believe.

It is not as many as minus one. So Acts 13.48 is clear. This is the conclusion of this article.

It should not be explained away or reinterpreted. Only certain individuals have been ordained or appointed to eternal life. These individuals are God's elect people.

And they will inevitably come to salvation. Okay. Well, let me just indulge me a little bit here.

Let me give you the Greek here. And you need to write this out. I'm going to give it to you in transliterated form.

Because this is the point of the spear for Reformed theology. If you understand this verse, you will understand all others. And you will understand why they have maybe been well-intentioned, but gone astray.

Now, the first part we don't have any problem with. They were rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord. It begins when it says, and.

This is the word kai, K-A-I. It's a classic Greek word that means and. It can also mean even and or and other things.

But, and. Then we have the third person plural, aorist, active, indicative. Remember I said that a salvation decision is typically given in the Scriptures in an aorist tense.

The aorist tense, they used to call it the point of time aorist. That's not really accurate. But aorist does not really imply an ongoing action the way the present tense does.

An aorist sort of takes an action out of time and just considers that it happened. It doesn't say it used to happen or it is happening or it will happen. It is a happening.

It is the action almost removed from time. And it tends to consider an action in its entirety, in its completeness and look at it as one ball of wax. So that's what we have here.

This is the aorist, active, indicative, third person plural. They, and this is from the verb pisteuo, P-I-S-T-E-U-O. And it means to express faith, to believe.

So, and they believed. And in this context, this is in a point of time. You can't equate the aorist with a point of time.

Any Greek guy would slap someone for saying an aorist is a point of time. But in this context, it is basically at the point that the decision is made that is in view. So, they believed.

Then you have the word hosoi, H-O-S-O-I. If you want the gory details, it is a correlative pronoun, masculine, plural, nominative. It just means the ones, these people.

We have just said, and they believed. Well, who are the they? Well, it is the ones. So, you can just translate it, the ones.

Then you have the imperfect, active, indicative. Now, the imperfect is ongoing action in past time. You remember your English grammar.

You have present tense, that is ongoing action in present time. The past perfect is

completed action. We had gone.

We had driven four miles when we got a flat. This is ongoing action in past time. So, as many as were being.

Now, we have the main word in the group here. Titagmonoi, this is the actual form of the perfect passive participle. It is masculine, plural, nominative.

But the idea here is it is perfect, meaning it is complete action. It is passive, meaning the action was done to someone, they received it. And it is a participle.

And the action of the participle here precedes the action of the main verb. So, and they believed, the ones who were Titagmonoi. And it functions as a noun.

It describes them. A participle functions as a noun here. So, these, you know, you talk about the hoi polloi.

Or you talk about the anthropoi, the people. Well, this is Titagmonoi. And it comes from the verb tasso.

And it is translated here, appointed. In the King James, it is ordained. In the New American Standard, it is appointed.

And I think in the New King James, we also have appointed. So, as many as were appointed ones. Ones having been appointed.

That would be the best translation. And they believed, the ones who were having been appointed ones. Now, I'll qualify that here in a minute.

But let me give you the rest of the phrase. Unto eternal life. This is ace, E-I-S.

Which means into or unto. This is the word that would have been used in the previous phrase we talked about. Unto the ends of the earth should be ace.

Unto. Or into the ends of the earth. Not haos.

But we have ace, E-I-S. Into or unto. Then, zoane ionion.

Ionion means of the ages. Zoe is life. So, life unto the ages.

As many as have been appointed to what they translate everlasting life. We'll use that as a working translation for the moment. Everything hinges on two things.

Tasso and ace. Let me read you what the lexicon says about the word tasso. By the way, why do we care about this? I'll tell you why.

If this is true as it stands on the surface. If Arthur Pink and John Kohler and these other

people are correct. Then we need to radically change the way we think about our Christianity.

Because God has ordained certain things. If he has ordained our salvation decision. Then he has ordained all the rest of our decisions.

And so we can relax. We can basically say, you know, I wasn't very spiritual today. I wasn't very motivated today.

