



Series: You Are Sent, Vol 2.

Sermon Title: The Promise Keeping God

Speaker: Joseph Anderson, Associate Campus Director, MNE

- Good morning Mercy Family
 - It is my joy to be with you this morning

- No I am not a guest speaker
 - My name is Joseph Anderson
 - My wife is Kaylon
 - and we have 3kids
 - Soon to be 4
 - I will be the campus director for the Mercy NE
 - NE stand up

- And i tell you what
 - I have been praying for MERCY

- I have been praying that we will see what has happened in the book of Acts
 - happened in our Church
 - that the Word of God would be preached
 - for the advancement of the Gospel
 - that the power of God will be revealed
 - for the sake of his glory
 - And that there will be a gospel Awakening
 - in the city of Charlotte

- Last week Pastor Allan preached about the Unstoppable Force that is the sovereignty of God



- there was nothing anyone could do to stop the spread of the Gospel in Jerusalem

- And now Luke, being the master Storyteller that he is
 - addresses the same topic but with different characters

- We flip over to chapter 13 and we see God setting apart
 - Paul and Barnabas for the sake of the Gospel
 - It doesn't say it explicitly but the mission to the Gentiles has begun
 - by the end of the chapter
 - the Gentiles will be rejoicing at the glory of the Gospel

- But before we get there though
 - We see Paul and Barnabas journey on the island of Cyprus
 - Luke, illustrates how they had gone from synagogue to synagogue
 - proclaiming the gospel with relative ease...until Paphos

- OHH but at Paphos, there was a Sorcerer
 - a worker of dark magic
 - a false prophet
 - and an opponent of Jesus

- You see, Paul and Barnabas had been summoned by the ruler of that Roman District
 - Called a procounsul
 - He wanted to hear the gospel
 - And at Paphos, the enemy would make his stand



- It says in verse 8 that
 - the magician opposed Paul and Barnabas, seeking to turn the roman ruler away from the faith.
 - But the work of God would not be halted
 - Satan would learn the hard way that the gospel does not kneel before kings
 - Nor does it bow to sorcerers

- Paul, filled with the spirit, called judgment on this man
 - and he was struck blind
 - a pair of darkened eyes
 - to match his darkened heart

- Scripture says the proconsul believed when he saw what had occurred.
 - the gospel would not be stopped

- But if we look closely
 - Luke the author of Acts
 - does not attribute the belief of the proconsul to the miracle of judgment worked before him

- Look closely at verse 12
 - the proconsul believes for, or because,
 - he was astonished at the teaching of the word.

- There is a type of preaching empowered by the spirit



- illuminates our dead hearts to beat with astoundment at the glory of God

- In our portion of scripture today
 - Acts 13:13-41
 - We see Paul's first recorded sermon

- What we have modeled before us is
 - God saturated
 - God exalting
 - God glorifying
 - Preaching

- In which Paul accentuates the supremacy of God
 - in his sovereignty
- Affirms the grace of God
 - in his choice
- and Articulates the faithfulness of God
 - through the Fulfillment of the promise

- The main idea of the sermon today... is God
 - God has sovereignly ordained everything
 - Graciously choosing those he loves
 - For the sake of the promise

- So we'll see three things repeat me
 - sovereignty
 - choice
 - fulfillment



PRAY

- In verses 13 - 15 Paul and Barnabas arrive in Antioch
 - and as is their custom on the Sabbath they attend their local synagogue
 - Scripture says after the reading of the law and Prophets the rulers of the synagogue ask them to speak
 - And as a result
 - they would hear the message far greater than they expected
 - Paul stands and addresses this group of Jews and God-fearing gentiles
 - His first point is this
- 1. God has sovereignly ordained history in his gracious choice of Israel to reveal the promise**
- - we pick up in verse 17

17 The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. 18 And for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. 19 And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. 20 All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. 21 Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 22 And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' 23 Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.

- It would be no overstatement To assert that
 - the book of Acts was written to highlight the sovereignty of God.



