

## **PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (2)**

### **Acts 14**

#### **Introduction:**

- 1. Paul and Barnabas were selected by the Holy Spirit to be the first foreign missionaries.**
  - a. They sailed to Cyprus where Paul withstood Elymas.**
  - b. They next sailed to Perga in Pamphylia where John Mark left them.**
  - c. They traveled to Antioch of Pisidia where they preached in the synagogue.**
  - d. They were persecuted and went on to Iconium.**
- 2. Paul's three missionary journeys were historical milestones.**
  - a. As a result of them, Gentiles became predominant in the church.**
  - b. The church became a world-wide body.**
- 3. We now continue our study of this momentous journey.**

#### **Discussion:**

- I. THE MISSIONARIES PREACHED IN ICONIUM (14:1-7).**
  - A. Iconium was about 100 miles from Antioch of Pisidia.**
    - 1. Iconium was in Phrygia and Lystra and Derbe were in Lycaonia, but the general area was known as Galatia.**
    - 2. Iconium is today the Turkish city of Konya.**
    - 3. It is located on a plateau about 3,400 feet above sea level.**
  - B. The missionaries preached in the synagogue on the sabbath day.**
    - 1. They found a ready audience for the Gospel of both Jews and Gentiles.**
    - 2. Many "believed" ("believed" is a synecdoche for the whole plan of salvation).**
    - 3. The unbelieving Jews "poisoned" the minds of the Gentiles against the brethren.**
      - a. The devil is "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).**
      - b. His servants often use slander against God's people.**
    - 4. The missionaries remained a long time "speaking boldly in the Lord."**
    - 5. God confirmed the preaching of His Word by granting miracles to be done by the missionaries (Mark 16:20).**
  - C. The unbelievers planned to abuse and stone the missionaries.**
    - 1. They had the support of government officials to do this.**

2. Paul and Barnabas learned of the plot against them.
  - a. They fled first to Lystra and then to Derbe.
  - b. They were willing to suffer martyrdom, if need be, but did not needlessly put themselves in danger.

## II. THE MISSIONARIES PREACHED IN LYCAONIA (14:8-20).

- A. In Lystra, they healed a man who was lame from birth.
  1. In some ways this case is similar to Peter's healing of the lame man in the temple (Acts 3).
  2. Paul saw that the lame man "had faith to be healed."
    - a. Faith was not always a requirement for healing.
    - b. The lame man in Jerusalem did not have faith.
  3. Paul commanded him to "Stand up straight on your feet."
    - a. He immediately leaped and walked.
    - b. He did not have to learn to crawl, then walk.
- B. The people declared, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men."
  1. A myth told of Zeus and Hermes coming to Lystra and being rejected by most of the people.
  2. They called Barnabas "Zeus," chief of the gods, perhaps because he was of imposing appearance.
  3. They called Paul "Hermes," messenger of the gods, because he was the chief speaker.
  4. The two missionaries strongly protested saying they were men also and tearing their clothes as a sign of grief.
  5. God had tolerated such superstition in the past, but He would tolerate it no longer.
    - a. He had given evidence of Himself in nature (Rom. 1:20, 21).
    - b. Paul's sermon on Mars Hill is similar to his teaching here (Acts 17:22-31).
- C. Jews from Antioch and Iconium stirred up the people against the missionaries.
  1. Those from Antioch had come 130 miles and those from Iconium 40 miles to harm the missionaries.
  2. The Jews persuaded the multitudes to stone Paul and drag him out of the city, thinking he was dead.
  3. Paul revived and went back into the city.
  4. He later mentioned his stoning at Lystra when he listed all his sufferings on behalf of the Gospel (2 Cor. 11:25).
  5. In his last letter, he wrote to Timothy:

"But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of

life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra - what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:10-12).

6. The following day, the missionaries left for Derbe, about 16 miles away.

### III. THE MISSIONARIES PREACHED ON THEIR RETURN JOURNEY (14:21-28).

#### A. They again visited Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch.

1. They strengthened the faith of the brethren.
2. They warned them of the tribulations (persecutions) they would face (2 Tim. 3:12).

#### B. They appointed elders in every church.

1. “Elders” is from the Greek “presbuteroi” meaning “mature” or older men.
2. Elders are also called “bishops” which refers to those who have the oversight (Acts 20:17, 28).
3. Too, they are called “pastors” which are shepherds who feed the flock (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

#### C. They preached in Perga before sailing for Antioch.

1. In Antioch they reported on their work to the church.  
  
“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.”
2. They remained at Antioch a long time, perhaps as long as two years.

#### Conclusion:

1. We are blessed that others sacrificed to bring the Gospel to us.
2. We are blessed to have the privilege of taking the Gospel to others.
3. Have you obeyed the Gospel plan of salvation?
4. If not, why not do so today?