

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

AT ICONIUM – VS. 1-7

Act 14:1 Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.

Act 14:2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.

Act 14:3 Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

Act 14:4 But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

Act 14:5 And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them,

Act 14:6 they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region.

Act 14:7 And they were preaching the gospel there.

vs. 1. Coming into the area of Galatia, where Paul would later write an epistle to them. As they come to Iconium, today Turkey 4th largest city (Konya), about a hundred miles from Antioch, they went to the synagogue, where a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

vs. 2-3 Although the opposition was stirred, rather than leaving, **they stayed**. The Lord **granted signs and wonders** to be done by their hands, which **gave testimony to the word of grace that they were sharing**. In the book of Mark (Mark 16:17) As they were teaching, the Lord gave witness to the truth of what they were saying with the signs and the wonders that were done by their hands. Signs and wonders **following** the teaching! – cf. Mk. 16:17.

vs. 4-5 This is not an area which is really under the strict rule of the Roman government. This is more of the mob rule. In fact, this was a lynch mob that gathered together to get rid of Paul and Barnabas. They were plotting to lynch them.

vs. 6-7 So when they heard of this plot, they fled on a little deeper into the land, into Derbe and Lystra, a more rural area with less Roman influence.. Now this is the area where Timothy originated. It was, no doubt, on this journey that Paul first met Timothy. Again, as was their custom, there they preached the gospel. Nothing could silence them!! Cf. Acts 16:1-2; 20:4; 2 Timothy 1:5 (Timothy and others from this region)



IDOLATRY AT LYSTRA – VS. 8-18

Act 14:8 And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

Act 14:9 This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed,

Act 14:10 said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.

Act 14:11 Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"

Act 14:12 And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

Act 14:13 Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.

Act 14:14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out

Act 14:15 and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,

Act 14:16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways.

vs. 8-10 Here we see a great miracle. There seems to be a **combination of gifts of the Spirit** being exercised by Paul. The **gift of prophecy** as he is preaching the word. The **gift of discernment**, for as he is preaching, he notices that there is this lame man over here. Paul began to stare at him, observing him intently. And as he did he perceived that God gave to this man, faith to be healed. So that's the **gift of discernment**, realizing that this man has the faith to be healed. So he said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" I think that probably the **gift of faith** was operating then. You know if you are in a strange area preaching on the street. You have a crowd there listening and there's a guy over here who has never walked. He's probably about forty years old. For you to say, stand up straight on your feet! That would take a lot of faith. Then the **gift of miracles** because the man began to leap and walk. **Cf. Acts 3:1-10** (Peter's miracle of healing)

vs. 11-12 The gods are here! They called Barnabas Zeus (Jupiter), and Paul, Hermes (Mercurius), because he was the chief speaker. Jupiter and Mercurius are Latin for the Greek gods, Zeus and Hermes. In Lycaonia, there was a **legend** that at one time, Zeus and Hermes came down to visit the people, incognito. They were treated very poorly by the people, except for one old couple, Philemon and his wife. Because of their mistreatment in that the people didn't recognize them, they cursed the area and the whole area was destroyed with the exception of Philemon and his wife. Because of this legend, the people didn't want to miss it if this is Zeus and Hermes again, so that we won't be cursed. Because Barnabas was the taller of the two, he must be Zeus and the little short guy with the squinty eyes and the crooked nose must be Hermes.

v.13-14 The gods are here! And so the priest of Jupiter came dragging an ox up the street to the gate of the city and was going to offer a sacrifice to Barnabas and to Paul. At this the **missionaries tore their clothes**, to **express their horror at the people's blasphemy**, and ran in among the multitude, **protesting against their intention, and insisting** that they were humans like them. - **Cf. Is. 42:8**:

vs. 15- Notice **they did not take the adulation** of the people! They turned them to the living God. We've come here to tell you that you're not to follow these empty things. You are to serve the living God, who is the Creator of the whole universe. **It was important that they turn** these people away from themselves and to the Lord! We are **men with the same nature** as you. **Cf. 1 Kings 18:20-40; James 5:17 - Elijah; Ex. chapters 3-4 - Moses; Jer.1:6 - Jeremiah; Judges 6:15- Gideon** So Paul and Barnabas said we're men of like passions. We're not gods. We're just men, ordinary men! And we've come to tell you to turn away from these kind of vanities. These things are empty! The worship of false gods is empty. There is a true and a living God, who is the Creator. He is the One that you are to worship. We've come to tell you about Him!

