

Paul's First Recorded Sermon

Text: Acts 13:13-39

John Mark has left. Paul and Barnabas have crossed the Mediterranean Sea, landing at Perga in Pamphylia in the area of Galatia. They are traveling through challenging terrain, high mountains, rocky roads and the ever-threatening highwaymen. Paul may have had some of his travels between Perga and Antioch in Pisidia in mind when he wrote, "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren" (II Corinthians 11:26).

Once in Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas came into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.

I. THE POSTURE

Acts 13:14

In the midst of this adventure, I am impressed that before Paul asked for an opportunity to speak, he relaxed and made himself at home. And for Paul, for the greater part of his life, the synagogue was home. There are times in the busy course of life, we need to just sit down. Great things have happened when we sit down. For instance, Acts 2:2 tells us, "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." Hebrews 10:36: "For ye have need of patience...."

II. THE PORTAL

Acts 13:15

In years gone by, men of God would often say, "There is a prepared place for a prepared man." And it is certainly true in this case. I believe it to be true, that God prepares a place for a prepared person. After the reading of the law and prophets had taken place, the rulers of the synagogue said, "...if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." The Lord arranged this. Revelation 3:8: "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

III. THE PREACHING

Acts 13:16-41

This is the first recorded sermon that we have of the great apostle Paul.

A. Paul captures their attention. Acts 13:16

His message is to all who will listen.

B. Paul reminds the audience what God has already done. Acts 13:17-22

God has never removed His watch care over His people. God made a way in the wilderness. He was longsuffering with their stubbornness and complaining. He destroyed the nations that would have prevented them from possessing their possessions, even though, in fact, these nations were stronger than Israel.

Deuteronomy 7:1: "When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou."

For 450 years God gave Israel judges to repeatedly deliver them from their constant problem described in Judges 17:6: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Then in His kindness, the Lord gave them the prophet Samuel, who navigated Israel through their rejection of God's leadership to choose a king, like the other nations. I Samuel 8:7: "And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." After Saul's continual disobedience, God found in David a man after His very own heart. I Samuel 13:14: "But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him [David] to be captain over his people, because thou [Saul] hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee."

C. Paul documents the Messianic authority of Jesus.

Acts 13:23: "Of this man's seed hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." Matthew 1:1: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Matthew 1:21: "And she [the virgin Mary] shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins."

D. Paul associates John the Baptist with Elijah. Acts 13:24, 25

Malachi 4:5: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." See also Isaiah 40:3, 4. Matthew 11:13, 14: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come."

E. Paul presents the Gospel. Acts 13:26-39; I Corinthians 15:3, 4

1. It is the one and only plan of salvation (Acts 13:26; Acts 4:12)
2. The Bible prophesied Christ's rejection and crucifixion (Acts 13:26-28; Isaiah 53:3, 4; Psalm 118:22; John 1:11, 12).
3. Christ was buried (Acts 13:29).
4. Christ rose from the dead (Acts 13:30-37).

IV. THE PROMISE

Acts 13:38, 39

Acts 13:32: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers." The promise of "glad tidings" *euangelizo* is another way of saying the Gospel.

A. The forgiveness of sins is promised (Acts 13:38). Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

B. Salvation is all of grace (Acts 13:39). Galatians 2:16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we

have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 3:24: “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Romans 10:4: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

CONCLUSION:

For the remaining portion of Acts 13, we observe the responses to the Gospel. To this day, we will still see the similar responses when we publish the Word of God and present the Gospel. Acts 13:51 and 52 show us that the team was not discouraged, although expelled from the city; their joy and blessing of God followed them. Let us also take hope with a beautiful comparison of Acts 13:44 with Mark 2:1, 2. Let us preach the Word of God and present the Gospel and may it always be said of Christchurch Baptist Fellowship that Jesus is in the house!

-Pastor Pope-