

## Series: Turning the World Upside Down # 2

### The Communication of the Church

Acts 13: 14-16; 26-39

As we continue our study this morning, I want to remind us of our theme verse: [Acts 17:6 – ...These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also](#). Paul, Barnabas, and the others who traveled with them were literally turning the world upside down for the cause of Christ. All who heard their words may not have agreed with the message, but there was no doubt that the cities and towns they encountered were affected by their presence. The Lord was with them, and their ministry was very productive and fruitful. Surely this ought to be the desire of every born again believer. Each of us ought to desire to reach others for the Lord and make a difference in our communities and places of influence.

I would love for Fellowship to turn our community and Mount Airy upside down for Jesus. If we are to have any hope of doing that, we must look to the Scriptures for direction and guidance. We must seek to implement the particular aspects of ministry that Paul and the others did.

In our first study we considered the Charge of the Church. This morning I would like to consider the Communication of the Church. Would you agree that we have a message worth sharing? Would you agree that we have received something that all people need? If so, we must learn to communicate that message. If we are to effectively communicate with the world, we must have a proper understanding of what we desire to communicate. The message of Jesus has the power to turn the world upside down if it is communicated in a proper manner. Let's take some time this morning to consider the [details](#) given in the text as we think on: [The Communication of the Church](#).

**I. The Particulars of the Gathering (14-16)** – These verses reveal significant details regarding Paul's arrival in Antioch. If we are to effectively communicate the gospel message, we need to understand their significance. Consider:

**A. The Synagogue (14)** – [But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down](#). There is really nothing unusual or astounding about the fact that Paul spoke within the synagogue. This would seem to be the natural place in which to share the Word with others. We worship on the Lord's day, Sunday, at the house of God. There is something special about coming together with God's people at His house on a consistent basis.

- There is an important element that we need to consider though. There were always many Jews within the synagogues, but there was also a great concentration of Gentile proselytes that had navigated to the synagogues as well. They had grown tired of the immoral practices of pagan religion and sought a more sanctified religion. Many of them turned to the religion of the Jews.
- The significance is that Paul sought people where they were. He always sought those who were hungry for truth and seeking it. We would do well to learn of Paul in that regard. Many assume that the world doesn't care about the gospel, but there are many within our own communities that seek truth. We need to seek them out and share truth with them.

**B. The Scriptures (15)** – *And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.*

Within the normal services at the synagogue, emphasis was always placed on reading the Scriptures. They always spent time reading the Word of God publicly.

- That too may seem an insignificant detail; we naturally expect the Scriptures to be read at the house of God. However, I fear it is something that we take for granted many times. We cannot underestimate the importance of God's Word. It must always have a prominent place in our worship, as well as our witness. We need to know and understand the Word. It is within the Bible that the Gospel is recorded. The Word reveals God to man and our need for salvation through His Son. The world will provide enough conversation of the weather, current events, and sports. We need to share the Word of God. Our witness will be void of substance and power if we fail to share the Word with those who need to hear!

**C. The Sermon (16)** – *Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.*

This was not uncommon in that day. Typically once the Scriptures were read, an opportunity was given for an exhortation to the people. Often this was reserved for visitors deemed worthy to speak. Paul was given many opportunities to address the attendants of the synagogue under this order of service. He seized every opportunity to expound the Word, pointing people to Christ through the Word.

- We have discussed the importance of Scripture to our witness, and we also need to be reminded of the need to share it with those who need to hear. Simply knowing the Bible isn't enough. We need to be willing to share what we have learned with those who need to hear. Paul and the apostles turned the world upside down by sharing the truth of God's Word. All have not been called to preach, but all can share the Word with others. If we are to impact our world for Jesus, we too must be willing and able to share His Word with them.

## **I. The Particulars of the Gathering (14-16)**

**II. The Preaching of the Gospel (26-37)** – In the verses we passed over, Paul shares the history of Israel and the providence of God bringing Messiah to them. He shares that information leading into the presentation of the Gospel. Let's consider the preaching of the Gospel by Paul. Notice:

**A. The Appeal (26)** – *Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.* Paul appeals to the children of Abraham to look to Jesus, but his message isn't reserved for them alone. He also appeals to whosoever fears God. He had a universal message of salvation for all who would hear by faith.

- What a challenge that presents to us today. We must be aware that the Gospel isn't reserved for a select group that meets our expectations. Jesus is more than able to save anyone. We must not be guilty of selective sharing when it comes to the Gospel. All men are born in sin, and all need a Savior. None are righteous within themselves, and none are beyond Jesus' ability to save. All will not receive our witness, but let's ensure their rejection of Jesus isn't influenced by our lack of proclaiming Him to a lost and dying world.

