

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (June 23, 2024)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

I grew up inundated with TV commercials, radio pitches, slick magazine promotions. As a kid I selected toys based on incredible claims of endless fun ... promises broken. I'm bombarded with ads for restaurants, detergent, sodas, clothes that look great on a perfect body, bottled water (*\$3 for 16oz of water, what?*). Kathaleen and I once got hoodwinked into test driving a car because of the dealership's marketing campaign, They offered two roundtrip tickets to Las Vegas if we took a test drive ... they were bus tickets. In our passage this morning Paul and Barnabas continue their first missionary journey. As they visit cities and towns they talk about Jesus. What they don't do is try to "sell" or "market" Jesus. Quite the opposite, they talk about how difficult it will be to follow Jesus. No sugar added, no celebrity endorsement, no promise of ease and comfort. They were honest, no bait and switch. How refreshing!

The Holy Spirit in Barnabas & Saul: Trouble (Acts 14:1-28) ESV

Due to the passage's length some verses are omitted. Please read the entire passage

^{14:1} Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. ² But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers ... (*verse 3 omitted*) ⁴ ... the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. ⁵ When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, ⁶ they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, ⁷ and there they continued to preach the gospel.

⁸ Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. ⁹ He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, ¹⁰ said in a loud voice, 'Stand upright on your feet.' And he sprang up and began walking. ¹¹ And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, 'The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!' ¹² Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. ¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, ¹⁵ 'Men, why are you doing

these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and ***we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.*** ¹⁶ In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷ Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.' ¹⁸ Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.

¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ²⁰ But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹ When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that ***through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God ...*** (*verses 23-28 omitted*)

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. Where did Barnabas and Paul go? What was their message?
2. What kind of reception did they get in each place they visited?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

3. What does, "an attempt ... to mistreat and stone them" mean?
4. What does, "through many tribulations ..." mean? v.22

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

5. How much influence has advertising had on your life?
6. Do advertisements live up to their promises? Cite examples.
7. Have you ever had a job selling a product? Were you honest?
8. When you first heard about Jesus what were you promised? Were you told the truth, or was it more like a sales pitch?
9. What do you tell others about Christian faith? Why should someone become a Christian? Why are you a Christian?

As you spend time praying, remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural part of your day. Prayer is a conversation: talking to God and listening to God. Ask God to help you know the Truth, and to know when you are hearing a lie. Ask God to help you follow Him even though you will experience trouble. Ask God to help you speak honestly about Him to others. God is with you, and He will speak to you, and to others, because He loves us.