- text like this validate that reality.
 - In the first seven verses
 - God is referred to no less than 16 times

- What Paul is holding before our eyes is God's Sovereign control over history
 - see the verbs attributed to God
 - God chose
 - God made great
 - God led them out
 - God put up with
 - God destroyed
 - God gave an inheritance
 - And judges
 - and kings
 - and David
 - And God gave Jesus

- There is something awe provoking about the sovereignty and supremacy of God.

- There is a being who has crafted every detail of History

- Hear what God says about God... Isaiah 46:9-10
 - I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times (to) things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'

- not only does God have a design for the world



- but he has the ability to accomplish it

- In His Infinite Wisdom, he has crafted purpose
 - and in his infinite power, he brings it about

- So be still and know that the crafter of history was not caught off guard by coronavirus
 - He is not surprised by your joblessness
 - Nor is he overwhelmed by your depression

- Hear me mercy regardless of your circumstance
 - God is still in Control

- Paul wants us to grasp the sovereignty of God
 - He literally brought one nation to Superior status
 - within another
 - then He delivered them despite their military disadvantage
 - And then he gives them someone else's land as an inheritance
 - Proving the land always belonged to him
 - God does whatever pleases God

- Seated on the throne of Heaven
 - Know that there is a Holy
 - Righteous
 - All-powerful



■ Triune God

- And get this ...
 - He is for us

- This is the fifth and most important way God manifests his sovereignty
 - He chose Israel

- What we will see is that
- all of God's actions toward Israel
 - are grounded in God's act of choosing them in unconditional Love

- God is not the God of Israel in a sense that Israel chose him out of a number of other eligible deities
 - On the contrary
 - the relationship between Israel and God is based solely on the reality that God unconditionally loved them

- V17- 18 says that
 - God chose Israel
 - Made them great
 - Delivered them
 - And bore with them

- But the why is just important as the what



- **What we must comprehend is that**
- **it is Gods choice of Israel that Influences every other interaction**

- We should recall Deut 7:7-8
 - "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples,
 - See the connection between love and choice
 - And see how God chose this lowly nation
 - He says
 - it is because the Lord loves you
 - and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery,

- Before God chose him, who was Abraham but a Godless idol-worshipper?
 - Who was Isaac but the second-born son?
 - Who was Jacob but a spineless Deceiver?

- But in a shocking turn of events
 - God chooses Abraham, this obscure man and
 - prefers him above every other created being

- It was not just for sovereignty that God acted
 - But his action was motivated by love



- Do you see how It was his love that exalted and delivered Israel from Egypt
 - How it was his love that caused him to endure in the wilderness

- In the Old Testament when God forgave and pardoned sins
 - It was often accompanied by this statement
 - *God remembered his Covenant*
 - Which could also be stated...
 - he remembered that he had chosen them

- It was for love that God removed Seven Nations for the inheritance of one
 - one commentator highlights that
 - it is no small matter for the land to be deprived of her inhabitants, that she might receive strangers.
 - But God had chosen Israel

- And his grace toward them continues
 - Verse 20-21 say
 - **All this took about 450 years.**
 - **He gave them judges**
 - **Prophets**
 - **And kings**

- And scripture tells us that Israel,
 - In their asking God for a king
 - denied God's good and faithful provision
 - being the prodigal child that they are



■ squandered their inheritance

- But like the good father in the parable
 - he continued to provide
 - We see this repetition of
 - He gave

- And we see God's choice of Israel building to this climax as God raises up David
 - The grace of God is becoming more and more apparent
 - as Paul for the first time in his sermon lingers

- Some say the most gracious act of God toward Israel apart from The Exodus
 - was raising up David as king

- And we almost feel the urgency of Paul as he accentuates God's grace with his words
 - emphasizing that David was the son of Jesse
 - And Jesse was a shepherd
 - the least desired occupation in ancient times

- But God flexes his sovereignty as he chooses David in a similar way he chose Israel
 - Choosing to love the least of the shepherd boys
 - Saying of him I have found David a man after my own heart
 - Who will do all my will



