

PAUL: PERSECUTOR TO PREACHER

Iconium

Ice-breaker: Have you every taken a mission trip or served in some capacity in a location other than the one in which you live. Describe your experience.

The Kingdom's Third Law of Motion: every gospel action causes an equal and opposite reaction...

You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings – what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted... (2 Tim. 3:10-12)

What kind of reaction do you receive for being a Christian among your friends, employers, employees, etc.?

Iconium on Paul's first missionary journey...

At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. (Acts 14:1a)

- ***Gospel impact: Paul and Barnabas' effective preaching*** – “There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed.” (v. 1b) **Where are your giftings and passions? In what arenas do you think that you are the most effective when it comes to communicating the Gospel? Have you any experiences that would prove to be so? If so, describe them.**

¶ ***Are your spiritual gift(s) in the holster or are they engaged?*** – “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit... Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (1 Cor. 12:4, 7)

- ***Counter-reaction: defiance and polarized resentment*** – “But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.” (v. 2)
- ***Ministry boldness: despite the defiance, God's still on mission*** – “So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of His grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.” (v. 3) **Do you believe that God is still on mission nowadays given the political climate and Covid-19? How have you seen it? How can you participate with him in it?**

¶ **Which of these is your reflex-response when God gives you an opportunity to share the gospel?**
1) Who me? 2) Not me! 3) Why me? 4) Use me!

- ***Expect one of two responses: openness or opposition*** – “The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. There was a plot afoot among the Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them.” (vv. 4-5) **Explain a time when you received opposition because of who you were or what you believed or what you said. Describe a time when you experienced openness.**

*He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.
(Matt. 12:30)*

- ***God takes worldly opposition and turns it into kingdom expansion*** – “But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country, where they continued to preach the good news.” (vv. 6-7)

PAUL: PERSECUTOR TO PREACHE

Iconium

If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. (Matt. 10:14)

What really keeps you from being a full-time ambassador for God and his kingdom in your home, workplace, recreation area, etc.? It doesn't necessarily have to be a full-time missionary but what would need to change in your life to constantly focus on God and His kingdom work more than any other thing? Pray about that specifically.