But, you know, that was just in the eternal decrees of God. That's just the way he cut the groove in eternity past. I'm just the needle tracking through it.

So, it's not really my fault if I don't believe in Christ. That's not the groove that was assigned to my particular needle. If I'm not particularly spiritual.

Not particularly motivated. Not particularly this, that or the other. If I fell into an egregious failure.

Well, that was all part of God's great plan. And he's going to use my failure for some ultimate good purpose. And we can just kind of turn loose.

We don't really have any responsibility. People say, oh, yes, you have. You're still responsible, but it's all ordained.

And it's the great conundrum. Nobody can solve it. It's two tracks of a railroad that never meet.

You can't resolve them. You can't reconcile it. You still are responsible.

But at the same time, the Bible teaches that God ordained everything before the foundation of the world. So, it's fate. It's kismet.

It's a certainty. It's decreed. And you're just going to fulfill the decree of God for your life.

You can't do anything that he hasn't already foreseen and decreed. Well, it can't be both ways. And most scholarship, and you would be surprised.

I mean, this sounds kind of silly, doesn't it? That the Bible says both things and it contradicts itself. But whenever you bring this up to a Calvinist, they say, who are you to answer back to God? Shall the thing form? Do you think you can understand God? You're arrogant. Because you want this to make sense.

You're arrogant to think that you can understand. And this is how they blunt and dismiss and turn away all arguments. I say to you this.

The word of God never contradicts itself. Not once. Because if it does, I'm throwing the thing out and I'm hanging up my spurs as a pastor and going to go be a computer guy

again.

Because if this book contradicts itself, it's not true. It cannot be inerrant and infallible. It cannot be the inspired word of God if it talks out of both sides of its mouth.

Well, am I saved or am I not? It says I am, but over here, maybe not. Maybe it's only if I persevere. There are apparent contradictions in the word of God.

In the same way that Joseph and I can be talking, and Tammy and I can be talking. If I'm talking to Tammy, and I say 1 plus 1 equals 1-0, Tammy's going to say, you're wrong. Since I was old enough to talk, I've known that 1 plus 1 equals 2. But if I'm talking to Joseph, and I say 1 plus 1 equals 1-0, he knows exactly what I'm talking about.

I can say the same thing to Matthew. He knows exactly what I'm talking about. Because in the language of computers, in binary, 1 plus 1 equals 1-0.

And 1-1 plus 1 equals 1-0-0. So, it is not a contradiction to say both statements. You have to understand the context.

You have to understand what is being talked about. Well, I'm not trying to dissemble here. Let me tell you what Tasso means.

This is Tetagmenoi. As many as were, and then we have, having been appointed once. Tetagmenoi.

This is from Tasso. Here is definition 1 from the Bauer, Denker, Art, and Gingrich Lexicon. Which is our state-of-the-art, modern-day, best-you-can-get lexicon.

Number 1, Tasso. To bring about an order of things by arranging. To arrange.

To put in place. It can be to put in place an authority structure. It can be of a person put into a specific position.

Put someone in charge of something. Put someone somewhere. Put someone under someone's command.

To assign someone to something. To give instructions as to what must be done. To order.

To fix. A good translation in this context would be out of definition number 1. To arrange. To put in place.

They believed those who were put in place. Who were put there. Ace.

I told you there are two parts of understanding this verse. One is to understand what Tasso means. It means to arrange.

To place. You strategically position something. In fact, strategically position is a pretty good translation of this word.

It's used in the military sense. In Greek after Greek after Greek. Putting their forces out.

You Tasso them. You arrange them. You position them.

Ace means with a view toward. It means into, unto, with a view toward. Peter says be baptized.

Ace, the forgiveness of sins. Be baptized with a view toward. When you go through baptism, you're looking at the fact that forgiveness of sins exists.

So, these people were positioned with a view toward eternal life. Now, my suggestion to you is this. Where did these crowds come from? Paul and Barnabas are in Antioch of Pisidia.

And on a certain day and at a certain time, they preach to the Jews and the Jews reject them. And they come out to synagogue and people say we want to hear this. On the following week, there is a huge crowd.

