

## Living out our faith Pt 17

### Acts 14:1-28

#### V1-20

- Here is the beginning of the Apostle Paul's first missionary journey; he's traveling through an area, which is modern day Turkey. This is where he'll begin to establish the first Christian churches. Remember these are primarily gentile areas but Paul knows if he starts with the Jews believing that they at least have a respect for the Word of God and then if they are converted it would allow him to have a launching pad to also preach to the Gentiles. Many begin to trust Jesus as their Savior but some did not. Satan as he so often does see this as an opportunity to rise up opposition to stop the furtherance of the gospel. Verse 2 – he breaks out one of his chief weapons of mass destruction with a guaranteed one hundred percent effective and it worked as people's minds were poisoned against the truth. What is so effective that it can cause a mind once fertile toward the truth become poisoned against the truth? Gossip and rumors.
- They spoke evil against Paul and Barnabas and it caused people to become distrustful of what they were teaching. People are so quick to believe a lie, so it's no wonder folks are inclined to tell lies. Scripture tells us: Satan is the father of lies (**John 8:44**), and to watch out for those who like to hear and tell some new thing coming down the pike, it can destroy spiritual growth (**Proverbs 26:20-21**). Verse 3 – it didn't stop Paul and Barnabas. In spite of the lies and opposition they continued to speak, live, and demonstrate, the love, grace and power of the gospel. Verse 3 - explains how
  1. They abode- they stayed didn't run away or give up because of difficulty.
  2. They spoke boldly- once their minds were made up to stay God gave them courage to speak.
  3. They give testimony of God's grace- they lived a lifestyle both of words and deeds.
- The city ultimately became divided in their thinking. Once the area became intolerant toward the truth they left just as Jesus said in **Matthew 10:23**. This brings Paul to the province of Galatia; this is the first of three recorded visits to this area. During this visit we'll note four different responses to the gospel. First – the crippled man's response when he heard the gospel. Paul discerned that he believed everything he heard and it produced faith, which caused him to be healed (**Roman 10:17**). Verse 11 – second - the crowd's response upon seeing the miracle. They misinterpret this and call Barnabas, Zeus - chief god and Paul, Hermes - his speaker. This came from their mythology and superstitions. This also shows that miracles by themselves do not produce conviction or faith; the Word must accompany it.
- Verse 14 – third - The Apostles response – we are but men also with a sin nature just like you; we needed a Savior just as you do and its Him we've come to preach to you. They could easily have accepted the worship, sadly we see so many today that identify themselves in a place that only God should occupy in a person's life.
- Verse 19 – preaching is never without conflict and some Jews followed Paul and Barnabas convinced people in the city that they were phonies and persuaded them to stone Paul. People are so fickle, one minute they were crying out "they are gods" and the next minute its "kill them". Verse 20 – fourth, response is how would these new converts respond to this type of persecution? They are new to the faith, their leader was just killed, their future looked bleak. But notice instead of running away they gather around. Because of this they witness another miracle as God raises Paul up – not to go to the hospital but to return to the city almost in defiance to encourage the

saints – if all they can do is kill the body then that is nothing to be afraid of because God can raise up our bodies again (**Matthew 10:28**).

## V21-28

- They double back through the cities they had been expelled from to do four things:
  1. Preach the gospel – Verse 21
  2. Teach and disciple others – Verse 21
  3. Strengthen believers. Believers have to see examples – Verse 22
  4. Organize the churches – Verse 23
- In doing this consideration for personal safety was abandoned. Folks if you're going to be used like this our minds cannot be on self-preservation. You go to the mission field to put yourself in danger; it's like becoming a surgeon but not wanting to see blood – you signed up for blood. It's the same as a believer – if you don't like persecution, opposition, difficulty, people lying on you, separating themselves from you, well don't become a Christian; because this is what Christianity is all about, and if you had any doubts then go back over this chapter.