- At this point the glory of the Gospel will no longer be contained
 - Paul has landed on David with good reason
 - for it was his springboard to dive
 - into the DEEP pool of Jesus
 - and in verse 23 he gets to the point
 - The bedrock of the sermon
 - Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.
- God's power in sovereignty
 - and wisdom in choice
 - are all for the purpose of his promise
 - that he may be worshipped and glorified for all eternity
 - as faithful
- God made a promise to David in 2 Samuel 7 saying
 - "I will raise up your offspring to succeed you ... and I will establish his kingdom forever."
 - Jesus is the royal Messiah, and the final kingdom has arrived with him.
- Paul has dropped to the equivalent of an atomic bomb on this Jewish synagogue
 - seizing the opportunity to present the Fulfillment of all Old Testament expectations of the Messiah
 - in Jesus
- It is important to note here that Paul's message is distinctly Jewish
 - in order not to give connotations of a political Deliverance
 - He altogether avoids the word messiah
 - For the promised king would not be one who sat on an Earthly throne



- But instead would be exalted into the heavens giving liberation from our greatest enemy, sin and death
- (---)All that Paul has said until now
- Has been in service of this point
 - for the sake of the promise
 - God endured Israel's murmuring and idolatry in the wilderness
 - for the sake of the promise
 - he destroyed Seven Nations so that the people could receive their inheritance...
- Don't miss the essential nature of their inheritance
 - It is literally referred to as the promised land
 - So what Paul is highlighting for us is that God keeps his promises.
 - In this way the land functions as a precursor to Salvation
- *Our God is faithful to every word that he speaks*
 - *And he is intentional in the work of his hands*
- *So let me ask you Mercy*
 - *Are you trusting him*
 - *Are you meditating on his sovereignty*
 - *Are you allowing his faithfulness to overcome*
 - *Your fears*
 - *Like really is your hope for salvation*
 - *in the cure for this virus*
 - *Or in an economic upswing*
 - *Is it in a bullish market*



- *Brothers and sisters look at the text*
 - *see how God has divinely crafted history for the purpose of our salvation.*

- *See how the history of Israel reveals how God has saved us*
 - *For just as God chose and exalted Israel he has chosen and exalted us (EPH 1:4)*
 - **Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.**
 - *And just as he endured with Israel he endured with us saying (1 JN 1:9)*
 - **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
 - *And just as he destroyed the enemies of Israel*
 - *he destroyed our enemies of sin and death*
 - *and better than any judge or King*
 - *he is giving us his Spirit to lead and guide us*

- *So yes God has sovereignly crafted history to reveal the promised to us*

- **Don't miss the principal**
 - **all that God has done and is doing**
 - **he does in his Sovereign choosing**
 - **for the sake of the promise**

- **So when your life is a whirlwind... cast your anchor into the depth of God's sovereignty**
 - **knowing that he is working all things together for the good of those who love him**

- (—)Our God is faithful to keep his promises
 - *And we see this most clearly... in the cross*



- Paul continues
 - Arguing that

2. God has sovereignly ordained the cross in his gracious choice of Jesus to fulfill the promise.

- Vs26

26 “Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation. **27** For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. **28** And though they found in him no guilt worthy of death, they asked Pilate to have him executed. **29** And when they had carried out all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. **30** But God raised him from the dead, **31** and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.

- Coming out of these verses we should observe 2 things
 - the scandalous condemnation of Jesus
 - and Pauls Insistence on the historical Validity of these events
- And once again
 - the Emphasis is placed on the sovereignty of God
- But here... God’s sovereignty is contrasted
 - with the perceived autonomy of man ... saying
 - . **27** because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets,(they) fulfilled them by condemning him.