**B. The Admission (27-28)** – *For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. [28] And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.* Keep in mind Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees. He too had been part of the sect that vehemently denied that Jesus was the Christ. He had persecuted the church and sought to stamp out Christianity. He was well aware that many were opposed to the message of the Gospel. He knew some would not believe that Jesus was the Christ, Savior of humanity. He realized that all would not receive the Gospel.

- We too need to maintain a proper perspective as we seek to reach others for Christ. Some will be receptive to the message, and some will receive Christ, but all will not. We live in a world dominated by sin and its evil influence. Some may hear the Gospel numerous times and never receive it. I will admit that rejection is certainly discouraging, but we cannot let that hinder us from sharing Jesus. Paul did not focus on those who would not hear. He was committed to seeking out all who would. We must remember that they are not rejecting us, but in reality, they are rejecting the Lord. We cannot expect all to accept Christ, but we cannot allow their rejection to consume our thoughts and energy. You may have been rejected many times, but the next one you share with may be the one that is willing to receive Christ.

**C. The Affirmation (28-37)** – In these verses Paul confirms and shares the Gospel with those who are present in the synagogue. He shares the essential elements of the Gospel. He speaks of:

**1. Jesus' Crucifixion (28-29)** – Paul clearly affirms the crucifixion of Jesus. He was well aware that the crucifixion was essential to salvation's plan. Sin caused separation from God. If sin was to be forgiven, it had to be atoned. The only means of atonement was a perfect sacrifice. God alone is perfect, so He sent His Son, God in the flesh, to become the sacrificial atonement for sin.

- It is impossible to share the Gospel without the crucifixion. Had Jesus not died upon the cross, bearing our sin and taking our place, we would yet be in our sin, lost without hope.

**2. Jesus' Resurrection (30-33)** – Paul also affirms the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This was not merely legend, but undeniable fact. Jesus was seen of many after His resurrection, [V.31](#). This too is a fundamental element of the Gospel. Had Jesus not risen, He would have been no different than all who died before Him. Had He not risen, death and the grave would have gained victory. Had He not risen we would have no hope of future resurrection and eternal life. We cannot share the Gospel apart from the victorious resurrection of Christ!

**3. Jesus' Perfection (34-37)** – Paul reveals that Jesus rose to die no more. All who remain in the grave decay in death. The great king David remained in the tomb. Jesus came forth victorious and His body did not see corruption. The grave could not hold the King of glory. The curse of sin had no hold on the Lord of lords. He came forth having the keys of death and hell. He ascended back to the Father where His is seated on His right hand in glory. There is no need to look to another, Jesus lives today and forever more!

**I. The Particulars of the Gathering (14-16)**

**II. The Preaching of the Gospel (26-37)**

**III. The Prominence of the Gospel (38-39)** – As Paul concluded his presentation of the Gospel we discover its prominence. It is a message that all need to hear and receive. Consider:

**A. Our Salvation** (38) – *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:* This was not a message of little value. It was not something to be lightly considered. The preaching of the Gospel reveals Jesus, in whom is forgiveness of sin and salvation. As long as there are lost people upon the earth, there will be a need for salvation. As long as there are lost people upon the earth, the Gospel will need to be shared. I rejoice for the day the Gospel was presented to me in power of the Holy Spirit.

**B. Our Justification** (39a) – *And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* When one receives the Gospel by faith, they receive salvation in Christ. Salvation results in justification. In Christ we are justified from all things. We are declared righteous in Christ. The sin of our past is cleansed and forgotten. Our account is marked “paid in full by the blood of the Lamb.” The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the account of all who come to Him in salvation.

**C. Our Obligation** (39b) – *from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* Many in that day were looking to the law of Moses as a means of justification before God. They sought to keep a set of rules and laws in order to be found acceptable to God. Paul declares that there is justification in no other but Christ. It isn’t found in keeping laws or statutes. It isn’t obtained through moral living. It isn’t a question of whether the good outweighs the bad; it is only a question of salvation in Christ. There is no other way to be forgiven of sin and reconciled to God. Jesus is the only way of redemption!

**Conclusion:** Paul was very clear on the message he presented. He always shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we are to turn the world upside down for Jesus we must be committed to sharing the Gospel as well. We must be willing and able to communicate the Gospel to a world that needs to hear of Jesus.

Are you familiar enough with the Gospel to share it with others? If you are saved you ought to be. Always share Jesus crucified, buried, risen, and coming again. Share with others what He has done for you. If Jesus can save you and me, He can save anyone.

Maybe you are here and have never heard the Gospel until today. Maybe you have heard it before but have never responded to it. Jesus is the only way of salvation and reconciliation to God. If the Holy Spirit has spoken to you through the presentation of the Gospel, please respond to Him by faith. Jesus paid for your redemption. Will you receive Him as your Savior today?