

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 5-29-16 AM NOTES  
"A POURED OUT LIFE (PART 1)"  
ACTS 14:1-28  
#18 in Series, "The Spirit, the Church, and the World"

**2 Timothy 4:6 (NASB)** "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come."

**Numbers 15:10 (NASB)** "and you shall offer as the drink offering one-half a hin [two quarts] of wine as an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the Lord."

**Romans 12:1 (NASB)** "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship."

**Philippians 1:20b (NASB)** "...but *that* with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death."

**Philippians 1:21 (NASB)** "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

I. A Poured Out Life Is Characterized by Courage (vv. 1-7)

**Luke 9:23 (NASB)** "And He was saying to *them* all, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.'"

**Matthew 28:19-20a (NASB)** "<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you..."

**Acts 14:2 (ESV)** "But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and **poisoned their minds** against the brothers."

**1 Corinthians 2:3 (NASB)** "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling."

**2 Corinthians 7:5 (NASB)** "For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within."

**1 Thessalonians 2:2 (NASB)** "but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition."

**Ephesians 6:19-20 (NASB)** "<sup>19</sup> and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

“You can expect from me everything save fear or recantation [to repudiate his teachings]. I shall not flee, much less recant.” —Martin Luther

“Not go to Worms? I shall go to Worms though there were as many devils as tiles on the roofs.” —Martin Luther

“Unless convinced by the Holy Scripture, or by clear reasons from other sources, I cannot recant. To Councils or Pope I cannot defer, for they have often erred. My conscience is a prisoner to God’s Word.” When given another opportunity to recant, he folded his hands and said, “Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me.” —Martin Luther

## II. A Poured Out Life Is Characterized by Humility (vv. 8-18)

Humility is having a proper view of God and a proper view of ourselves that results in a life that denies self and is totally dependent on God.

“[Humility] is simply the sense of entire nothingness, which comes when we see how truly God is all, and in which we make way for God to be all.” —Andrew Murray

**James 4:6 (ESV)** “But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

**Genesis 3:5 (NASB)** “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

**1 Corinthians 15:10 (NASB)** “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.”

“If I appear great in their eyes, the Lord is most graciously helping me to see how absolutely nothing I am without Him and helping me to keep little in my own eyes. He does use me. But I’m so concerned that **He** uses me and that it is not of me the work is done. The axe cannot boast of the trees it has cut down. It could do nothing but for the woodsman. He made it, he sharpened it, and he used it. The moment he throws it aside it becomes only old iron. Oh, may I never lose sight of this.” —Samuel Brengle

**First Baptist Church Powell 5 29 2016 AM**  
**Sermon 18: A Poured Out Life (Part 1)**  
**Series: The Spirit, the Church, and the World**  
**Acts 14:1-28**

In our study of Acts 14, we are taking a different approach. In this narrative passage we are going to focus on some of the character and leadership qualities of the apostle Paul that made him extremely effective and fruitful in his service to the Lord. I want those same qualities in my life. I believe that the verse in the New Testament that best describes the apostle Paul and gives insight into his approach to life is 2 Timothy 4:6: “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.” The *departure* that Paul is referring to in this verse is his death at the hands of the Roman government. From reliable historical sources, we learn that Paul was beheaded by orders of the Roman Emperor Nero not long after 2 Timothy 4:6 was written.

The phrase I want to focus on in 2 Timothy 4:6 is, “poured out as a drink offering.” I want us to see that phrase as an accurate summary of Paul’s life in Christ. I could think of no better goal for any Christian’s life than to be “poured out as a drink offering” to the Lord. What does it mean to be poured out as a drink offering? The drink offering has its roots in the Old Testament sacrificial system. We read in Numbers 15:10: “and you shall offer as the drink offering one-half a hin [two quarts] of wine as an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the Lord.”

The drink offering was in conjunction with the burnt offerings. The burnt offering was when an animal was slain and burned on the altar as an offering to God for sin. In some cases, the slain animal on the altar would have flour mixed with oil put on it. That made the offering have a very pleasing aroma. It would have been something like the smell of grilling steak mixed the aroma of bread being baked. In Numbers 15, there was also sweet wine that was poured on the sacrifice that made the aroma even more pleasing. Paul is saying that he desires that when the Lord looks at his life it will be like a pleasing sweet smelling drink offering. Do you desire with all of your being that your life is pleasing to the Lord? This is the highest motive we can have in our service to Him.

From chapter 14 of Acts, I want us to examine what a life poured out to the Lord, looks like.

### **I. A Poured Out Life is Characterized by Courage (v 1-7)**

A surrendered, poured out life is not optional for a child of God. This call to total surrender goes out to every believer. A poured out life is *the normal Christian life!* By that, I mean that this is the kind of Christian life that God desires for all of His children. Another way to describe a poured out life is seen in Luke 9:23: “And He [Jesus] was saying to *them* all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.’”

