

Acts 13:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

Analysis

Sergius Paulus, a prudent man (ἀνδρὶ συνετῷ, andri synetō)—the Greek συνετῷ (synetō, 'intelligent, understanding') describes intellectual acumen and discernment. As Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus governed Cyprus with authority, yet his wisdom led him to seek spiritual truth beyond official paganism. His calling for Barnabas and Saul demonstrates unusual humility for a Roman official.

Desired to hear the word of God (ἐπεζήτησεν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, epezētēsen akousai ton logon tou theou)—the compound verb ἐπεζήτησεν (epezētēsen, 'sought earnestly') indicates persistent inquiry, not casual curiosity. This Gentile ruler's spiritual hunger contrasts sharply with Jewish leaders' hardness throughout Acts. His conversion (v. 12) marks Paul's first recorded Gentile convert.

Historical Context

Archaeological evidence confirms a Sergius Paulus family prominent in Roman Cyprus during this period (AD 45-48). Proconsuls governed senatorial provinces like Cyprus with significant autonomy. His 'prudence' likely involved investigating various philosophies and religions—common among educated Romans.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Sergius Paulus's intellectual integrity and spiritual seeking challenge the stereotype that intelligent people reject Christianity?
2. What responsibility do Christian leaders have to engage with civic leaders and government officials, following Paul's example?

Interlinear Text

ὃς	ἦν	σὺν	τῷ	ἀνθυπάτῳ	Σεργίῳ	Παύλῳ
Which	was	with	G3588	the deputy of the country	Sergius	Paulus
G3739	G2258	G4862		G446	G4588	G3972
ἄνδρῖ	συνετῷ	οὗτος	προσκαλεσάμενος	Βαρναβᾶν	καὶ	
man	a prudent	who	called	for Barnabas	and	
G435	G4908	G3778	G4341	G921	G2532	
Σαῦλον	ἐπεζήτησεν	ἀκοῦσαι	τὸν	λόγον	τοῦ	θεοῦ·
Saul	and desired	to hear	G3588	the word	G3588	of God
G4569	G1934	G191		G3056		G2316

Additional Cross-References

Acts 19:38 (Word): Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

Acts 13:12 (Parallel theme): Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

Acts 18:12 (References Paul): And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,

Proverbs 18:15 (Parallel theme): The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

Acts 13:8 (Parallel theme): But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.