

**Ministry of The Holy Spirit**  
**Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey**  
**Lystra and Derbe and Home**  
**Acts 14:8-28**

Last time...the reaction of the hearers to the Gospel in Antioch in Pisidia and in Iconium

1. believing Gentiles and Jews rejoiced in the good news of the Gospel of grace
2. unbelieving Jews were filled with envy and stirred up unbelieving Gentiles to persecute Paul and Barnabas

Where God is working, so is the devil

This time...Paul and Barnabas continue this first missionary journey to Lystra and Derbe, and then back track they way home to Antioch in Syria

What will be the reactions of the Gospel in those places?

More of the same

We are in Acts 14

v4-7

[ map ]

Undeterred by the persecution, and led by the Holy Spirit, Paul and Barnabas  
keep moving, preaching the Gospel

v8-10 a cripple...had faith...Stand:

Listening to Paul preach the Gospel in Lystra is a man who has never walked.  
He was born lame..."weak", "impossible" to walk

Preaching the Gospel, being a witness of Jesus Christ, comes by the Holy Spirit,  
the power of God from on High  
Salvation is a spiritual work of God in the heart of the believer

God gives gifts to men to help them be a part of what He is doing  
The very best gift is the one needed in the moment, in the circumstance  
In this moment, in this circumstance, multiple gifts are the best

1. Gift of teaching (Rom 12:6-8)
2. Gift of faith (1 Cor 12:9)
3. Gift of a word of knowledge (1 Cor 12:8)
4. Gift of healing (1 Cor 12:9)

Thus, Paul, perceiving/discerning/known that the Holy Spirit was moving in the heart of the lame man (who was believing he could be “saved, delivered, made whole”),  
by faith spoke loudly to the man so that everyone could hear him:  
Stand up on your feet  
(never had before, it has been impossible)

Note: Paul did NOT put on any kind of a staged show, with himself at the center...as have/do so many a televangelist

And the Holy Spirit was working...spiritually, as evidenced by the physical  
The man jumped up and walked around!  
The Holy Spirit is testifying of Jesus Christ,  
as Jesus foretold His disciples (John 15:26 and John 16:14)  
as Jesus did of the Father (John 5:19 and John 7:16)

Is 35:4-6      the lame shall leap as a deer...Matt 15, Matt 21, John 5  
Acts 1:1  
Acts 3:1-8

v11-12    gods are come down to us:

Many people did hear Paul and did see what...the Holy Spirit had done  
But, in their darkened minds, they gave the glory of this wonderful work to their false Greek/Roman gods

Jupiter = “Zeus”  
Greek god of the sky, lightning, and thunder  
ruler/father of all gods in the Greek pantheon (glorified humans)

Mercurius = “Hermes” or “Mercury”  
Greek god of wealth, luck, fertility, and some other things  
herald/messenger of Zeus

v13      priest of Jupiter...done sacrifice:

There was a temple of Zeus in Lystra;  
perhaps why the Holy Spirit sent Paul and Barnabas there

Given the miracle, the priest of Zeus is quick to bring oxen and wreaths/crowns to offer a sacrifice to...Barnabas and Paul

Note: It is in the natural, corrupt heart of man to want a god made in their image, rather than submit to a God Who made them in His image

Note: Every pagan god is angry and needs to be appeased by man

1 Cor 10:20a that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God

Religion...good things man must do to please God and “win salvation” (salvation by works)...is demonic in its root

The OTL God is love, giving reconciliation to those who will receive it

The Gospel of grace...what God has done for man, a gift for whosoever will believe...opposes and is opposed by every religion

Herein lies a great trial for Paul and Barnabas...as well for any of us:

the praise and the applause of men, taking the glory of God for themselves (their “brand”)

ala John 12:42-43 among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God

Are Paul and Barnabas pleasers of men or pleasers of God?

v14-17 why...We also are men...the living God:

When Barnabas and Paul learned what was happening, they were faithful to God

1. acted on and spoke of their displeasure

- rent their clothes...an outward display of an inward distress
- rushed to stop the people
- Why are you doing this...stop and think about what we said!
- We are mere men...afflicted with the human condition (weakness, death) just like you

2. bore witness of the OTL God

- we proclaimed to you the Gospel and exhorted you to turn from these empty and worthless idols made by man to the Living God, Maker of man
  - Creator of heaven and earth, Source of all life (Rom 1:18-21, Mal 2:10a)
  - suffering long the ignorance of mankind (Acts 17:23-31)
  - while continuing to bear witness of Himself
    - the creation itself (Ps 19:1-6)
    - the Jews, to Whom He revealed Himself (Ps 78:5)

- His love for us
  - Matt 5:44-48
  - man sows the seed but God sends the sun and rain to bring forth life from the earth He created to feed man and beast; all life is dependent upon God, the Giver of Life
  - filling/satisfying our hearts with food and joy

The Creator God's greatest witness of Himself to man:  
His love...Rom 5:8

v18 scarce restrained:

Paul and Barnabas

- barely and with much difficulty stopped the people from worshipping them
- passed their test; Paul would later write to them Gal 1:10

From

- Peter in Acts 10
- Paul here
- John in Revelation

the message of the Holy Spirit is very clear:

We bow before the Living God ONLY

v19 Jews...persuaded...stoned...drew:

Into this scene of a majestic witness and display of the love of OTL God come...  
unbelieving Jews from the places Paul and Barnabas had been

The unbelieving Jews from Antioch and Iconium

1. persuaded these Gentiles, these pagan heathens, to turn against God's messengers...stirring up anger and hatred
2. stoned Paul
  - the Jews stoned Paul, the people of Lystra did not
  - the Jewish form of capital punishment was stoning, it was not a Gentile form
  - the Jews that wanted to stone Paul in Iconium (v5) followed him to Lystra and stone him in Lystra (they did not stone Barnabas; why not?)
  - dragged his seemingly lifeless body out of the city
3. left Paul for dead

An instance of which Jesus foretold in John 16:2 and misrepresentation, religion

v20a Howbeit...he rose up:

Howbeit..."But God", if you will

as the disciples stood around his "dead" body...what disciples?

Believers from Lystra, fruit of God's work in that town

he rose up...NOT dead or no longer dead

2 Cor 12:1-5

Let's pause and consider Paul at this moment

What is he going to do after being "rewarded" for being faithful to his calling by getting stoned to death?

Either "OK, I'm done." and look to save his own hide

Or: "Let's get back to work." (Acts 9:15-16, 1 Cor 6:19-12)

What would you and I do?

v20b-22 into the city...Derbe...preached...taught...returned...confirming:

What did Paul do after being stoned?

1. Came into the city...he did not run for his life, he went right back into Lystra, the scene of the crime against him
2. Departed with Barnabas to Derbe...keep moving  
[ map ]
3. Preached the Gospel to unbelievers in Derbe...1 Cor 9:16, 19-27
4. Taught many disciples/believers in Derbe...takes time;  
including Timothy (Acts 16:1-2)
5. Returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch...all sites of persecution against him AND sites of churches planted by the Holy Spirit
6. Confirming the souls of the disciples
  - Strengthening, establishing their faith  
1 Thes 1:9-10  
2 Cor 1:24
  - Exhorting them
    - to continue in the faith...  
remain/abide/persevere (John 8:31-32, John 15:1-8)  
faith, not works  
salvation by grace thru faith...of God,  
not of works...of the devil
    - we (disciples/believers) MUST through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God  
John 16:33 and their own personal experience  
1 John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you

Rom 8:18, 29

2 Thes 1:4-5

Phil 1:29

Ps 34:19

Many *are* the afflictions of the  
righteous: but the LORD delivereth  
him out of them all

2 Tim 2:11-12

James 1:12

NOT an ear-tickling exhortation!

