

Embrace His Grace

March 18, 2018

I. Understanding life can sometimes be difficult.

Acts 14:8-10 In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

A. God can do the miraculous for those who have faith in Him.

Acts 14:11-13 When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

1. We tend to idolize the things that fit our story.
2. We often worship the miracle instead of the miracle worker.

B. It is deceptive to put our trust in people instead of God.

Acts 14:14-18 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: "Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

- We are only human.

Acts 14:19-20 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

II. Don't be surprised by opposition.

A. Sometimes we win only after it seems that we have lost.

B. When you dismiss God's presence in your life, you miss out on gifts of His grace.

Acts 13:45 When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. They began to contradict what Paul was saying and heaped abuse on him.

Acts 13:50 But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.

Acts 14:2 But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

Acts 14:5-6 There was a plot afoot among both Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them. But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country,

1. We are threatened by what we do not expect.
2. We push back what we do not like.

C. When we push back against God, we miss out on the gifts of His grace.

Acts 13:38-40 "Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses. Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you:

Habakkuk 1:2-4 How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

Habakkuk 1:5 "Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.

Acts 13:41 "Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, for I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe, even if someone told you."

D. God will use His surprising ways to bring you life you did not expect.

III. Conclusion: Embrace His Grace