

HIGHER AIM

Balancing Your Life

Acts 14:1-25

INTRODUCTION

When I was in seminary, I took a trip to New Mexico and decided to go snow skiing for the first time. I had all the right gear, looked like I knew what I was doing, and skipped the lessons, but as soon as a young student asked if I was the ski instructor, I fell flat on my face. I looked like I could ski, but I had no stability whatsoever. Today, I want to talk about developing stability in your life, balancing your life, using Acts 14 as our guide.

KEY POINTS

1. Lean on God

In verses 1–4, Paul and Barnabas were doing what God had called them to do. Their focus was not on how people responded, but rather on being faithful to the Lord. They started in the Jewish synagogue, using the Old Testament to point people to Christ. A great revival broke out, yet at the same time, many Jews refused to believe, and Gentiles became confused. The entire town became divided, and tension developed.

We need to lean on God all the time because following the Lord doesn't mean everything will be wonderful or free of opposition. Just because you are serving God does not guarantee that you will be insulated from problems. Sometimes you will experience more opposition because you are doing God's will. That's why the Bible says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." Leaning means putting your weight on something, and the key to balance is always leaning on God.

2. Rely on Common Sense

God has given you a mind and the ability to think clearly. Many people think faith is mystical or "touchy-feely," but God wants you to use your common sense. When the Jews and Gentiles formed a plot to mistreat Paul and Barnabas, they made a good decision: they left. God had given them enough sense "to get out of Dodge," and they lived to preach another day.

NOTES

HIGHER AIM

Balancing Your Life

Acts 14:1-25

Jesus Himself told the disciples to leave towns that rejected the message. Common sense focuses on what is happening right now and what is logical, while faith is taking God at His Word. They are not the same, but they work together. When God speaks clearly in His Word, choose faith. But where He is silent, use common sense. It will keep you out of much trouble.

3. Refuse the Crowd

If you want to maintain balance in your life, refuse the crowd. In verses 8–18, Paul spoke to a man who had never walked, and the man jumped up and began to walk. This miracle electrified the crowd, and because of their mythology, they immediately assumed Paul and Barnabas were Zeus and Hermes. The priest of Zeus brought bulls and wreaths to offer sacrifices to them. But Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes and rushed into the crowd, shouting, “We too are only human like you.” They refused to go with the flow. Crowds are fickle, one moment worshiping them, the next moment ready to stone them. That’s why we are always to refuse the crowd and listen to the applause of heaven rather than the impulses of people.

4. Cultivate Stability

Nothing stays the same in this life: the color of your hair, the affirmation of your friends, or the opinions of culture. That’s why Scripture tells us, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Your stability is in Jesus, not in people. Friends will fail you. Family cannot provide perfect stability. Even Christian leaders will disappoint you because they are human.

Stability is also not found in success. Paul and Barnabas saw God do miraculous things, but success was never their stabilizing force. Instead, stability comes from cultivating productive habits like prayer, personal Bible study, fellowship, and ministry involvement. It comes from accountability with other believers, having a clear perspective of yourself, and staying committed to the task God has given you to do. When you lean on God, rely on common sense, refuse the crowd, and cultivate stability, you are ready to “ski,” no matter what the moguls of life look like.

NOTES

HIGHER AIM

Balancing Your Life

Acts 14:1-25

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Which of the four principles above (leaning on God, relying on common sense, refusing the crowd, or cultivating stability) do you feel God is highlighting to you right now?
2. How does Acts 14 challenge your assumptions about what it means to be in the center of God's will?
3. What specific habits or relationships can you cultivate this week to build greater spiritual stability?
