

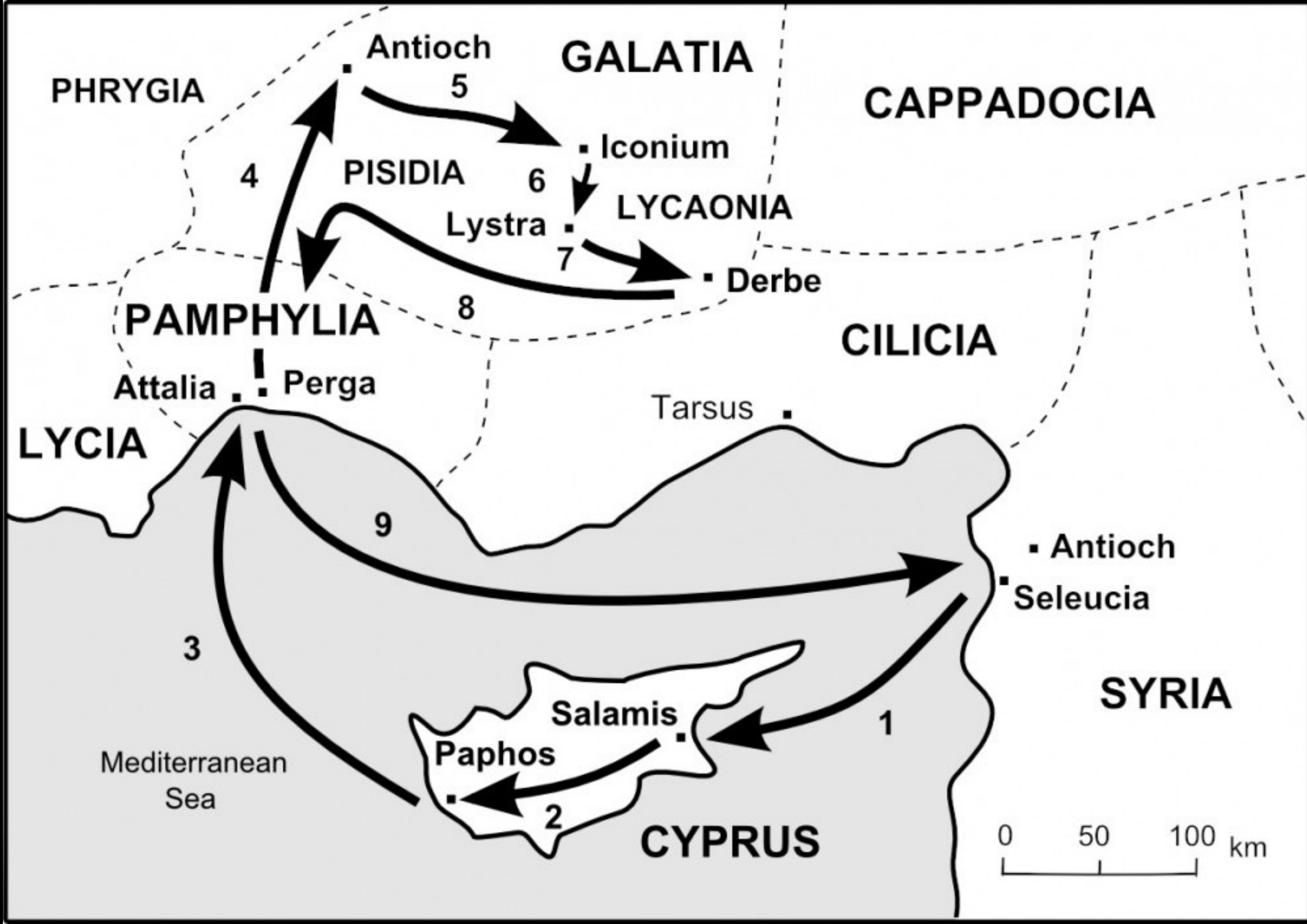


# Building the church

*A sermon series on the Gospel of Acts*

## Lessons In Gospel Delivery

Acts 14:1-28



Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. 3 So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 4 But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. 5 When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, 6 they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, 7 and there they continued to preach the gospel.