- There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is destruction .(Prov 14:12)
- Feel the discomfort of the Jews who sat before Paul
 - as they squirmed in their seats
- This was an outright condemnation of the religious leaders
 - One commentator says it this way
 - Paul's emphasis is on their guilt, for it was not an inadvertent failure to realize who he was
 - but a studied and deliberate rejection of all he was.
- The people's ignorance was not simply the lack of knowledge, but a false understanding
 - it was a clinging to their way of knowing and thinking
 - and exaltation of what seemed right in their eyes
- And you know what
 - I fear we're more like them then we'd like to admit
 - How often do we neglect the word of God for our opinion
 - Or the ways of God for our preference
- We must see the danger in arrogance
 - the very ones who heard the scripture every Sabbath
 - the ones who Had memorized the first five books of the Old Testament
 - THEY didn't recognize Jesus
- Instead,
 - they unwittingly fulfilled the words of the prophets



- Scripture proclaimed that the Messiah would be betrayed
 - scripture proclaimed that the Messiah would be hung on a tree
 - scripture Proclaim that the Messiah would suffer at the hands of the men
 - and instead of recoiling from involvement in such evil...
 - they messed around and killed God

- Brothers and sisters hear me
 - Our sin corrupts completely

- See how their sin nature used their religion to make them blind
 - to the 1 true way of salvation
 - even studying the scriptures did not enable them to recognize Christ
 - emphasizing... how desperately they needed him

- And as if this isn't crazy enough
 - God ordained it all

- one may ask
 - well if God ordained it how are the Jews responsible

- YET see how the answer validates the breath of the scriptures
 - that it is not ultimately our actions that condemn us
 - but the wickedness of our hearts

- What angered the Jews and drove them to kill Jesus
 - was their comprehension of this reality
 - (---)The exaltation of Christ equals the surrender of our self-sufficiency



- And they desire to be their own God
- So what Paul is exposing is the shallowness and brevity of human autonomy
- In the end we all do the will of God
 - the only question is will you do it willingly
- Acting in ignorance
 - the people of Jerusalem played a pivotal role
 - in the exaltation of Jesus as Messiah
- See God's sovereignty on display
 - The more violently they sought to extinguish Christ
 - the more fervently they proved him to be the Messiah...
- Paul addresses this... apparent failure of Jesus in Jerusalem head on
 - this was not a dereliction of Duty on God's behalf
 - On the contrary
 - God ensured that the Jews so handled Christ that there was nothing of the Prophecies of scripture left unfulfilled
- Yes the Jews were culpable
- but God was ultimately responsible...
 - he had planned the death of Christ long ago
 - and declared it through the prophets
- God planned



- ordained and
- executed the working of the cross
- in other words, God killed God ^

- Isaiah 53:10 says

- it pleased God to crush him

- Why?

- why would it please God to crush Christ

- Bear with me

- I promise the answer is worth the wait

- For now Paul continues

- In v32-34

- Paul will link the resurrection to
- God's Choice of Jesus
- And the promise

32 And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, **33** this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm,

"You are my Son,

today I have begotten you.'

- Here we see God's Choice of Jesus



- The reality that all of scripture was fulfilled in Christ proves
 - God's Sovereign choice of him

- Let me say it again

- The reality that all of scripture was fulfilled in Christ proves
 - God's Sovereign choice of him

- Jesus is
 - The promised seed of Genesis 3
 - The blessing to the nations of Genesis 12
 - the wonderful Council of Isaiah 9
 - The Eternal King of 2 Samuel 7

- And don't miss this
 - Paul asserts
 - that God fulfilled HIS promise by raising Christ from the dead
 - which leads us to this reference of Psalm 2
 - "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."

- in Psalm 2 Christ is highlighted as God's son
 - not only in essence
 - but also in choice

- In Matthew 3:17 we see the skies break open
 - the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus



- And God's Majestic announcement
 - this is my son in whom i am well pleased

- Now,
 - See how Paul intricately links Psalm 2 to the resurrection
 - his point being that IN God's resurrection of Christ
 - he has proclaimed to the world
 - "You are my Son, today I have begotten you.'
 - Emphasizing God's choice of Christ

- And He continues his thought in v34 saying

34 And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,

"I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.'

35 Therefore he says also in another psalm,

"You will not let your Holy One see corruption.'

- So according to Paul the Old Testament also speaks of Jesus's resurrection
 - in Isaiah 55:3
 - "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.'
 - And psalm 16:10
 - "You will not let your Holy One see corruption.'

