



Preachers in Front of a Crowd:

**16-Day Study of the Power of
Public Proclamation in the
Expansion of God's Work**

UNseminary 

Based on the episode "Grow More, Send More: Building a Sending Church with Andrew Hopper" on the unSeminary podcast

In the episode with Andrew Hopper from Mercy Hill Church, we explored the power of public proclamation in advancing the kingdom of God. Andrew discussed the pivotal role of preaching in front of crowds as seen throughout the Book of Acts. This study guide is designed to help church leaders, preachers, and anyone interested in understanding the profound impact that public preaching has had—and

continues to have—on the spread of the gospel. By studying these key moments, you'll be able to reflect on the preacher's boldness, the response of the crowds, and the ways we can apply these lessons in our context today. Over the next 16 days, you'll engage with scripture, reflect on God's word, and be challenged to think deeply about the role of public proclamation in your own life and ministry.



Day 1: Acts 2:14-41 – Peter's Sermon at Pentecost

Peter stands up on the day of Pentecost, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and boldly proclaims the death and resurrection of Jesus. In a powerful response, 3,000 people are added to the church. This moment sets the tone for the early church's mission to preach the gospel in public spaces.

Questions

1. What does Peter's boldness in front of a hostile crowd reveal about his understanding of the gospel?
2. How does the Holy Spirit empower Peter's words, and what can we learn about relying on the Spirit in preaching?
3. What was the crowd's initial reaction, and what changed by the end of Peter's message?
4. How can you step into moments where public proclamation is needed in your own ministry?



Day 2: Acts 3:11-26 – Peter's Sermon at Solomon's Portico

After healing a lame man, Peter seizes the moment to address the crowd in the temple. He calls the people to repent and turn to Jesus, the "Author of life," whom they had rejected. This sermon emphasizes God's plan through Christ and the necessity of repentance.

Questions

1. How does Peter use the healing miracle as an opportunity to proclaim the gospel?
2. Why does Peter focus on the crowd's responsibility in Jesus' death, and how does this make room for grace?
3. What role does repentance play in this message, and why is it central to the call to salvation?
4. How can moments of crisis or breakthrough in people's lives be turned into opportunities for evangelism in your context?



Day 3: Acts 4:8-12 – Peter’s Defense Before the Sanhedrin

In the face of opposition, Peter boldly declares that salvation is found in no one else but Jesus. His courage before the religious leaders shows the importance of standing firm in the gospel message, even under pressure.

Questions

1. What do you notice about Peter’s attitude when standing before a hostile council?
2. How does Peter simplify the gospel message for clarity?
3. What impact does this bold defense have on the spread of the gospel despite the opposition?
4. How can you remain faithful to the message of Christ in the face of criticism or persecution?



Day 4: Acts 5:29-32 – The Apostles’ Bold Declaration

The apostles, once again standing before the religious leaders, make it clear that they will obey God rather than men. Their boldness and conviction are evident as they continue to preach the resurrection of Jesus despite threats of punishment.

Questions

1. What motivated the apostles to prioritize obedience to God over man, even in the face of danger?
2. What role does the resurrection play in their public proclamation?
3. How does this passage challenge you to live out boldness in your preaching or leadership?
4. How can your church foster a culture of boldness when it comes to sharing the gospel publicly?



Day 5: Acts 7:1-53 – Stephen’s Defense and Martyrdom

Stephen’s sermon is a comprehensive retelling of Israel’s history, culminating in a strong rebuke to the religious leaders for rejecting Jesus. His courage leads to his martyrdom but also sparks a new wave of gospel spread.

Questions

1. How does Stephen’s understanding of Israel’s history shape his proclamation of the gospel?
2. What does Stephen’s unwavering boldness in the face of death teach us about the cost of proclaiming the truth?
3. What impact did Stephen’s sermon and subsequent martyrdom have on the early church and the spread of the gospel?
4. In what ways are you being called to a deeper level of courage in your proclamation of the gospel?



Day 6: Acts 8:5-12 – Philip in Samaria

Philip preaches Christ in Samaria, and the crowds pay close attention to his message, especially as they witness signs and wonders. His evangelistic efforts break down ethnic and cultural barriers, showing the inclusivity of the gospel.

Questions

1. How does Philip's ministry in Samaria reflect the breaking of barriers in the spread of the gospel?
2. What role do signs and wonders play in affirming Philip's message, and what can we learn from that?
3. How did the crowd's attention to Philip's words shift their lives toward faith in Christ?
4. How are you being challenged to preach the gospel in culturally diverse or unexpected places?



Day 7: Acts 8:26-40 – Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

Led by the Holy Spirit, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official reading Isaiah. He explains how the Scriptures point to Jesus, leading the eunuch to faith and baptism. This moment highlights the power of one-on-one evangelism in unexpected places.

Questions

1. What does Philip's response to the Spirit's leading teach us about being available to share the gospel?
2. How does Philip's explanation of Scripture show the importance of understanding the Bible in evangelism?
3. How does the Ethiopian's immediate response to the gospel reflect true conversion?
4. What opportunities for personal evangelism are present in your life, and how can you prepare to seize them?



Day 8: Acts 9:19-22 – Paul Preaching in Damascus

Immediately after his conversion, Paul begins preaching that Jesus is the Son of God. His transformation from persecutor to preacher astonishes the people, showing the radical nature of God's grace.

