

The First Missionary Enterprise Pt. 2

Overall Luke is mainly interested in the gospel's expansion to Rome. He spotlights three events from the first trip.

- An evangelistic encounter with a Proconsul and power encounter with a false prophet in Paphos.
 - Their ministry in a synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia in South Galatia
 - And their address of a pagan crowd in open air preaching in Lystra.
1. **The Peril that confronts us all. V. 13.** What Luke states so matter of factly later becomes patently clear. Cf. **15:38**. Why, we aren't told. "The realities of missionary life were too much for John Mark. He had inwardly romanticized the ministry they were undertaking, but the reality had smashed his dreams. First came the disappointment in the seeming ineffectiveness of the initial ministry. Then there had been a convert, but what a battle for that one soul! Now they were setting sail from the sunny shores for the ominous cliffs of Perga, 175 miles away." Kent Hughs.
 - a. **Was it:**
 - i. Homesickness
 - ii. Sickness.
 - iii. Envy over the closeness of Paul and Barnabas
 - iv. Objection to Gentile evangelism
 - v. Problem with the difficulty of the travel
 - vi. Fear of the powers of darkness
 - b. **The sad truth about us.** Many of us are too soft! We think, "This cannot be God's will – it is too hard! I know it is not God's will – it hurts!"
 - c. **Remember the words of Christ. Cf. Lk. 9:62.** If you've fallen like Mark repent like him too! Cf. **Col. 4:10; 2Tim. 4:11.**

What was revealed in Paul's life is that the Christian life is a war. It demands the best we have. Let us not enter it with romanticized notions. Let us enter it with a sober realistic assessment confident that though the struggle is fierce, there is no trial so hot but that Christ can see us through it. In Him we are more than conquerors.

2. **Antioch of Pisidia**¹. **Vv. 14-52.** We have a report of their arrival and a sample of their ministry. This passage is exceedingly valuable because: It is the longest and most developed of Paul's synagogue speeches. It takes us inside the message they preached and typical reaction they received.

The section outline: (**Vv. 13-15**) the setting (**Vv. 16-41**) the sermon (**Vv. 42-47**) the follow up sermon and (**Vv. 48-52**) the impact. The main point is contained in **Vv. 46-47**. Jewish rejection will not stop the progress of the mission.

- a. **Vv. 13-15. The Setting.**

- i. **Vv. 13-14a.** Pamphylia is about 400 miles from Jerusalem. The trip to Perga was about 112 miles and the city was 12 miles inland situated about 3,600 feet above sea level. It had a large Jewish population (Josephus notes about 2,000 families in the region).
- ii. **Vv. 14b-15.** The synagogue service followed the normal order of reading from the Law and Prophets². This was followed by a homily or brief exposition called here, "**a word of encouragement.**" It was the job of the rulers to assign the homily and the visitors are asked.

- b. **Vv. 16-41. The Sermon.** The sermon can be usefully divided into three parts: (**Vv. 16-25**) A survey of the

¹ It was situated in Phrygia, over against Pisidia. It belonged to the part that was in the kingdom of Galatia. When it was established Augustus made Antioch a Roman Colony. It was the civil and military center of that part of Galatia. Paul seemed to attach importance to evangelizing such centers.

² Typical order: Shema, prayer, Torah reading, Prophet's reading, priestly blessing, exposition.

history of Israel up till John (Vv. 26-37) the declaration of Jesus and (Vv. 38-41) the application.

i. **Vv. 16-25.** Having stood up and addressed both the sons of the covenant along with the god-fearers. Paul begins with a typical liturgical rehearsal of God's covenantal acts covering three periods all with a focus on Christ.

1. **Vv. 17-20a. The exodus and wilderness wandering.** This was the signal event pattern and symbolic of redemption from sin and bondage.
2. **Vv. 20b-22. The conquest and time of the judges till the monarchy.** God led Israel along setting the stage for the monarchy. To David God gave promises that awaited latter fulfillment. Cf. 2Sa. 7; Ezek. 21:27; Ps. 89:19-29.12-13.
3. **Vv. 23-25. John pointed to and paved the way for Jesus who was promised.** He prepared for His coming and identified His arrival.

