



All Citizens Christian Church

Bible Study: Thursday, June 30, 2016.

Topic: Acts 14

INTRODUCTION: Acts 14 is the continuation of Acts 13 which is typical of Luke's writing. Here, Luke highlighted the challenges encountered by the Apostles and how they dealt with them. All the challenges were capable of derailing their mission. Some looked positive; like when the Apostles were likened to gods in Lystra. This very situation was capable of derailing their mission if it was properly handled and vehemently resisted. Some of the other challenges include beating Apostle Paul to the point of giving him up for dead. Almost all of these challenges were spearheaded by the Jews. In spite of these challenges, they continued the work they were sent and rounded up the first missionary journey in this chapter. They returned to Antioch in Syria and reported the result of the journey to the disciples.

At Iconium

14 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.

Why were the early apostles recording remarkable results in soul winning?

- The gospel was not of them but of God. John 12:32, Acts 14:3
- The culture made it easy to speak to people compared to the culture of individualism and freedom
- The gospel as explained by the apostle was a new dimension to spiritual living.
- They were convinced of what they believed.
- God was always with them Matthew 28:20.

²But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. ³Therefore 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.

⁴But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. ⁵And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, ⁶they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region. ⁷And they were preaching the gospel there.

Consider the importance of miracles in the propagation of the gospel. Vs 3, 8. John 4:48, Heb 2:3-4, Acts 13:12.

Why do you think the Apostles stayed longer in Iconium? II Tim 4:2

Why were the Jews the ones perpetrating trouble and who can you compare the Jews with in our days?

What did the Apostles run from? Was it confrontation or violence?

At what time in the propagation of the gospel should we run and when should we turn the other cheek? Luke 6:29

Why did they not give up the preaching of the Gospel? Jer 20:9, Zach 4:6,

Idolatry at Lystra

⁸And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. ⁹*This* man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, ¹⁰said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.

Examine the combination that made the miracle possible in vs 8? Rom 10:17, Eph 3:12, Hosea 4:6

It's very interesting that the propagation of the gospel took this turn in Lystra. History has it that they had no synagogue. Isaiah 43:16

¹¹Now 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!" ¹²And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³Then 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.

¹⁴But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out ¹⁵and 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, ¹⁶who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷Nevertheless 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." ¹⁸And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

Why are men of God often misrepresented?

What should we do when people misrepresent us positively? John 6:15

Should we take advantage of the situation to our credit?

Who are the Apostles? As we look at this definition, let us realise that Jesus himself was called an apostle by the writer of Hebrew. Heb 3:1,

Stoning, Escape to Derbe

¹⁹Then 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. ²⁰However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

Why did the people who called Paul and Barnabas gods change so suddenly?

Be careful how you put your confidence in man. Jeremiah 17:5, Psalm 118:8-9.

Strengthening the Converts

²¹And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith,

andsaying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."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.²⁴ And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.²⁵ Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶ From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

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

Why do you need to strengthen the church in the places where you have previously preached the gospel? John 15:16

How did Paul and Barnabas strengthen the Church?

Appoint elders - Titus 1:5

Encourage them. Titus 2:15

Teach them to pray and fast

Finally, in the work of the gospel never forget who sent you.

CONCLUSION: it is difficult to conclude chapter 14 without mentioning the success of their entire first missionary journey which started in chapter 13. This marked the deliberate move to spread of the gospel around the world. On this trip both Jews and Gentiles were affected. It was a stressful and challenging one but all is well that ends well.