So much so that the Jews are jealous. Where did these people come from? These people have been positioned. They have been assigned.

Maybe some of them were on caravan routes. And were coming through town at the time that Paul and Barnabas were there. Maybe some of them had come to live there.

These are people who are receptive. God positioned an abnormally large crowd. This is abnormal.

You don't find this happening every place that Paul and Barnabas go. There is an abnormally large crowd of Gentiles in of all places. Antioch of Pisidia.

This is not the big time Antioch. This is not Lystra or Pergamus or any of the other big towns. This is little Antioch.

Antioch, Pisidian Antioch. But there is this abnormally large crowd of Gentiles there. And they hear the word and receive it with rejoicing.

God has positioned them there. As many as God positioned. They were in the right place at the right time to hear the message.

And they believed. Why did they believe? Because they were there to hear the message. If they had been over the hill chasing a goat, they wouldn't have heard it.

If they had been down the road transacting business, they wouldn't have heard it. But they were positioned there. Now, let me point something out.

I had you make a mark, if you're not afraid to mark your Bible, up above. What did we mark? Paul says, beware lest what has been spoken by the prophets come on you. But they come out, they pervert, they twist, they distort, they oppose, they blaspheme, contradict.

So Paul and Barnabas grow bold. He says, it was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first. But since you reject it, and who judges them unworthy of everlasting life? Very same phrase.

Zoe Ionias. What does it say in verse 46? But because God has judged you unworthy of eternal life, and did not ordain you to eternal life and eternity past. Is that what it says? Who judges these rejecters unworthy of everlasting life? They judge themselves.

They judge themselves. Now, I would instantly become a Calvinist if verse 46 said, God has judged you unworthy of eternal life. You could even make a case that God does judge them unworthy because they reject.

But Paul says, you have judged yourselves unworthy. You have rejected this word. This is why we're not going to give you this word anymore.

Not because God has not ordained that you should receive it. You have decided you don't want it. And God has positioned these Gentiles out here.

And this particular contrast, this sermon, this statement by Paul on this day is a bellwether. It's a benchmark. It is a turning point.

It's a turning point in the history of the church. It's a turning point in the book of Acts. And God put this artificially large crowd of Gentiles there on that day to make the point.

Here are the Jews in the synagogue who are full of envy and opposition. When they walk out, here are the Gentiles who, when they hear, believe. As many as God had positioned there believed.

Notice also that it says that it doesn't say that they were positioned for belief. Or that they were ordained for belief. Or that they were arranged, or any other use of the word tasso, for belief.

It says they were placed with a view toward eternal life. With a view toward the thing that the Jews are rejecting and judging themselves unworthy of. The contrast is all about zoe in ionion.

Life of the ages. Life eternal. Life everlasting.

That's the issue. The Jews have judged themselves unworthy of it. God has positioned people with a view toward that life who are believing.

Big crowd of people looking at eternal life. Some are pushing it away. Others are accepting it.

God positioned the Gentiles to be there and accept it while these Jews are rejecting. To draw this picture and make this contrast. This is not an ironclad, bulletproof, only understood in one way passage.

It has been misunderstood, I think largely, by the mistranslation of the word *tasso*. These people were positioned with a view toward eternal life. God is making an issue out of eternal life.

You say, wait a minute, didn't you say earlier that it was a process of believing, it was all about righteousness and so on? Yes, absolutely, and that is still true. You remember from our previous studies that when you see the words eternal life, this is not a synonym for I am going to heaven and not to hell, or I am going into the eternal future with God and not into the lake of fire. Eternal life is a destination.

It is a continuation of a process that begins in this life. We possess eternal life right now. We partake of eternal life right now, and we haven't passed the portal of death.

We haven't gone into the kingdom or into the eternal future. Eternal life is the life of God. It is not exactly a metaphor, but it is a figure of speech.

Life that partakes of the eternal is life that partakes of God. It is God's life, the life of God. So they begin believing at this point.

