

Engaging in Spiritual Warfare

Acts 14

I. Two Sides are Formed – 13:44-14:7

1. Gentiles rejoiced to hear about Jesus – 13:44-49
Verse 47 is quoted from Isaiah 49:6
Stating God's plan includes Gentiles
2. Word spread throughout the region – 49
"As many as were appointed to eternal life believed"
All who are "in Christ" are appointed to eternal life
John 3:16
Faith in Christ brings us into all that God has appointed – Eph. 1:4-5
3. But the Jews stirred up persecution – 50-52
Drove Paul & Barnabas out of the region
They went on filled with joy & the Holy Spirit
4. They went to a synagogue in Iconium - 14:1
Spoke of Jesus so many Jews & Greeks believed
5. But unbelieving Jews stirred up Gentiles - 2
"Poisoned their minds against the brothers"
Against Paul & Barnabas (perhaps "believers")
6. Paul & Barnabas continued to preach – 3
For a long time they spoke of Jesus
Bore witness to the word of His grace
By signs & wonders (miracles)
7. People of the city remained divided – 4
Some sided with the Jews – some with apostles
8. Both sides sought to stone apostles – 5-7
Went to rulers of the city
Paul & Barnabas fled to Lystra & Derbe
Where they continued to preach the Gospel

II. The Conflict Intensifies – 14:8-18

1. Issue moves from ethnic to spiritual
Not just Jews against Gentiles but "spirit world"
2. Man lame from birth is healed – 8-10
He listened to Paul with a look of faith
Paul told him to "Stand up on your feet"
He did and began walking
3. Crowds missed what happened – 11-13
They thought Paul & Barnabas were gods
Barnabas was "Zeus" Paul was "Hermes" (speaker)
Priest of Zeus came to offer sacrifices
4. Apostles cried out to the crowds – 14-15
They tore their clothes expressing sadness
That they missed the truth in this sign
Denying that they are gods "we are men like you"
5. Sign was to declare God's good news – 15-17
"You should turn from these vain things"
That is worship of false gods
"Turn to the Living God, who made heaven & earth"
"The sea and all that is in them"
"In past generations He allowed all nations to walk in their own ways"
"Yet He did not leave Himself without witness"
"He did good by giving you rains from heaven"

- "And fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness"
6. Paul's words scarcely restrained the crowd – 18
They wanted to offer sacrifices to them

III. The Tide is Turned – 14:19

1. Crowd in Lystra inclined to worship them – 18
But Satan does not soon quit
2. Jews from Antioch & Iconium arrive – 19
They convinced the crowd to stone Paul
They did, leaving him for dead
Note what is said in Acts 9:16
3. Disciples gathered around Paul – 20
He rose up and entered the city

IV. The Ministry Continues – 14:21-28

1. Next day he & Barnabas went to Derbe – 20-21
Preached & made many disciples
2. Visited young churches in Lystra, Iconium & Antioch – 22
Strengthening the souls of the disciples
Encouraging them to continue in the faith
"Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God"
What a testimony to faithfulness & God's power?
3. Appointed elders for them in every church – 23
With prayer & fasting they committed them to the Lord In whom they had believed
Left the churches in hands of good leaders