vs. 11-14 At this point Paul and Barnabas were facing one of the gravest danger in their ministry. Not when they were in Iconium and there was a plot to stone them. Not later on in Lystra when they did stone Paul, but right now is the greatest threat to the success of their ministry as the **people are ready to worship them as gods because of God's working through their lives**. There is an incumbent danger with the gifts of the Spirit that we all need to be wary of. All of us desire to have the power of God working in our lives. All of us desire to have Spiritual gifting. As Paul said (1 Corinthians 12:31), covet earnestly the best gifts. We do desire to see the power of God. We would love to see answers to prayer. We would love to see God's power manifested in our lives and through our lives. But, whenever this happens, people have a **tendency to get their eyes on the instrument that God is using** and to elevate and glorify that instrument.

Now the danger is taking the glory. You can sort of rationalize it, I'll let them think I'm Zeus and that will give me a chance then to really lead them around to Jesus. There is a temptation to enjoy and to sort of savor that adoration and adulation. But it'll be the end of your ministry. God will not share his glory with man. And so Paul and Barnabas were in great danger as the priest of Jupiter was ready to offer a sacrifice to them.

When you read of Paul and the ministry of Paul and the exploits of this servant of God, when you read of him saying to the man, "Stand up on your feet" and this lame man who had never walked before, born with this impediment, and you now see him walking and leaping. You say my, Paul is something super! But he is saying, no. We are men with the same nature as you. What's he saying? God **uses common people**. God uses **ordinary people to accomplish His work**. God wants **to use you!** You say, oh no, not me! Yes, you! It's interesting how men that God has used have **always felt that somehow they weren't usable**. Men that God uses are men who always are surprised that God would use them. **God wants to use you!**

Act 14:17 Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

Act 14:18 And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

STONING, ESCAPE TO DERBY – VS. 19-20

Act 14:19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

Act 14:20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

STRENGTHENING THE CONVERTS – VS. 21-28

Act 14:21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

Act 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

Act 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

vs. 17-18 And so they are showing to the people that the true and the living God has revealed Himself, **His goodness in nature**. The Psalmist said the heavens declare the glory of God! Paul tells the Romans that even the heathen are without excuse because of God's revelation of Himself in nature. **Cf. Ps. 19:1-2; Rom. 1:18-20!!** So they are going **to the basic revelation of God**. The true and living God, who created the universe! He is **the One who gives us rain, the fruitful seasons and fills our hearts with food and gladness**.

v. 19 How fickle is the worship of the crowd! Here they are ready to offer sacrifices and claim them as gods, but the next thing is they are stoning him, as if he were a felon. Paul is stoned, not a judicial execution, but a lynching. He was drug out of the city. They think he is dead. So as his body was there, they left, figured that he was dead. **- Cf. 2 Cor. 11:25; 12:2-10**

v. 20 His friends has gathered around him. He went back into Lystra, the city where they had just stoned him. Then the next day he takes off for a nearby city, Derby, about a 60 mile journey.

vs. 21-22 They had seen what it cost Paul. So they encouraged them. They said, look, it's not going to be an easy road! It's going to be tough. It's through many tribulations. In this world, Jesus said you will have tribulation. Notice how they retrace their steps, regardless of danger strengthening and exhorting the believers. **Cf. Mt. 28:19-20 (making disciples); 2 Cor. 1:3-7 (necessity of tribulations); Acts 15:32, 41; 18:23 (strengthening them); Acts 15:32, 16:40; 20:2; 1 Thess. 2:11(encouraging them).**

v. 23 So this was their **first thrust into this area of Asia**, which is present day, Turkey. Notice the **appointing of elders** and their **commitment to praying with fasting!** They are encouraging them to stay with the Lord.

Who knows what God would do through your life if you fully yielded yourself to Him? Someone once said **the world has yet to see what God can do through a man who is totally yielded unto God**. Moody heard that and said, I want to be that man! And we see what God did though Dwight Moody. But yet, I'm sure he wasn't totally yielded. I believe the world has yet to see what God could do through a man that is totally yielded to Him.