We had a good point made on the break about the fact that Scripture seems to place so little emphasis on the initial point of belief and much more emphasis on the process of belief. Again, comparing when you look at your military career, or even when you look at your married life, very few people go back to the very first day, to the wedding day or to the induction day or the signing on the line day and say, boy, that was the greatest day of my military life. The wedding was great, but it's not the best part of my marriage, hopefully.

Hopefully it doesn't start high and just run downhill from the wedding day. Those are examples of entering into a new life, and it is the new life that you focus on. That's what the Word of God focuses on.

There is an abnormal emphasis on the entry point in evangelism and in modern Christianity today. It puts people off and confuses them. I mentioned on the break I talked to someone who is very confused because they didn't have this experience of angels singing in heaven, parting in glory came down and filled my soul.

They accepted Christ as their Savior and felt basically the same as they had five minutes earlier. So then they did it again the next week and the next. They thought, well, maybe

I need to walk the aisle, so they walked the aisle.

Well, maybe I need to get baptized, so they got baptized. None of those things really furnished this experience that everyone kept pitching would happen. Oh, flights of angels will sing you to your salvation and all this.

This didn't happen. I had the privilege of explaining that it is not an experience. You enter into a relationship, and the craving and the hunger that follows and the feeling like, well, where is this thing that I... That's not a need and a looking for salvation.

That is a need and a looking for milk. It's like a baby after it's been born. It wants to nurse.

It wants to get fed. And you don't just go back and say, well, there's no milk. Maybe I need to go get born again.

Maybe if I get born again and again, pretty soon I'll feel more like I'm a member of the human race. No, you need the milk. You need to grow and become a member of the human race.

Well, this is the emphasis here. This is the beginning of the process of laying hold on eternal life that extends all through our Christian life and growth. It sounds strange when we say it that way because we have grown up in an ethos and a culture and a Christianity that says, oh, no, there's a great mind-bending experience at the point of salvation, and then you basically kind of tap your foot waiting until Jesus comes back, and then you have your eternal life.

We enter into a new life, and it is a process of claiming. It is a process of growing. It is a process of taking possession of an inheritance, and that inheritance is summed up by eternal life.

God put a bunch of Gentiles there and said, I can put you on the road to this inheritance and this life with God that starts now and is a part of now and goes into the indefinite eternal future. So I hope without going into all kinds of gory details that this verse makes a little better sense to you here. This is not talking about God decreeing someone's salvation.

This is a matter of God putting people in the right place at the right time, and here is the application. We, as people who are under God's watch care, are members of the family of God. We are united with the Lord Jesus Christ forever and ever.

God will put us in the right place at the right time. We think, no, no, no, I'm having some pain here. This is difficult.

I'm stressed. This is not the right place, and this is not the right time. Yes, it is.

Some of these people that were in Antioch of Pisidia on this day may have been unavoidably detained. Maybe their camel died. Maybe the wheel fell off their cart.

Maybe there was a death in the family, and they were there for a funeral, and they thought, oh, this is just wrong. This person died too young. Not my business.

I'm losing money by the hour. But God ensured that they were there on the day that Paul and Barnabas came out that Saturday and preached the Word that filled them with joy and gladness. They glorified the Word of the Lord.

They responded to the Word of the Lord. They believed in the Word of the Lord. They judged themselves worthy of eternal life.

They passed the test that the Jews failed. Not to say that these Jews are unsaved. These people have been going to synagogue 20, 30, 40 years maybe.

But eternal life in terms of its blessing and its fullness and its inheritance and its reward and its opportunity and its potential is what is in view. And if you judge yourself unworthy of that, well, be a skin of the teeth, pat out the flames, arrive in a puff of smoke believer. But as he says in Hebrews, we are convinced of better things of you, brethren.

You know, who wants to be last card Charlie clinging to the caboose on the train to salvation? There is so much more potential. That's what eternal life is talking about. Just remember.

If you don't remember anything else, write it in the flap of your Bible. Eternal life or everlasting life in the Word of God is not a synonym for I'm not going to the lake of fire. Even in John 3.16. One of these days we'll do the Gospel of John.

We'll straighten out John 3. But even in John 3.16, that is not synonymous with I am not going to the lake of fire. Jesus is talking about future potential. He's not talking about dodging the flames.

