

ACTS

of the Holy Spirit

Session #22 – 14:1-28



I. The Work at Iconium(14:1 - 7)

Verse 1

At Iconium

Paul and Barnabas

went as usual

into the Jewish synagogue.

There they spoke (laleo = simple talking)

so [effectively]

that a great number of

1) Jews

2) and Greeks believed.

They continue their pattern of evangelism by starting at the synagogue.



Verse 2

But

the Jews who refused (apeitheo = apathetic = to willfully determine NOT to be persuaded) **to believe**

stirred up the other Gentiles

and poisoned (kakoo = curse another using evil to embitter against another) **their minds** (psyche = soul/heart)

against the brothers.

The opposition continues!

These Jews are determined to hate and use evil tactics to stir up bitterness about the character of Paul and Barnabas. When a person cannot beat you on the issues, their next tactic is to attack your character.

Verse 3

So Paul and Barnabas

spent considerable time there,

- 1) **speaking boldly** (parresiazomai = confident freedom) **for [in] the Lord**, (The source of power)
- 2) **who confirmed** (martyreo = testimony/proof) **the** [unto] **message** (logos = Word of God) **of his grace** (charis)
- 3) **by enabling them** **to perform signs and wonders.**

The three great signs that The Holy Spirit is working: 1) Boldness of the speaker, 2) Testimony about the Word of God, and 3) Supernatural signs and wonders.

The gospel is called here “The word of his grace” – The heart of the message focuses upon the grace of God through Christ.

Verse 4

The people of the city were divided; (schizo) **some sided with the Jews,** **others with the apostles.**

The philosophy of the haters has always been to “divide and conquer”. The message of Christ has always been to bring unity and wholeness to those who believe.

Verse 5

There was a plot afoot (horme = a hostile assault)
among both Gentiles
and Jews,
together with their leaders,
to mistreat them (hybrizo = to treat one with great shame)
and stone them.

The use of stoning is a disciplinary action implemented by the Jews to “purify” the Jewish faith.

These groups hate each other!
But they will cooperate to
defeat a greater hatred!

Verse 6

But
they found out about it
and fled to the Lycaonian cities
of Lystra
and Derbe
and to the surrounding country,



Verse 7

where they continued to preach (euaggelizo) the gospel.
The persecution continues and so does the preaching!

II. The Work at Lystra and Derbe (14:8 - 20)

Verse 8

In Lystra
there sat a man who was lame.
He had been that way from birth
and had never walked.

Verse 9

He listened to Paul
as he was speaking.
Paul looked directly (atenizo = to fix a stare) at him,
saw that he had faith to be healed

Verse 10

and called out,
“*Stand up on your feet!*”

At that,
the man jumped up (hallomai = spring up)
and began to walk.

Paul using his discernment, was led to command this man to
stand who had NEVER walked before.

Verse 11

When the crowd saw
what Paul had done,
they shouted
in the Lycaonian language,
“*The gods have come down to us
in human form!*”

Note: People tend to interpret truth in their own understandings
unless someone reorients their ideology

Verse 12

Barnabas they called Zeus, [Jupiter]
and Paul they called Hermes [Mercury]
because he was the chief speaker.

Isn't it interesting that the crowd places Paul and Barnabas into
their Greek god framework.

Verse 13

The priest of Zeus,
whose temple was just outside the city,
brought bulls
and wreaths
to the city gates
because he and the crowd
wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

The myth of Zeus and Hermes.

Verse 14

But
when the apostles Barnabas and Paul
heard of this,
they tore their clothes
and rushed out into the crowd,
shouting:

Verse 15

“Friends, why are you doing this?

- 1) *We too are only human, like you.
We are bringing you good news,*
- 2) *telling you to turn from these worthless things
to the living God,*
who made the heavens
and the earth
and the sea and everything in them.

Two reasons why Paul reacts this way: 1) Don't worship me! and
2) This is the key to our whole message.
Your Greek gods are not real, but we are speaking about THE
God who created everything!

Verse 16

*In the past,
he let all nations go (poreuo = walk)
their own way.*

Verse 17

*Yet [nevertheless]
he has not left himself without testimony:
He has shown kindness (agathopoieo = to do right)
by giving you rain from heaven [sky]
and crops in their seasons;
he provides you with plenty of food
and fills your hearts with joy.” (euphrosyne =
gladness that leads to rejoicing)
Your Greek gods do not provide these things – Our God
graciously provides for your needs.*

Verse 18

Even with these words,
they had difficulty keeping the crowd
from sacrificing to them.

Old ways of thinking are HARD to transform even when the
truth is expressed clearly.

Verse 19

Then some Jews came from Antioch
and Iconium
and won (peitho = to persuade) the crowd over.
They stoned Paul (lithazo = pelt with stones as a punishment)
and dragged him outside the city,
thinking he was dead.

These haters accomplish their work. Divide and conquer.

Verse 20

But after the disciples had gathered around him,
he got up
and went back into the city.
The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.
Went back into the city? Paul is persistent!

III. The Return to Antioch in Syria (14:21 - 28)

Verse 21

They preached the gospel
in that city
and won (matheteuo = teach/to make disciples)
a large number [of disciples].

Then
they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch,
As they went – they taught, preached, and prayed.

Verse 22

- 1) **strengthening** (episterizo = epi (unto) + sterizo (establish) = reestablish/to make firm) **the disciples**
- 2) **and encouraging** (parakaleo = to call/implore) **them to remain true to the faith.**

“We must go through many hardships** (thilipsis = the pressure of tribulation/distress/shared together) **to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.

As they returned to the cities they had already served, they do two things that are essential: 1) strengthening the faith of the early converts, and 2) calling them to be willing to stand against the persecution of the world and stay faithful to Christ and the message of the Gospel.

Verse 23

Paul and Barnabas appointed (cheirotoneo = to stretch out the hand – laying on of hands) **elders** (presbyteros = leaders of the church based on age, wisdom, and spiritual maturity) **for them in each church** **and, with prayer and fasting,** **committed** (paratithemi = hand over for protection) **them to the Lord,** **in whom they had put their trust.** (pisteuo = to believe)

In addition to strengthening and encouraging perseverance, Paul establishes a leadership team to keep the church going and growing. Evangelism without church planting limits the duration of growth.

Similar to John Wesley and George Whitfield.

Verse 24

After going through Pisidia, **they came into Pamphylia,**

Verse 25

and when they had preached the word in Perga, **they went down to Attalia.**



Verse 26

From Attalia **they sailed back to Antioch,** **where they had been committed to the grace of God** **for the work they had now completed.**



Verse 27

On arriving there, **they gathered the church together** **and reported** (anaggello = rehearse/testify) **all that God had done through them** **and how he had opened a door of faith** **to the Gentiles.**

Verse 28

And they stayed there a long time **with the disciples.**

The end of the first missionary journey. Even though it was not easy, Paul and Barnabas had seen God do amazing work through them.