

# PLOT TWIST

**When God Surprises His People**

## **Part 7: The Sermon That Rocked a City**

As we come to Acts 13, we reach another moment which could be called one of the hinges of history. Here we find the pattern for all Christian witness in any culture, in any era of history.

~ Ray C. Stedman  
*God's Unfinished Book*

Thus began a radically new policy for Christian missions: the legitimacy of Gentile Christians' expression of their faith in Jesus apart from Jewish lifestyle or any distinctive Jewish practices. The church would never be the same again.

~ Richard N. Longenecker  
*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*

Paul was aware that his "Good News" was not only good but in many respects startling. God's surprise move is that through his incarnate and risen Son Jesus, he makes salvation blessings available to all who will believe, including Gentiles – apart from the law! For legalistic, ethnocentric Jews this might indeed be unbelievable, perhaps even outrageous and offensive.

~ William J. Larkin  
*Tyndale Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*

Those who embraced Paul's message gloried in the gospel itself. This should be our goal for people in our churches today. It is not enough to attract people to Christianity by presenting them an attractive program that ministers to their felt needs. We must get people to understand the glory of the truth of the gospel – something deeper and more lasting than experience. Then they will have joy in the gospel, a joy that can withstand the mysterious times of darkness in life.

~ Ajith Fernando  
*The NIV Application Commentary*

Paul's message in Acts 13 is virtually the same message that Stephen brought the day that he was stoned. Paul heard that message firsthand and remembered it.

~ Frank Viola  
*The Untold Story of the New Testament Church*

**And this is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus**  
**By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News.**

~ The Apostle Paul, *Ephesians 3:6-7 (NLT)*