What is emphasized is the (1) initiative and fidelity of God to His self initiated covenant through each phase of Israel's history. (2) The centrality of the Messiah (titled Savior) to Israel's story a story that unfolds in a historical process that awaits fulfillment. (3) Jesus as the climax of Israel's history and fulfillment of God's covenant.

- ii. **Vv. 26-31.** Paul addresses both groups and presents the salvation message. Two parts:
1. **Vv. 27-29. The historical facts surrounding His life and death.** It is presented as the continuation and climax of Israel's story. It is met with the characteristic:

a. **Israel's Ignorance. V. 27.** They neither understood the Scripture nor recognized the Savior. This is attributed to both their carnality and judicial hardening. Cf. 1Cor. 2:8; Isa. 6; Jn. 12:36b-43.

b. **Israel's Wickedness. Vv. 28-29.** Yet while it was evidence of the judgment of God; their actions were entirely intentional and entirely evil. Cf. 2:23; 1Thess. 2:13-16.

2. **The Resurrection with its historical evidence. Vv. 30-31.** The 'but' is a crucial one. They handed Jesus up 'but' God delivered Him. They rejected Him 'but' God vindicated Him. God reversed the verdict of men. This is the triumphant note constantly evident in early preaching.

iii. **Vv. 32-41. The use made of Jesus' story in synagogue preaching.** It is twofold:

1. **The historical events are theologically interpreted. Vv. 32-37.** It is the fulfillment and climax of the Old Testament covenant promises. What they did in ignorance was in fulfillment of OT prophecy. The OT references are all Messianic and Davidic.

2. **The theological interpretation is practically applied. Vv. 38-41.**

a. **Vv. 38-39³.** Forgiveness of sins is offered and repentance is called

³ Here the translation is so loose it borders on a paraphrase. "Through Him all who believe are justified" comprises v. 39 and should come last.

for. The major themes that conflict (v. 45) would cause to be hammered out are present.

i. Substitutionary atonement. Cf. v.29; Deut. 21:22-23; Ga. 3:13-14.

ii. Justification by faith. Cf. Ga. 2:15-21.

iii. Redemptive historical understanding of the Law. Cf. Ga. 3:10-29.

b. Vv. 40-41. The Habakkuk quotation is a reminder of a past surprising act of God. They are therefore, forewarned and re-warned of the folly of repeating the sin of their forefathers.

c. Vv. 42-52. **The Follow up Sermon and Response.** The initial reaction was extremely favorable. Cf. Vv. 42-44. They *“begged”* to hear more and at least some, *“followed Paul and Barnabas.”*

i. **Three themes emerge that will be prominent throughout the Pauline mission.**

1. **The willful rejection of the Jews.** Vv. 42-46; 50-51. Paul began with the Jews. It was fitting they do so. It was really a call to (1) join in and (2) be obedient to their calling (Isa. 2:1-5):

That they *“were filled with jealousy”* (v. 45) was very likely a work of their father Satan. Cf. 5:3. *lit.* *“Blaspheming”*. Cf. Eph. 4:29.

2. **The gracious reception of the gentiles.** Vv. 47-48a. This is not without exception. Cf. Acts 17.

3. **The glorious ascription of the results to God.** Vv. 48b-49; 52. The note of predestination is not to be weakened. *Tetagemenos* means to inscribe or enroll. Cf. Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 20:12-15, 27.

d. **Bruce said the Jews couldn't stop the gospel from being received** but they could make the town too hot for the missionaries and this they did. Vv. 49-52.

i. They roused the leadership. Cf. v. 50.

ii. The gesture performed was commended by Jesus and signified a testimony before heaven. Cf. v. 51.

iii. Iconium was 90 miles south east. It was the easternmost city of Antioch Pisidian. They left behind a people filled with a joy that would be preserved by the Holy Spirit.