This poured out life will never be chosen by those who seek the easy way, the path of least resistance, or the path that requires the least risk and sacrifice. A poured out life requires large doses of courage. The poured out life is not for wimps! It seems that almost everywhere Paul went, there was serious opposition. However, he just kept on obeying the marching orders he received from His Master – Matthew 28:19-20a: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...”. We see that Jesus’ *last* words were always Paul’s *first* priority.

In Acts 14, we pick up Paul and Barnabas as they continued on what was called, “The First Missionary Journey.” We last left them in Pisidian Antioch, but in chapter 14 they have traveled about eighty miles east to Iconium. In Iconium, they preached Jesus in the synagogue to the Jews first, but they also proclaimed the Gospel to the Gentiles. God graciously provided fruit as many believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. When God begins to work, the enemy of our souls also goes to work. Acts 14:2 (ESV): “But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and *poisoned their minds* against the brothers.” That is a great

description of what the enemy does to the minds of unbelievers. He poisons their minds and motivates them to oppose the Gospel.

Paul and Barnabas were courageous, but they were not foolish. Christians are never to water down the truth of the Gospel to avoid persecution, but neither are Christians to seek out persecution. Persecution should be avoided where it is possible to do so without compromising the Gospel. Paul and Barnabas responded to the persecution by strategically going to the next place to boldly share the Gospel. Verse 6 says they “became aware of it [persecution] and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region.” That is the New Testament pattern – move on when persecution comes and courageously share the Gospel in the next town. It would have been cowardice if they had refused to even go to Iconium because there was the likelihood of danger there. They shared the Gospel and then moved on to the next city.

Let’s talk about courage. Courage is not necessarily the absence of fear. In fact, it is in the presence of fear where courage is typically found. Courage manifests itself in overcoming our fear and continuing to walk in Holy Spirit enabled obedience to God’s will. For the Christian, the power to continue to walk in obedience to God is not something we work up with humanistic positive thinking; it is trusting in the Spirit of God to enable us to walk in obedience whatever the potential consequences might be. We see that in Acts 14:3: “Therefore they spent a long time *there* speaking boldly *with reliance* upon the Lord...” Paul never tried to hide the fact that there was fear that he had to deal with. He said in 1 Corinthians 2:3: “I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.” He said in 2 Corinthians 7:5: “For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within.”

While Paul didn’t go looking for danger, he did not shrink back controlled by fear when his Lord had told him to move forward. Some fear is a good thing. God often turns the devil’s tools back on him. Fear for a Christian should result in a sense of desperation to have the Holy Spirit fill us and give us the courage and boldness to do whatever needs to be done, “with reliance upon the Lord” (verse 3). Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 2:2: “but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.”

Paul often expressed concern that he would face every fear provoking challenge with courage and boldness. Ephesians 6:19-20: “and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Perhaps the greatest illustration in church history of courage in fear provoking times was the leader of the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther. When he set out on his journey to Worms to be held accountable for his teaching that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, he said, “You can expect from me everything save fear or recantation [to repudiate his teachings]. I shall not flee, much less recant.” When Luther’s friends warned him about the danger he was facing and tried to talk him out of going to Worms, he answered them this way, “Not go to Worms? I shall go to Worms though there were as many devils as tiles on the roofs.”

When Luther appeared before the emperor, he was called to recant. He answered them:

Unless convinced by the Holy Scripture, or by clear reasons from other sources, I cannot recant. To Councils or Pope I cannot defer, for they have often erred. My conscience is a prisoner to God’s Word.” When given another opportunity to recant, he folded his hands and said, “Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me.

[Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, pages 78-79]

While Luther was filled with courage as he stood before those who could have taken his life, I have read accounts of the fear he wrestled with the night before he appeared at the Diet of Worms. It was a night of agony, but the battle was won when he chose to follow through with what God called him to do,

“speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord” (Acts 14:3). You cannot avoid having fear pounding on your door, but you can choose to rely totally upon the courage giving Holy Spirit as you walk in the way He has called you to go trusting Him every step of the way.

## II. A Poured Out Life Is Characterized by Humility (v 8-18)

A poured out life and human pride cannot co-exist. When we experience God’s provided courage and we act in obedience and see Him do mighty things through us, others will often see us as the source of the boldness and spiritual fruit instead of God. Once we start believing what others are saying about us, our potential of being used by God vanishes.

Understanding some history of Lystra will help us to better understand what was happening to Paul and Barnabas. William Barclay is not someone whose theology I would endorse, but he is excellent when it comes to customs and history in biblical times. Barclay gives us some history of the town of Lystra.

The people around Lystra told a story that once Zeus and Hermes had come to this earth in disguise. None in all the land would give them hospitality until at last two old peasants, Philemon and his wife Baucis, took them in. As a result, the whole population was wiped out by the gods except Philemon and Baucis, who were made the guardians of a splendid temple and were turned into two great trees when they died. So when Paul healed the crippled man the people of Lystra were determined not to make the same mistake again.

