

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 16th October 2022
Sermon Title: Why be church: mission
Bible Passage: Acts 13: 1 - 12

Introduction

Take time to read the passage from a couple of different translations.

- Highlight the key verses, repeated phrases or words from this passage. What do you think is the significance of these words?
- Does the passage raise any questions for you?
- This story marks the start of Paul's first missionary journey. If you can search on google for a map that shows the areas Paul went to?

Recapping the Preach

You may have heard the phrase, 'I don't do church' as if church is something that we do. Over the next 3 weeks we will explore the question, 'Why be church'.

- If someone asked you, 'why do you go to church?' - how would you answer them?
- What would you say, are the primary functions of the church?
- We have explored two primary functions of the church: worship and discipleship. Why do you think these are important?

Stu began by describing the church in Antioch, that it was a good church with a good beginning. However there was a danger that they could become insular and stuck, neglecting to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. This is a danger that every church will face from time to time.

- Why do you think churches can get stuck in a rut and can sometimes neglect mission?
- What can we do, individually and together, to avoid these dangers?

Stu mentioned as an aside the central place of prayer and our absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit. He pointed out that mission springs from a place of prayer. Also that the posture of prayer gives way to the move of the Spirit.

- What were the church doing when the Spirit spoke to them (13:1-3)?
- What is the significance of this for us individually and as a church?
- Luke does not tell us but how do you think the Spirit spoke to them?
- In what ways do you recognise the Spirit speaking to you?

Stu then described Barnabas and Paul's journey to Cyprus and their meeting of Sergius Paulus. He unpacked the gospel as it may have been shared with the proconsul. The story is one which demonstrates the power of the Spirit (in regard to Elymas) and the power of the Word (in regard to the Proconsul).

- Why is the gospel central to the mission of the church?
- What verses of Scripture would you turn to, to support this?

Stu pointed out that this is important to us as a church because we are a place to grow in leading people to Jesus. Thus the trio of primary tasks of the church is completed: worship, discipleship and mission - each of equal importance and needing to be attended to in equal measure.

- Which of these areas do you need to grow in?
- How could you intentionally grow in personal evangelism?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?
- Who can you pray for to come to faith?

Prayer pointers

- Take time to share prayer requests and pray for one another.
- Pray that the Lord would open up opportunities for you to share your faith.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://bibleproject.com> (videos)
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>