Note an abstract of his sermon in vs. 15-18. This is his only recorded message given to illiterate pagans. Note the flexibility of his evangelistic approach. Paul's message was not based on the Old Testament, because this was a pagan Gentile audience. He started with the witness of God in creation (see *Act 17:22 - Athens*). He made it clear that there is but one God who is the living God, the giving God, and the forgiving God. And He has been patient with the sinning nations (*Act 17:30 - Athens*) and has not judged them for their sins as they deserve. His starting point was different, but his finishing point was the same: faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Where ever Paul went, it appears **he was consistent in giving the gospel message!** Whereas in Pisidian Antioch, **he focused on the Old Testament Scriptures, its history, prophecies, and law**. Here he **focuses on nature, something they could well relate to**. But wherever he began, he always ended with the good news of Jesus Christ! **Are we doing that? Are you? Am I?**

That door is still open, to Jews and Gentiles alike — to a whole world! Walk through that open door and help take the Gospel to others. Be daring!

We thank the Lord for the record. For the things that we can learn from it. **For the admonition**. For the encouragement and the warning. Lord, we do desire that You would use us and **we thank You that You used just plain, ordinary people**. Help us to be on guard that when people begin to look at us, to hold us up in high esteem, that we not be guilty of trying to receive that adulation. May we, as Paul, and Peter, **turn them to You, Lord, the great Creator!** Lord, we need Your strength. We need Your help. We ask that You would guide us, give us opportunities, sharing our faith with others.

Open the doors for us, Lord, that we might be able to declare the glorious gospel that we have received to those that we will meet during the week. And Lord, we would **like to be that person through which You might accomplish all of Your purposes**. We want to be totally dedicated to You. To Your will, to do Your work. So guide us, direct us, empower us, use us. In Jesus' name we pray.

ACTS 14:1-28

OBSERVATION

Act 14:24 And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

Act 14:25 Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

Act 14:26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

Act 14:27 Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Act 14:28 So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

INTERPRETATION

vv. 24-25 Back to Attalia, the port city from which they first arrived and from which they left.

v. 26 Antioch of Syria, from whence they began this journey, having been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. Their journey had probably taken about two years. They **had accomplished their first mission.**

vv. 27 They gathered their sending church together and reported, not what they had done themselves; but what God made them the instruments of working. **How he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles** - How God by His providence and grace had made a way for preaching Christ crucified among the heathen; and how the heathen had received that Gospel which, through faith in Christ Jesus, was **able to save their souls.**

v. 28 Back in their home church at Antioch, ministering again. It's like the missionaries who go out and then they come back. They share with us how that God used them! So the early church of Antioch was the center for world missions at that time. It's thrilling always to hear what God is doing.

ARE YOU THAT ORDINARY PERSON WHO IS WILLING TO BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE USED AS THE LORD SEES FIT? Do you relate well to Moses, Gideon, Jeremiah at the time of their calling?

DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH STEALING GOD'S GLORY? Are you more like Herod in chapter 12 or Paul in chapter 14?

ARE YOU REGULARLY INVOLVED IN MINISTRIES OF preaching, making disciples, strengthening and exhorting souls, comforting them and praying with and for them?

APPLICATION

Questions:

1. Is the emphasis of many churches to emphasize signs and wonders as the primary initial part of ministry outreaches really Biblical?
2. What do you think Paul saw in looking at the crippled man in v. 9? – “*seeing that he had faith to be healed.*” What spiritual gift do we see here?
3. In verse 12, why did the Lycaonians refer to Barnabas as Zeus and Paul as Hermes?
4. What incident on the First Missionary journey do you think was the greatest threat to the ministry of Paul and Barnabas?
5. In deflecting the praise of the people from themselves to give all glory to God, how different was Paul and Barnabas' response from that of Herod's at the end of chapter 12 in both the reactions of man and the subsequent blessings of God on them?
6. In verse 15, Paul said, “*We also are men with the same nature as you,*” Do you agree with that statement at it pertains to yourself?
7. What are some of the major differences in Paul's two sermons of that of Antioch in Pisidia and the sermon here (vs. 5-17) to the people of Lystra?
8. Can you summarize in six or seven words the various ministries mentioned in verses 21-23? Are you frequently engaged in these ministries on an individual or group basis?
9. v. 27 Paul and Barnabas announced that the “door of faith” had been opened to the Gentiles. How significant do you think that is?
10. **ARE YOU THAT ORDINARY PERSON WHO IS WILLING TO BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE USED AS HE SEES FIT?** Do you relate well to Moses, Gideon, Jeremiah at the time of their calling?
11. **DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH STEALING GOD'S GLORY?** Are you more like Herod in chapter 12 or Paul in chapter 14?