

9/2/07

Acts 14

Last week we began to look at the account of the first missionary journey that marks the final division of the book of Acts, the expansion of the church to the world.

1. Paul and Barnabas were called by the Holy Spirit to be separated for the work He had called them for.
2. The church laid hands on them and released them for the work of God.
3. They first went to Cyprus and God saved Sergius Paulus despite the opposition of the sorcerer Elymas.
4. Paul and his party then sailed to Perga in Pamphilia from where John Mark departed back to Jerusalem.
5. Paul and Barnabas proceeded to Antioch and preached Christ in the synagogue and the response was a dividing of the people, those who excepted Christ and those who rejected Christ.
6. Both of the Apostles shook the dust off their feet and continued to Iconium after being filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Now we find ourselves in the synagogue at Iconium as the custom of Paul was, going to the Jew first then to the Gentile.

14:1-7 The ministry at Iconium.**14:1** The arrival at Iconium.

- 1) The city of Iconium was located about 90 miles south-east from Antioch and was the chief city of the district of Lycaonia or south Galatia.
- 2) Several Roman roads entered the city, as well as the great highway that went east and west through it.
- 3) The synagogue was Paul's usual first step knowing the Jews gathered to study the word of God and pray but never
* Synagogues never offered sacrifices!
- 4) Their audience was of great numbers, combined of Jews and Gentile who believed.

14:2 The opposition by the Jews.

- 1) Once again the Jews opposed the Gospel.
- 2) They embittered the souls of the people against the believers of the gospel.

14:3 The response of the apostles.

- 1) They stayed a long time.
- 2) They spoke boldly in the Lord, depending on Him and trusting Him.
- 3) They observed the Lord bearing witness to the word of His grace by signs and wonders. Heb. 2:4

* They were used by God to be instruments of the miraculous to point to God and give the proper response.
Gal. 3:5

14:4-7 The outcome.

- 1) The multitudes were divided into two camps. vs. 4
- 2) The people, both Jews and Gentiles were plotting to abuse and stone them. vs. 5
- 3) The apostles were made aware of the attempt to do them harm.
- 4) The apostles fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lyconia, in the southern province of Galatia. vs. 6
 - a) The surrounding regions means they penetrated the areas round about.
 - b) Xenophon called Iconium “the last city of Phrygia”
- 5) The Gospel was preached in the cities of Lycaonia, a different region from Iconium. vs. 7
 - a) Lystra was about 18-20 miles south south-west of Iconium.
 - b) And like Iconium, Lystra was a Roman military colony.

14:8-20 **The ministry at Lystra.**

14:8 The cripple man at Lystra.

- 1) Lystra was made a Roman colony by Augustus in 25 B.C.
 - a) It was 18-20 miles south-west of Iconium.
 - b) Antioch was about 110 or so miles connected by a military road.
 - c) The city of Lystra was a province of Galatia and most of its population was uneducated Lyconoians, who came from a small Anotonlian tribe and spoke the Lycanian language.
 - d) The crippled man reminds us of the one at Jerusalem. Acts 3
- 2) The cripple man is much like the one in the temple. Acts 3
 - a) Without strength in his feet to walk.
 - b) Cripple from his mothers womb, congenital.

14:9-10 Paul confronted the cripple man.

- 1) Paul receives a word of knowledge from the Lord regarding this man and his faith to be healed. vs. 9
- 2) Paul receives a word of wisdom, commanding him to stand up on his feet. vs. 10a-b
- 3) The man received his healing and leaped up and walked, the imperfect indicates the action continued. vs. 10c

14:11-13 The response of the people was shocking to Paul and Barnabas.

- 1) Raising their voice in the Lyconian language they said, “The gods have come down to us.”
- 2) They said, “In the likeness of men”.
 - a) The story of Zeus and Hermes gods was told, of who came down and no one was hospitable to them except one Philemon and his wife, Baucis.
 - b) The result was that the gods wiped everyone out except both of them.
 - c) Both of them were made guardians of the temple and turned into two great trees when they died.
 - d) Zeus is the Roman name for the Greek god Jupiter and Hermes for Mercury, the messenger of the gods, the spokesman.
 - * We get our word Hermeneutics, the science of interpretation for his name Hermes.
- 3) The priest of Zeus not wanting the same thing to happen again preceded to make sacrifice to appease them. vs. 13

14:14-17 The response of the apostles.