God loves the world. God gave his son so that whoever believes in him does not perish but has everlasting life. Why does God care about everlasting life? Well, why do you plant a fruit tree? Oh, I just... If it'll just even stick a little branch out of the ground, I'll be happy because it's got life.

If you plant a fruit tree, you want fruit. If you plant a flowering shrub, you don't want to just see three leaves and say, well, at least it's alive. You plant the... I mean... You want the thing to grow and blossom and fulfill its potential.

And God's plan and God's word are always looking forward to potential. And you can't squeeze down every reference to that potential and say it's just a little bean sprout

pushing above the soil. Remember in grade school they always had you plant a bean in a Dixie cup? You know, oh, put it in a glass and we'll watch the root go down.

Turn it upside down halfway and it'll turn around and it keeps making these loop-de-loops trying to get the root up, the root down and the plant up. Well, Christianity today and evangelism today just concentrates on the bean, just getting one little sprout up above the soil. The word of God is looking at the entire plant, the entire shrub, the entire tree and all of the fruit that it can potentially bear.

And to shrink everything down and say, oh no, it's just the one little sprout, is to miss the point of the Scriptures. That is what the Jews do when Paul presents from the Old Testament Scriptures the potential for eternal life. And so here the Gentiles hear this and basically the last part of verse 48 is the antithesis of what we saw above.

They do judge themselves worthy of eternal life. They have been appointed to be there and hear these words. They have been put in place and they hear it and they believe.

So just connect, draw a circle around eternal life in the first verse and the second verse and connect the two. That's what straightens out verse 48. And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region.

But the Jews stirred up. Now look, verse 50. Who do the Jews stir up? Who are the best? Wet blanket, rain on the parade, stop this movement in its tracks, nip it in the bud, pour salt and sow it into the earth.

Devout and prominent women. Devout and prominent women. If you want to create an insidious movement in a group, get the women fired up and get them running the show.

Now you remember up above we had this same word devout. Remember it's set up in verse 43. Many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who speaking to them persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

But now these people are devout and prominent. The Jews are all about prominence. I'm prominent.

Your movement is endangering my prominence. Yes, I'm devout, but I don't want this newfangled religion. So the Jews get the women going.

And anybody that has ever been in the periphery of a colonel's wife or the president of the company's wife or whatever, and she winds up being the battle axe and the one that can get her hooked into you through your wife and that kind of thing. I've told you many times before that one of the signs of an ailing congregation is that the leadership and the momentum and the initiative in the group is the women. Run, don't walk in the opposite direction from a group when you see that it is nothing against ladies, but it is contrary to God's design.

You just come back to verse 50 here in Acts 13. The devout and prominent women are a danger. They can be enemies of the cross.

And the chief men of the city, they raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas. Can you imagine? How would you like to get to glory and find out that the apostle Paul is the greatest teacher of the word of God, wrote all these inspired books, and you opposed him? This is going to be your epitaph, your memorial, your claim to fame for a thousand years of the kingdom of the Lord. Well, I was devout and prominent, and I saw this apostle coming, and I ran him out of town.

So Paul and Barnabas do what in verse 51? They shook off the dust from their feet against them. Now, how do they know about this shaking off the dust? Where do we know this from? Remember in Luke, Jesus told them, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them. Well, Paul and Barnabas weren't in that group.

They weren't in the 12 and they weren't in the 70. How do they know this? Well, the Lord told them. He's got the apostolic instruction manual.

And they came to Iconium, and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. Notice, they got run out of town, persecuted and blasphemed, and all the head people are against them. They are still filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

They think about that great crowd of people that God assembled to hear the word and respond. And they realize that there is this great fertile field of witness and opportunity among the Gentiles. And this is going to be where Paul goes.

Well, we have a lot of great scripture ahead of us in chapter 14, and that's where we'll begin next time. Father, thank you for the privilege of studying your word. Thank you for showing us the path that is illuminated with the light of your countenance.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will remind us of these things. Help us to walk in the light, to respond to your word, and to lay claim and lay hold on eternal life for ourselves. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.