

Be Careful You Don't Miss It (Acts 13:13-52)

God has done something beautiful. He promised it a long time ago, and now it's come to pass in the story of Jesus. First followers of Jesus knew it meant nothing would ever be the same again. They also knew we have to be careful not to miss it, dismiss it or take it lightly. What are these promises? What do they invite us into? How could we miss them?

1. What God promised has come true in Jesus (Acts 13:17-39)

= contextualization. Learning to speak the gospel with clarity; in a way the person in front of you can understand (without compromising its message at all).

Picture the story about Jesus as a tree with deep roots. There's a lot beneath the surface we don't see.

Picture it as a movie with a prequel. Without the first part we might feel a bit lost at first.

Paul launches into a sermon filled with "signs" (post-it notes!) - key moments in history that help him tell the *story behind the story* of Jesus; that help him highlight the promises of God.

- First "sign" - God's story in and through the nation of Israel VV17-20
- Second "sign" - King David VV21-22
- Third "sign" - Jesus + John the Baptist VV23-25

VV33-35 quotes three passages - all in relation to King David. Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 55:3; Psalm 16:10

The Gospel is more than generic good news; it's the proclamation of a new era / day.

The promises fulfilled in Jesus all point to a breathtaking invitation. V38!

2. Be careful you don't miss it! (Acts 13:40-52)

Habakkuk 1:5 = invasion of Babylonians was God's doing! (Say what?!) His point? It's dangerous to ignore / dismiss what God is doing! *"Don't fail to recognize what's God's is doing!"*

Yes, God has acted in a surprising way! Yes, everything is going to be different now.

VV46-47 *"A light for the gentiles; salvation to the ends of the earth..."* Isaiah 49:6

QUESTIONS (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. How did Sunday's Talk encourage or challenge you?
2. Why is it so important we learn how to "contextualize" the story of Jesus - to share it in a way the person in front of us can grasp? What will that require of you / us?
3. Read Acts 13:13-42. Paul and Barnabas left Antioch in Syria and now arrive in a different Antioch (in Pisidian). It was customary in the local synagogue to allow visitors to deliver a fresh word of encouragement. Paul tells Israel's story and connects it to Jesus. What "signs" does Paul lean on to help him share this *story behind the story* of Jesus? *Hint: look at your notes above
4. Paul talked about "good news" in V32. How does he describe this good news (gospel)? Why is the resurrection of Jesus so central to this good news?
5. The promises Paul has laid out in the story of Jesus all lead to a breathtaking invitation found VV36-39. What are we invited into?
In V41 Paul warns his hearers using a quote from Habakkuk 1:5 of judgment through the Babylonians hundreds of years prior. That judgment was God's doing and Israel had an extremely difficult time accepting that fact. Paul is saying, *"don't miss what God is doing here! Don't let it pass you by."* Why did so many Jews have such a hard time accepting what Paul was saying (demonstrate such stubborn refusal)? Why do many in our own day do the same thing? How will we guard against treating these breath-taking promises lightly?
6. The call to be "a light to the gentiles" is something we will see again in Acts. It's a repeated theme. The door has been pushed wide-open for the good news about Jesus to go worldwide. What might faithfulness to this call look like here in at Local Church St. Pete?

Paul tells the story of God working through a particular people to reach the nations (to reach you). It isn't just anyone's story - if you by faith look to Jesus, it's YOUR story now. A story of freedom, hope, forgiveness and life through Jesus. Take time to thank God for his extraordinary grace. Thank him for including us (the nations) in his story of redemption. Ask him to keep us humbled by this grace and to help us communicate the story of Jesus with clarity, humility, courage and joy.