- 1) The apostles in sharp contrast when they heard that they tore their clothes, expressing grief over their perception. vs.14a

* This is the second time the word apostle is used for both of them in Acts. vs. 4

- 2) The apostles cried out that they were mere men with the same nature as they. vs.14a-d
 - a) Peter said the same thing to Cornelius. 10:26
 - b) The angel told John not to worship him but God, for he was his servant. Rev. 19:10; 22:8
- 3) They declared that they were preaching to them that they should turn from those vain things to the living God, who made heaven, earth, the sea and all that is in them. vs. 14e-I
 - a) This is what the Thessalonians had done. 1Thess. 1:10
 - b) Paul relates to them on their level of understanding about God, nature! Acts 17:30
 - 1)) But creation and conscience is not enough for salvation, it only makes a person inexcusable regarding the existence of God. Rom. 1:19-20; Ps. 19
 - 2)) Pantheism is the worship of God through everything, all is God.
 - 3)) Polytheism is the worship of many gods.

- 4)) Animism is the worship of God through nature.
- 4) They declared that in past generations God allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. vs. 16
- a) Not because He wanted it but because man had rejected Him, before and after the flood.
- b) Until he sent His Son. Gal. 4:4
- 5) They declared that the same God did not leave himself without a witness in that He showed His goodness by doing good to all of man kind, providing rain, fruitful seasons, food and gladness. vs17

14:18 Their religious zeal was emotionally out of control.

- 1) They could not be restrained from their pagan idolatry!
- 2) Throughout the world the idolatrous practices are so entrenched in culture that when one excepts Christianity, they are treated as an enemy, one dead, or killed.

14:19-20 The outcome at Lystra.

- 1) The Jews from Antioch traveled to persecute the missionaries. vs. 19
- a) They were so resentful and enraged at Paul for preaching the Gospel at Antioch, that they traveled about 90 miles from Antioch to Iconium.

- b) They persuaded the multitudes to stone Paul, surely Barnabas also, if they could of found him.
* This was the Jewish justice not Roman.
- c) They dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. 2Cor. 12:1-6
* The perfect “dead” is used for the fact he was dead. Lenski
- 2) The disciples gathered around Paul’s body and he arose and went back into the city. vs. 20a-c
- a) Without any doubt Timothy must have been there, 15-16 years of age.
- b) Paul calls attention of his knowledge of these persecutions. 2Tim. 3:10-11
- 3) The next day they departed to Derbe, about 20 miles south-east. vs. 20d
* The city was the frontier city of Galacia, near the home of Paul.

14:21-28 **The ministry to the saved and the trip home.**

14:21-23 The ministry to the saint, after leaving Derbe.

- 1) They preached the Gospel to that city. vs. 21a
- 2) They made many disciples. vs. 21a
* Gaius was from Derbe!

- 3) They then returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, retracing their step of the places they had evangelized and made disciples. vs. 21b-d
 - a) They could of taken the road through Tarsus and it's mountain range but rather decided to care for the new converts.
 - b) They backtracked to each city. vs. 21b-d
- 4) They were interested not in mere converts but disciples, learners of the gospel. vs. 22
 - a) They strengthened the souls of the disciples. vs. 22a
 - b) They exhorted them to continue in the faith by telling them that they must enter the Kingdom of God through much tribulations. vs. 22b-d
- 5) They appointed elders in every city. vs. 23a
 - a) The word appointed "cheirotoneo" means to vote by stretching out the hand, certainly it was the apostles that chose by the Holy Spirit's direction, not those recently born again.
 - * The word appears only one other time. 2Cor. 8:19
 - b) The elders "oresbyteris", the men of age and to officiate the office of overseeing and caring for the sheep.

- 6) They prayed with fasting and commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed in. vs.23b-c

14:24-25 The departure back to the church of Antioch in Syria.

- 1) They passed through Pisidia to Pamphylia. vs. 24
- 2) They preached the word in Perga. vs. 25a
* When they arrived they did not preach.
- 3) They arrived at Phamphylia. vs. 25b
- 4) They went down to the port of Attalia in preparation for their journey home. vs. 25b
- 5) They sailed to Antioch where they had been commended to the Grace of God for the work which they had completed. vs. 26
- 6) They reported the entire church all that God had done with them and how He had opened up the door to the Gentiles. vs. 27
- 7) They remained at Antioch along time with the disciples. vs. 28
* *Some believe that the first missionary journey took from one to two years!*