Questions

1. How does Paul's radical transformation impact his boldness in preaching?
2. What challenges did Paul face in convincing others of his new identity in Christ?
3. How does Paul's early preaching model the importance of being unashamed of the gospel?
4. In what ways does your personal testimony give you a unique platform to share the gospel?



Day 9: Acts 10:34-48 – Peter and Cornelius' Household

Peter's sermon to the Gentile Cornelius and his household marks a major shift in the early church, as the gospel is preached to Gentiles. The Holy Spirit falls on them, confirming that God's salvation is for all people.

Questions

1. How does Peter's message to Cornelius challenge the early church's understanding of who could receive salvation?
2. What role does the Holy Spirit play in confirming the message of salvation for Cornelius' household?
3. How does this passage demonstrate the universality of the gospel?
4. How is God challenging you to expand your understanding of who needs to hear the gospel?



Day 10: Acts 13:13-52 – Paul's Sermon in Pisidian Antioch

Paul delivers a powerful sermon in the synagogue, recounting the history of Israel and pointing to Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises. Some in the crowd believe, while others reject the message, showing how public proclamation can produce both acceptance and opposition.

Questions

1. How does Paul use Israel's history to lead the people toward the truth of Jesus?
2. What factors led to different reactions among the crowd?
3. What does this passage teach us about preaching to both religious and non-religious audiences?
4. How can you use the story of God's faithfulness in your own life to proclaim the gospel publicly?



Day 11: Acts 14:8-18 – Paul and Barnabas in Lystra

Paul heals a man in Lystra, and the crowd mistakes him and Barnabas for gods. Paul quickly redirects the attention to the true God, calling the people to turn from idols to the living God. His public message is one of correction and redirection.

Questions

1. How did Paul and Barnabas handle the crowd's misunderstanding of their message?
2. What does this event reveal about how public proclamations can be misinterpreted, and how should that be addressed?
3. How does Paul's focus on turning from idols to the living God resonate with modern-day gospel proclamation?
4. What "idols" might people in your context need to turn away from as they encounter the gospel?



Day 12: Acts 16:25–34 – Paul and Silas in the Philippian Jail

After an earthquake shakes the prison, Paul and Silas have the opportunity to share the gospel with the jailer and his household. Their public praise and steadfastness, even in difficult circumstances, lead to the conversion of an entire family.

Questions

1. How does Paul and Silas's response to suffering affect the jailer's openness to the gospel?
2. What role did their public worship play in leading others to faith?
3. How does this story illustrate the power of faithfulness in challenging circumstances?
4. In what ways can your faith in adversity serve as a testimony to others?



Day 13: Acts 17:16–34 – Paul in Athens

Paul preaches at the Areopagus in Athens, addressing a crowd of philosophers and scholars. He uses their religious context to introduce the unknown God they worship as the one true God. This sermon shows the power of contextualizing the gospel for a specific audience.

Questions

1. How did Paul contextualize the gospel for a philosophical and intellectual audience?
2. What does Paul's willingness to engage with the Athenians' culture teach us about evangelism today?
3. What was the crowd's response to Paul's message, and how can we learn from their mixed reactions?
4. How can you connect the gospel to the cultural beliefs and questions of those you're reaching?



Day 14: Acts 19:8–20 – Paul in Ephesus

Paul spends two years preaching in Ephesus, where the power of his message leads many to burn their books of magic and turn to the Lord. This passage shows the transformative power of the gospel as it takes root in a city steeped in idolatry.

Questions

1. What does Paul's extended ministry in Ephesus reveal about the importance of perseverance in public proclamation?
2. How did the crowd's radical response (burning their books) demonstrate the depth of their transformation?
3. What opposition did Paul face in Ephesus, and how did he overcome it?
4. What idols in your community need to be surrendered to the Lord, and how can your ministry play a role in that transformation?



Day 15: Acts 22:1–21 – Paul’s Defense Before the Crowd in Jerusalem

Paul addresses an angry crowd in Jerusalem, recounting his personal testimony and how Jesus radically changed his life. Despite his clear articulation of the gospel, the crowd reacts with hostility. This moment shows the challenge of preaching in a hostile environment.

Questions

1. How does Paul use his personal testimony to connect with the crowd and point them to Christ?
2. Why did the crowd react so violently to Paul’s message, and what does that reveal about the challenges of public proclamation?
3. How does Paul’s experience challenge us to persevere in proclaiming the gospel, even when faced with opposition?
4. In what ways can your personal testimony be used to witness to others, even in difficult situations?



Day 16: Acts 26:1–29 – Paul Before King Agrippa

In his defense before King Agrippa, Paul passionately shares his testimony and calls even the king to consider the gospel. Agrippa’s response—“Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”—reveals the power of Paul’s bold public proclamation, even in front of those in authority.

Questions

1. How did Paul use his trial as an opportunity to share the gospel, even with powerful leaders?
2. What can we learn from Paul’s confidence in appealing to Agrippa’s heart and mind?
3. How does Paul’s willingness to proclaim the gospel, no matter the audience, inspire boldness in your own preaching?
4. What are the “kings” or authorities in your context, and how can you boldly share the gospel with them?

