

The Powerful Gospel

I. Pisidian Antioch Outreach. Acts 13:13-52

- A. Phase two of the first missionary trip. 13
 - 1. Phase 1 is the mission mandate and the Cyprus outreach.
 - 2. Phase 2 is the Pisidian Antioch outreach.
 - 3. Phase 3 (next week) is the Derbe/Lystra
- B. John Mark goes home. (!) 13
- C. Sabbath synagogue meeting. Again, Paul is asked to speak...14-16

II. Paul's Gospel. 16-43. Paul's Synagogue Sermon.

- A. God chose Israel. 17-22
 - 1. Patriarchs; Exodus; Desert; Canaan; Judges; Saul,
 - 2. David: Slowing down here. Dialogue "... a man after my own heart ..." coming to the point.
 - 3. *God's hand seen in high-speed review, but life goes slowly when you're living it*
- B. God brought the Savior through Israel. 23-25 (jumps 1000 years)
 - 1. Preceded by John B. (known to most Jewish people) Baptism of repentance, pointing away from himself to the Messiah.
- C. God predicted and planned the Cross and the Resurrection. 26-31 (Acts 2:23-24)
 - 1. Jerusalem Killed & Buried Him.
 - a) Unwittingly fulfilled prophetic Scripture
 - b) Implicit providence of God in all of this.
 - 2. God raised him from the dead. Permanently!
 - a) He appeared many times over a period of many days
 - 3. God had promised this all along. 32-37
 - a) Psalm 2:7. You are My Son, today I have begotten you. Incarnation.
 - b) Isaiah 55:3. I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. Kingship
 - c) Psalm 16:10. You will not allow your Holy One to decompose. Resurrection.
- D. So, the two most important things you need come only through Jesus Christ: 38-39
 - 1. Forgiveness. *What we need more than anything. Lk.24:*
 - a) Repentant faith is more important than any human issue on offer.
 - 2. Freedom (justification). *Our eternal record expunged.* Rom.3:28; 8:1-2.
 - a) Freedom (justification) the Law could never provide.
 - b) Freedom (NAS) Justified (NIV) = dikaiow = acquitted, declared righteous, set free (like from prison after being declared innocent)
- E. So, don't scoff at God's message. 40-41
 - 1. Habakkuk 1:5 (late 7th cent BC.)
 - 2. This is a warning in Habakkuk is not about salvation happening, but judgment happening!
 - 3. God is doing something – He's bringing judgment against the world. 17:31

III. But the elites did scoff. In fact, they violently rejected the message. 44-52

- A. Large numbers of people came to the Lord. 44
- B. Which threw the balance of power into a tail-spin. 45
 - 1. They realized that the gospel is a threat to pagan and religious influence.
- C. So, the elites pressure the messengers out. 50
- D. But this does not stop the gospel itself. 46-48, 51-52

IV. The gospel is the best news ever proclaimed to humanity.

A. God loves sinful humans and has singlehandedly defeated evil and death on their behalf, offering us real, eternal life. WOW!

1. He will eternally forgive us of all our sins. Rom.8:1-2
 - a) Freed from what the Law could not heal
2. He will permanently declare us righteous (justification). Rom.3:28
 - a) Beyond bare forgiveness, declared positively good.
3. He will guarantee our physical resurrection. Phil.3:20
 - a) Christ's resurrection is the victory and we share it by coming into Him through the Spirit by faith.
4. He will recreate the world without evil and death. Rev.21-22
 - a) Evil and death will end and life will take on what we have always sensed intuitively should happen. (Rev.21-22)

B. So...what is not to like about this?

1. Well, as it turns out, among fallen humanity there is quite a bit not to like...

V. Consider the implications of Jesus as the Risen Lord:

A. If Jesus is the risen Lord, then religion is over. Acts 13:38-39

1. Judaism is over (Rom.10:4)
 - a) Nobody is "grandfathered" in through race or tradition.
2. And if Judaism (God's Torah Tradition) can't save us, no religious tradition of human origin can.
3. *But we like our religions! Note it was "devout and influential" women and men that threw Paul out of town.*

B. If Jesus is the risen Lord, then all other "gods" are false. Jn.14:6

1. The Roman and Greek pagan religions were idolatries. **1 Cor.10:20**
2. Humans have worshipped almost everything but God.
 - a) Sun, moon, stars, animals, insects, mythological deities.
 - b) Hinduism has thousands of gods and traditions.
 - c) All the "spiritualities" that focus on the Self are wrong.
 - d) Self-enlightenment, etc.
3. *But we like our idolatries!*

C. If Jesus is the risen Lord, then atheist philosophy is wrong.

1. There is only one God and he is a Person, not a principle.
2. Specifically naturalism in the west
 - a) The forces of physics are not eternal—they are the active expression of God's mind, his law regarding energy and matter.
 - b) There is eternal life, life after death—and death after life! (2nd death, Rev.20:6, 14)
3. *But we like our philosophies! They let us discuss life without reference to God.*

D. If Jesus is the risen Lord, then there will be a judgment and our goodness cannot save us—only He can. Acts 13:40-41. Hab.1:5 (Isa.64:6)

1. *But we like the idea that there won't be a judgment.*
2. *And we like the idea that if there is a judgment, our own goodness will suffice!*

VI. So, coming into Christ is truly a break with the past (repentance) and an embracing of a new identity and destiny in Christ alone (faith). Do you want this? Rom.10:9-10