

“Let’s keep our worship pure.”

Acts 14:8-20

November 20, 2022

14:8-10

... lame from his mother’s womb ...
... fixed his gaze ...
... leaped ...

Exact same words use to describe Paul, healing in Acts Ch 14, and Peter, healing in Acts Ch 3, reinforcing Paul’s equivalence with Peter in Apostleship. See ***2 Peter 3:15,16*** where Paul’s writings are placed on an equivalent plane with “the rest of Scriptures.”

Three levels of persecution inflicted on Paul:

Pisidian Antioch – ***Acts 13:50*** But the Jews ... drove them out of their district.

Iconium – ***Acts 14: 5*** And when an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and the Jews ... to stone them,
6 they became aware of it and fled ...

Lystra – ***Acts 14: 19*** But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and ... they stoned Paul ...

Martyrdom is generally not Plan A for the believer, though sometimes it is. Observe in ***1 Samuel 23***, David’s flight from certain death from Saul; God provided David a way of escape, and David took it.

Vv 11-17

Notice how Paul crafted his sermon to the audience:

To the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch, Acts 13:17 – “The God of this people Israel chose our fathers ...

To the gentiles at Lystra, Acts 14:15 – a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM.

To the gentiles at Athens, Acts 17:24 “The God who made the world and all things in it ...

Know your audience. An individual’s spiritual understanding determines where we start with evangelism; those from a Christian culture, start at the cross; those from a non-Christian culture, start with God.

Vv 12,13

12 And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

Notice the elements of a religion:

A god

A priest

A temple

A sacrifice

A ramification for refusal (see v 19)

Our culture has many idols, most of which are not as material as the statues to Zeus, etc., found in ancient Roman culture. One such example:

“Alphabet soup” sexuality

god: Self/pleasure

Priests: Voices of the culture

Temple: media; medicine; entertainment; education

Sacrifice: homage to the idea

Treatment for those who refuse: name calling, cancellation, litigation

2 Timothy 3:10-12

The Lord delivers us from our persecutions.

Compared to the vain idols of the world, our culture, and our society, Christianity is transcendent.

Christianity

God: Jesus Christ – John 1:1 . . .and the Word was God. . .

Priests: Believer – 1 Peter 2:9 . . .a royal priesthood. . .

Temple: Body – 1 Cor 6:19 . . .your body is a temple. . .

Sacrifice: our God – 1 Cor 5:7 . . .For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

Our treatment to those who refuse: Luke 6:35 . . .love your enemies. . .

V 15 the living God who made the heaven and the earth

Is the planet a cosmic accident, or did God place it here?

With reference to the environmental “hot topic” of today, consider these two viewpoints, each of which represent a “religious” perspective:

Secular environmentalism: “The Earth is in our hands, and unless you change your behavior, the planet’s going to overheat and bake us all.”

Scriptural environmentalism: Genesis 8:21. . . and the LORD said to Himself. . .22 “While the earth remains,

Seedtime and harvest,
And cold and heat,
And summer and winter,
And day and night
Shall not cease.”