[William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles*, page 109]

This background helps us understand what was happening in verses 11-13. They identified Barnabas with Zeus which likely indicates that he was more distinguished in appearance than Paul. They identified Paul with Hermes because Hermes was the main speaker. In this town that was steeped in Greek Mythology, there was a priest of Zeus that began to lead the people in worshipping Paul and Barnabas. The response of Paul and Barnabas is a great example of the humility of a poured out life. The response of Paul and Barnabas was to proclaim to these Lycaonians that they were just men of flesh like the Lycaonians. Then they used this whole episode to be a platform from which the Gospel was preached.

Let’s focus in on this vital quality of a poured out life we are calling “humility.” In the fourth century, the early church leader Augustine was asked, “What is the most important quality in the Christian life?” He answered, “Humility.” He was then asked the second most important quality and he answered, “Humility.” He was then asked the third most important quality and again he said, “Humility.”

Humility is not a popular character quality in our culture. You don’t find it discussed on talk shows or touted by sports teams or certainly politicians. While the world touts pride, humility is honored and sought by those who desire a poured out life – a life that exists to glorify God and to magnify Him. Exactly what is humility? *Humility is having a proper view of God and a proper view of ourselves that results in a life that denies self and is totally dependent on God.*

There is a little book by Andrew Murray that I try to set aside time to read every New Year’s Day as I launch into a new year. The Title is simply, *Humility*. Here is a quote from this powerful little book. “[Humility] is simply the sense of entire nothingness, which comes when we see how truly God is all, and in which we make way for God to be all.” [Andrew Murray, *Humility*, page 13]

It is quite impossible for us to really understand and live out humility until we understand the opposite of humility – pride. The essence of pride is self-sufficiency. Pride is living independently of God and thus robbing Him of the glory He is due. Pride is when we think more highly of ourselves than we ought and have an attitude of independence from God. Pride puts self on the throne and tells God we can handle things and we will call Him if we need Him. Pride involves self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Pride just leaves God out. Instead of glorifying Him with all of our life, we mostly just ignore Him. To summarize, pride is when we contend for supremacy with God.

When we begin to see the reach of pride and how it is not only accepted in our culture, but also something to be desired and cultivated, we must come to the conclusion that pride is the Christian's worst enemy. James 4:6 (ESV): "But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'" That word "opposes" is a present tense. As long as pride grips a person's life, God continually stands in resolute opposition against that person.

Why does pride so provoke God? It is because of what pride does. It is the root of all sins. Had there been no pride, there would have been no Devil. When you read the account of how the angel Lucifer became the Devil in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, you will see that the root of it all was pride. Pride made the Devil, the Devil. Pride also corrupted the human race. What was the enticement that the Devil used to lure Eve into sin? Genesis 3:5: "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." That's pride – desiring to take God's place or join Him on His throne. Pride made the Devil, the Devil; pride caused the human race to fall into sin and brought a curse on all creation. All suffering, all "natural disaster" all sickness, all war is the result of sin coming into the world. No pride, no Devil; no Devil, no sin, no suffering and death. It all started with and is rooted in pride. The most horrible result of pride is that it steals God's glory. Instead of lives yielded to Him serving as display cases for His awesomeness and glory, we take credit and basically ignore Him. That is why everything a nonbeliever does is sin. He or she is leaving God out and robbing Him of the glory due His name. Other sins may turn us away from God, but pride attacks God and lifts our hearts above and against Him. Christians will either be humble or they will be humbled.

Let's examine the last part of James 4:6, "[God] gives grace to the humble." A poured out life is a life of power because that person has reckoned themselves dead to pride and has appropriated God's enabling grace to live in loving obedience. The apostle Paul saw everything that he did energized by grace. 1 Corinthians 15:10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." When we humble ourselves before an omnipotent God, desire only for Him to be glorified, and look in faith to Him, His enabling grace is poured out on us. The result is that God works through us and we make sure that He gets all of the glory.

Samuel Brengle (1860-1936) who succeeded William Booth as head of the Salvation Army was a Godly, humble man. Though I wouldn't agree with all of his theology, I have been impacted and convicted by his humble life. Once when Samuel Brengle was honored, he said this:

If I appear great in their eyes, the Lord is most graciously helping me to see how absolutely nothing I am without Him and helping me to keep little in my own eyes. He does use me. But I'm so concerned that He uses me and that it is not of me the work is done. The axe cannot boast of the trees it has cut down. It could do nothing but for the woodsman. He made it, he sharpened it, and he used it. The moment he throws it aside it becomes only old iron. Oh, may I never lose sight of this.

[Samuel Brengle, Quoted in Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, page 81]

## **Conclusion**

Oh, how I long for a poured out life – a life with only one objective – that God be glorified and magnified through me. This poured out life will be characterized by courage in the face of opposition and humility in the face of pride. Are you ready to come before God with a poured out life?