



Lesson 17 – Preaching among the Heathen

Based on Acts 14:1-26

Our Lesson today is in the middle of Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey.

1) Where does our lesson begin today

Acts 14:1 And it came to pass in _____, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

From Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium. In this place, as at Antioch, they began their labors in the synagogue of their own people.

2) How well did that go?

Acts 14:2 But the unbelieving _____ stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds _____ affected against the brethren.

3) Did that deter Barnabas and Paul?

Acts 14:3-4 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the _____ of his _____, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was _____: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

The increasing popularity of the message borne by the apostles, filled the unbelieving Jews with envy and hatred, and they determined to stop the labors of Paul and Barnabas at once. By means of false and exaggerated reports they led the authorities to fear that the entire city was in danger of being incited to insurrection. They declared that large numbers were attaching themselves to the apostles and suggested that it was for secret and dangerous designs.

So enraged were the leaders among the Jews by the turn that matters were taking, that they determined to gain their ends by violence. Arousing the worst passions of the ignorant, noisy mob, they succeeded in creating a tumult, which they attributed to the teaching of the disciples. By this false charge they hoped to gain the help of the magistrates in carrying out their purpose. They determined that the apostles should have no opportunity to vindicate themselves and that the mob should interfere by stoning Paul and Barnabas, thus putting an end to their labors.

4) What became of it?

Acts 14:5-7 And when there was an _____ made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to _____ them, They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: And there they _____ the gospel.

Friends of the apostles, though unbelievers, warned them of the malicious designs of the Jews and urged them not to expose themselves needlessly to the fury of the mob, but to escape for their lives. Paul and Barnabas accordingly departed in secret from Iconium, leaving the believers to carry on the work alone for a time. But they by no means took final leave; they purposed to return after the excitement had abated, and complete the work begun.



Driven by persecution from Iconium, the apostles went to Lystra and Derbe, in Lycaonia. These towns were inhabited largely by a heathen, superstitious people, but among them were some who were willing to hear and accept the gospel message. In these places and in the surrounding country the apostles decided to labor, hoping to avoid Jewish prejudice and persecution.

In Lystra there was no Jewish synagogue, though a few Jews were living in the town. Many of the inhabitants of Lystra worshiped at a temple dedicated to Jupiter. When Paul and Barnabas appeared in the town and, gathering the Lystrians about them, explained the simple truths of the gospel, many sought to connect these doctrines with their own superstitious belief in the worship of Jupiter.

5) Whom did they meet in Lystra?

Acts 14:8 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a _____ from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

6) What does Scripture record about him?

Acts 14:9 The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had _____ to be _____,

7) What did Paul tell him to do?

Acts 14:10 Said with a loud voice, _____ upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

Heretofore the sufferer had been able to take a sitting posture only, but now he instantly obeyed Paul's command and for the first time in his life stood on his feet. Strength came with this effort of faith.

8) Did the onlooking crowd give God the glory?

Acts 14:11-13 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The _____ are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief _____. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done _____ with the people.

The Lystrians, eager to show their gratitude, prevailed upon the priest of Jupiter to do the apostles honor. Paul and Barnabas, who had sought retirement and rest, were not aware of these preparations. Soon, however, their attention was attracted by the sound of music and the enthusiastic shouting of a large crowd who had come to the house where they were staying.

9) Were Barnabas and Paul thrilled?

Acts 14:14-15 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they _____ their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of _____ with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

Acts 14:16-17 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without _____, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our _____ with food and gladness.



10) How successful were they in stopping them?

Acts 14:18 And with these sayings scarce _____ they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

Notwithstanding the positive denial of the apostles that they were divine, and notwithstanding Paul's endeavors to direct the minds of the people to the true God as the only object worthy of adoration, it was almost impossible to turn the heathen from their intention to offer sacrifice. So, firm had been their belief that these men were indeed gods, and so great their enthusiasm, that they were loath to acknowledge their error.

11) What happened shortly thereafter?

Acts 14:19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who _____ the people...

On arriving at Lystra, these Jews soon succeeded in inspiring the people with the same bitterness of spirit that actuated their own minds. By words of misrepresentation and calumny those who had recently regarded Paul and Barnabas as divine beings were persuaded that in reality the apostles were worse than murderers and were deserving of death.

12) What did they incite the Lystrians to do?

Acts 14:19 ... and, having _____ Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

Soon the murderous designs of the enemies of the gospel were carried out. Yielding to the influence of evil, the Lystrians became possessed with a satanic fury and, seizing Paul, mercilessly stoned him. The apostle thought that his end had come. The martyrdom of Stephen, and the cruel part that he himself had acted upon that occasion, came vividly to his mind. Covered with bruises and faint with pain, he fell to the ground.

In this dark and trying hour the company of Lystrian believers, who through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas had been converted to the faith of Jesus, remained loyal and true. The unreasoning opposition and cruel persecution by their enemies served only to confirm the faith of these devoted brethren; and now, in the face of danger and scorn, they showed their loyalty by gathering sorrowfully about the form of him whom they believed to be dead.

13) What happened?

Acts:14:20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

What was their surprise when in the midst of their lamentations the apostle suddenly lifted up his head and rose to his feet with the praise of God upon his lips. To the believers this unexpected restoration of God's servant was regarded as a miracle of divine power and seemed to set the signet of Heaven upon their change of belief. They rejoiced with inexpressible gladness and praised God with renewed faith.

Among those who had been converted at Lystra, and who were eyewitnesses of the sufferings of Paul, was one who was afterward to become a prominent worker for Christ and who was to share with the apostle the trials and the joys of pioneer service in difficult fields. This was a young man named Timothy (Acts 16:1). When Paul was dragged out of the city, this youthful disciple was among the number who took their stand beside his apparently lifeless body and



who saw him arise, bruised and covered with blood, but with praises upon his lips because he had been permitted to suffer for the sake of Christ.

14) Did Paul give up and go home?

Acts 14:21-22 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to _____, and to Iconium, and Antioch, Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much _____ enter into the kingdom of God.

15) What legacy and order did Barnabas and Paul leave behind?

Acts 14:23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they _____ them to the _____, on whom they believed.

As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper order and system were established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.

16) Who abides with those who believe?

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am _____ in the midst of them.

In all their missionary endeavors Paul and Barnabas sought to follow Christ's example of willing sacrifice and faithful, earnest labor for souls. Wide-awake, zealous, untiring, they did not consult inclination or personal ease, but with prayerful anxiety and unceasing activity they sowed the seed of truth. And with the sowing of the seed, the apostles were careful to give to all who took their stand for the gospel, practical instruction that was of untold value. This spirit of earnestness and godly fear made upon the minds of the new disciples a lasting impression regarding the importance of the gospel message.

17) How did Barnabas' and Paul's first missionary Journey end?

Acts 14:26-27 And thence sailed to _____, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they _____ all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

Can you see that God blesses the courageous?

Do you want to be a bold witness?

When is the time to share Jesus with others?