Q1. (Faith) The Church teaches that the entire Bible, Old and New Testaments” is the Holy Word of God. In this lesson we see St. Paul preaching the Gospel to the Jewish congregation. Notice how many times he refers to the Old Testament. How does this illustrate the importance of understanding the Old Testament if we are to understand the New Testament?

CCC105

God is the author of Sacred Scripture. "The divinely revealed realities, which are contained and presented in the text of Sacred Scripture, have been written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

"For Holy Mother Church, relying on the faith of the apostolic age, accepts as sacred and canonical the books of the Old and the New Testaments, whole and entire, with all their parts, on the grounds that, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author, and have been handed on as such to the Church herself."

Q2. (Hope) Practically everything we know about Jesus and the growth of the early Church we know from the Bible. There are other sources, such as the Church Fathers, but most of us seldom read them. The Catechism and the unanimous opinion of the Church Fathers was that the Gospels were, in fact, written by the Apostles Matthew and John; Luke, a companion of St Paul who wrote the Gospel preached by St. Paul and also wrote Acts of the Apostles; and Mark, who we read about in today’s lesson who wrote the Gospel preached by St. Peter. How does this knowledge of the trustworthiness of the Gospels and Acts support your hope of salvation?

Didache Bible footnote

John Mark, who became one of Paul's missionary companions, is the Mark who is credited as the author of the second Gospel (CCC120)

CCC120

The New Testament: The Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

The Case for Jesus by Dr. Brant Pitre

Church Fathers Completely Unanimous: four Gospels were written by

a. Matthew the tax-collector (eyewitness and apostle)

b. Mark the follower of Peter (non-eyewitness, but based on Peter’s preaching)

c. Luke the disciple of Paul (based on eyewitnesses; cf. Luke 1:1-4)

d. John the Beloved Disciple and fisherman (eyewitness and apostle)

Q3. (Love) How does the perseverance of Sts. Paul and Barnabas in the face of hardships and persecutions only begun in this chapter encourage you to spread the Gospel in your own circle of influence?

Acts 13:43, 48-49, 52

43 After the congregation had dispersed, many Jews and worshipers who were converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to remain faithful to the grace of God.

48 The Gentiles were delighted when they heard this and glorified the word of the Lord. All who were destined for eternal life came to believe,

49 and the word of the Lord continued to spread through the whole region.

52 The disciples were filled with joy and the holy Spirit.

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I think that many things which appear strange and even contradictory in the New Testament become much clearer when viewed in light of the Old Testament. For example, the Resurrection of Jesus on the third day after his death kept his body from decaying in death as ours will do and as King David’s did. This strange prophecy in the Old Testament sees its fulfillment in the New Testament.

In preaching the Gospel to the Jews, it was important for St Paul, and for us, be able to explain hoe Jesus fulfills the Old Testament prophecies.

Acts 13:34-37

34 And that he raised him from the dead never to return to corruption he declared in this way, ‘I shall give you the benefits assured to David.’

35 That is why he also says in another psalm, ‘You will not suffer your holy one to see corruption.’

36 Now David, after he had served the will of God in his lifetime, fell asleep, was gathered to his ancestors, and did see corruption.

1. But the one whom God raised up did not see corruption.

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Acts 12:25

After Barnabas and Saul completed their relief mission, they returned to Jerusalem,  
 taking with them John, who is called Mark

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I believe that the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles were written by the attributed authors who were Apostles or companions of Apostles. They were not made up in later years as fairy tales. They are the truth, inspired by God and the Apostles were all martyred (except John) for proclaiming that which they knew to be true. It is in this truth and the promise of the Holy Spirit to keep the Church in the truth that inspires my hope of salvation.

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48 The Gentiles were delighted when they heard this and glorified the word of the Lord. All who were destined for eternal life came to believe,

49 and the word of the Lord continued to spread through the whole region.

52 The disciples were filled with joy and the holy Spirit.

Although Sts Paul and Barnabas endured many hardships, they received the reward of seeing the fruits of their labors as many came to believe. I can endure many hardships if I see the positive fruits of my labors in the faithfulness of God’s people.