- --So how do these verses speak to the resurrection of Christ
 - the Bible loves it when we ask a question

- Let us first consider what the Holy and sure blessings of David are
 - They must certainly be God's promise to establish an Eternal throne



- A kingdom that would last for all eternity

- So do you see Paul's logic
 - The promise of an internal Kingdom can only be fulfilled
 - by one no longer susceptible to death
 - By raising Jesus from the dead God demonstrates that he has truly accomplished his promise >
 - by bringing forth a son who abides forever
 - In Christ
 - "Death is swallowed up in victory."
 - We cry with scripture
 - O death, where is your sting?"

36 For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, **37** but he whom God raised up did not see corruption.

- God's promise of Resurrection to David has been fulfilled in his greater son...
 - God Did not choose David to fulfill his promise
 - To this day David's bones lay decaying in his tomb
 - And the Greek makes it clear
 - God willed it that way

- According to the purposes of God
 - David's body was eaten by worms
 - in order that it would be clear
 - the promise would not be fulfilled in him...
 - but there is another
 - **AND he whom God raised up did not see corruption. ...**

- And Saints make no mistakeJesus was dead dead (---)
 - The removal of his body from the tree



- and its placement in the Tomb
 - underlines the full reality of Christ's death
- He was laid in a place both famous and known to his adversaries
 - They set guards around his grave in order to ensure his corruption...

- But... God
 - The adversaries of Christ had reached the extent of their role in the story
 - They were now written out of the show
 - the Final Act was reserved for God's miraculous and conclusive work

- See the faithfulness of our God on display
 - Not one promise was left undone...

- (—)And it is here that we return to our question
 - Why would it please God to crush Christ?
 - The simple answer is two-fold
 - Because we're sinners
 - and because God loves us

- Our sin has separated us from our creator
 - we have become haters of God and lovers of self
 - and in response God sent Jesus

- Scripture says that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us
 - Christ was not the guilty one
 - We were
 - See how Paul emphasizes Jesus's innocence
 - They found no guilt in him in verse 28



- because there was no guilt to be found in Christ

- And yet God ordained his Crucifixion
 - Christ is the innocent Messiah
 - punished as a condemned criminal

- So see the beauty of the gospel
 - That because we were sinners
 - destined for the wrath of God

- God sends Jesus...
 - He emptied himself into the form of a slave
 - Subjected to hunger
 - And hatred
 - He then proceeds to live a perfect life
 - All that he might suffer the fate of sinners...

- Our gracious father sent our willing savior
 - and laid upon him the sin of every man
 - He who knew no sin became sin in order that we might become the righteousness of Christ
 - 2 Cor 5:21

- But he did not stay dead
 - He received the holy and sure blessings of David

- Let us observe v 34 one more time



- It says
 - "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David."
 - Put your finger on the word you

- --We have said previously that this You in the verse is Jesus and it is
 - But the you is also david
 - And the you is also us

- Brothers and sisters the you in this text is plural
 - Therefore
 - the implication of God choosing Jesus is that he has chosen us

- God says in 1 Peter 2 that
 - We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that we may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

- See the implications of Christ's death
 - Resurrection
 - and Ascension
 - verse 38 says

38 Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, **39** and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

- So hear me today Christian and non-Christian alike
 - in Christ, there is forgiveness of sin To all who believed



- and in Christ there is freedom from everything which you could not be freed from in your attempts to keep the law
- we could never repay the debt we owe
 - But for all who believe
 - Christ has done it

- Ohh what depth of beauty in the gospel
 - This is good news
 - That

- For his glory
 - for his honor
 - for the joy that lay before
 - Christ our savior purchased sinners
 - And is in the grave no more
 - He's alive
 - He's alive
 - He's alive

So What:

- Have you trusted in Christ Our Risen Savior
 - For the salvation of your soul

- I plead with you
 - do not hear the beauty of the gospel and go away unchanged



- Paul concludes

40 Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about: 41

“Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you.”

- God has done a wondrous work
 - Trust and believe

- Let us pray to that end