

INTRO

- Are you much of a gardener?

In the third season of Unstoppable, we witness the gospel transforming a diverse and global movement of followers of Jesus. We have been invited to actively participate in this movement, rather than spectate from the sidelines.

READ

Acts 1:8

Acts 13:26-33a, 38-39

REFLECT & RESPOND

Luke provides one of three summaries of Paul's gospel preaching in Acts 13, with Acts 14 and 17 recording the remaining two. In every situation, Paul customizes his presentation of the gospel to suit the unique context, while still preserving the essential elements of the message. Understanding the connection between context and content is crucial when sharing the message of Jesus. When it comes to fruitful witnessing, both the soil and the seed are important factors to consider.

Soil: the context for the Gospel

Context matters. Paul uses a lot of Jewish history and scripture in this sermon because his audience is in the synagogue. In future sermons, he'll argue from nature or philosophy to build common ground with his non-Jewish audiences.

Qu: think about the people and place you're in. How would you describe the "soil" around you, and possible ways to make it more receptive?

Seed: the content of the Gospel

Fertile soil is a great place for seeds to flourish... and weeds! The quality of our gospel seed also matters. So, what is crucial we get right in sharing the gospel? Interwoven in all of the sermons recorded in the NT, there are core

components of the gospel usually presented, as seen in this sermon by Paul:

1. What must I believe?

We confess Christ: died, buried, raised and seen (1 Cor 15:3-5). The Easter event becomes the cornerstone of the gospel and faith.

2. Why should I believe? (v38)

This addresses credibility (the facts and reasonableness for faith) and relevance (the fulfillment and implications of Jesus' death & resurrection).

3. How can I believe? (v39)

Belief in Jesus is a call to both an invitation and challenge: to receive, repent, trust, follow.

Qu: are you confident in sharing the gospel? What aspects of the context and content of gospel sharing do you find challenging? What are ways to counteract those challenges?

In Acts 1:8, Jesus was confident that bearing witness to him would lead to an international, multicultural Jesus-following movement. 2000+ years later, he was right!

Whilst we have our own challenges to overcome in witnessing, rest assured that Acts reminds us that when we do witness it is guided by the providence of God, empowered by the Spirit, and we can trust the gospel seed to spread widely, grow in power, and flourish wherever it is sown.

RESPOND & PRAY

- Pray for a greater courage and confidence in sharing the gospel.
- Pray for divine opportunities and wisdom to share the gospel.