8 Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. 9 He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, 10 said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking. 11 And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" 12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. 13 And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out,  
15 “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. 16 In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.” 18 Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.

19 But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. 20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

24 Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia.  
25 And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia, 26 and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. 27 And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. 28 And they remained no little time with the disciples.

-Acts 14:1-28



## **Acts 14:1-28**

- **Main Idea:** The Christian witness perseveres through opposition, speaks into the culture, and is nurtured through a healthy church.
  - We are to persevere through opposition
  - We are to deliver a message that transcends culture
  - We are to care for new believers through the local church

50 But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. 51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium.

- Acts 13:50-51

# Pattern of Gospel Delivery in the Book of Acts

**Preaching:** vs 1

**Division:** vss 2 + 4

**Persecution:** vs 5

**Growth:** vss 3 + 21

5 When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, 6 they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, 7 and there they continued to preach the gospel.

- Acts 14:5-7

19 But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. 20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples,

- Acts 14:19-21

24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course (route) and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

- Acts 20:24

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

- 1 Peter 5:8-9

17 Then the dragon (Satan) was enraged at the woman (the Church) and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring —those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.

- Revelation 12:17

through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

- Acts 14:22

Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. . . . 3 So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace.

- Acts 14:1+3

# Iconium: Context and Audience Matter in Acts

**Context:** a Jewish synagogue

**Audience:** believing Jews and God-fearers

**Message:** “speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace”

25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

- Matthew 16:25-26

15 “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. 16 In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

- Acts 14:15-17

# **Lystra: Context and Audience Matter in Acts**

**Context:** A greek city market place

**Audience:** Pagans worshipping the Greek Pantheon of gods.

**Message:** “ turn from these vain things to a living God”

16 In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

- Acts 14:15-17

# Principles of Gospel Contextualisation

## 1. Know the Gospel worldview:

- The fundamental story of the gospel—humanity's separation from God, who Jesus is, what He accomplished through His death and resurrection, and the call for repentance and faith—must never be compromised.

# Principles of Gospel Contextualisation

## 1. Know the Gospel worldview

## 2. **Worldview Questions:** Everyone operates within a narrative explaining the world.

- How are things supposed to be? What am I here for?
- What has gone wrong?
- What will make things right?

# Principles of Gospel Contextualisation

1. **Know the Gospel worldview**
2. **Worldview Questions:** Everyone operates within a narrative explaining the world.
3. **Identify the Culture's Idols of the Heart:**
  - *"... that most basic question which God poses to each human heart: "has something or someone besides Jesus the Christ taken title to your heart's functional trust, preoccupation, loyalty, service, fear and/or delight?"* - Tim Keller

# Principles of Gospel Contextualisation

1. **Know the Gospel worldview**
2. **Worldview Questions:** Everyone operates within a narrative explaining the world.
3. **Identify the Culture's Idols of the Heart:**
4. **Build bridges without compromise**

# Principles of Gospel Contextualisation

- 1. Know the Gospel worldview**
- 2. Worldview Questions:** Everyone operates within a narrative explaining the world.
- 3. Identify the Culture's Idols of the Heart:**
- 4. Build bridges without compromise**
- 5. Trust the Gospel to do its work**

# A Healthy Church

## Acts 14:21-23

1. Sound teaching
2. Practical encouragement
3. Godly Elders
4. Characterised by Prayer and Fasting (seeking and depending upon God)

Men despise religion. They hate it and are afraid it may be true. The cure for this is first to show that our faith is not contrary to reason, but worthy of reverence and respect. Next make it attractive, make good men wish it were true, and then show that it is.”

— Blaise Pascal, *Pensees*



Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

- 1 Peter 3:14-16



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