After being stoned, what did Paul do?

Remain faithful to his calling...never gave up

2 Cor 11:23-30

2 Tim 3:10-12

2 Tim 4:7-8, 17-18

v23 elders...prayed with fasting...commended them to the Lord:

In Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch the Holy Spirit of the God of order  
established order

Who selected the elders?

The Holy Spirit

Paul and Barnabas heard His selections by prayer and fasting

Who is the Head of the Church?

Jesus Christ, Who purchased them with His blood (Acts 20:28)

The Good Shepherd and the Bishop of their souls

Paul and Barnabas did NOT

- take any glory from God
- insert themselves between Jesus Christ and His saints,  
an error of the RCC and its false priesthood
- 1 Cor 2:1-5

v24-26 to Antioch:

Paul and Barnabas head home, retracing their steps...

again and always preaching the Gospel as they went...

to the church in Antioch in Syria, from whence the Holy Spirit chose and sent  
them (Acts 13:1-4) to preach the Gospel of grace, a work of God

- that they got to be a part of!
- to which they were faithful, in spite of persecution and  
tribulation/trouble/difficulty!

v27 gathered the church together...God had done...He had opened:

Once home, the missionaries gather the church together to bear witness to them of

- what God had done...NOT what they had done, but God working thru them (Zech 4:6, 1 Cor 3:6-9a)
- how God had opened doors of faith among the Gentiles...  
Acts 26:18, Rev 3:7

We do not save anyone; Jesus saves

Salvation is the work of God

The children of God get to be a part of what God is doing, if they are willing

We who are willing are co-laborers of God the Holy Spirit, but the power to open the hearts of people is God's alone;  
God could use a donkey...

Therefore...

God is special, He gets ALL the glory

We are NOT special to man, nor should try to be, but we are to God!

Our testimony is of what God has done, not what we have done  
(either as sinners or as saints)

v28 they abode long time:

Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch a long time, enjoying the fellowship of like-minded believers there

Time for

- refreshing
- ministry in Antioch
- awaiting further instructions from the Lord

So ends Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> missionary journey

The Alpha and the Omega is the OTL God

Antioch was the center of evangelism of the Gospel of grace to the world

What is next?

Just as Ch 11 followed Ch 10, so Ch 15 follows Ch 13-14

The simmering Church split over the Gospel  
of grace...of God

or

of works...of the devil  
comes to a boil and must be dealt with

## Application/Lessons

What does this passage of Scripture have for us today?

1. the man born lame but healed/restored

We were born dead in our trespasses and sins, separated from God  
(Eph 2:1, Is 59:1-2)

We were “weak”, it was “impossible for us to walk” with God  
(Amos 3:3)

But God

- so loved us
- sent a messenger of good news – His love and His Gospel of Grace
- opened the door of our heart to faith as we responded to how He was moving within us
- gave us a new life!
- we jumped up and now walk with Him (John 15:4-5)

2. God never leaves Himself without a witness

Just as God witnessed of Himself to us and sent a witness of Him to us,  
He has sent us to those who are crippled, do not know how much He loves them and wants to walk with them

ALL of us are witnesses of Jesus Christ

ALL of us need the power of the Holy Spirit to be a part of what He is doing

Are you willing to love God and love others as God and others loved you?

3. Be strengthened in the faith and be exhorted to continue...thru the tribulation and suffering into the glory

Matt 25:21

Matt 25:34

Here at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we see darkly what awaits us in the coming year

We are in the “beginning of sorrows”...but we have the joy of the Lord,  
our Good Shepherd goes before us!

Call to action:

- Crippled unbeliever:  
The Holy Spirit is moving within you  
Respond!  
Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart  
He loves you so much that He suffered and died and rose again to reconcile you with the loving Father  
Stand back and let Him open the door...invite Him to come into your life!
- Healed saint  
Be baptized with the Holy Spirit  
Be used of God in these days!