

Unstoppable – June 6, 2021

1. Introduction:

- a. This account is set at the end of Paul and Barnabas' 1st missionary trip (47-48 AD).
- b. Question: What comes to your mind when you think about Paul's missionary trips?
- c. Question: Why do you think Paul was, at least in some cases, joyfully received?
- d. Question: Why do you think Paul was often meet with open hostility by the ruling elite?
- e. The context for our text for today is found in Acts 14:1-4, "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.** ³ So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ⁴ But the **people of the city were divided;** some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles."
- f. Question: What was the reaction of unbelieving Jews to the preaching of Paul and Barnabas?
- g. Question: According to Acts 14:4, what was the response of the people of the city after much teaching, preaching, signs and wonders?

2. Read: Acts 14:19-23 "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. ²³ And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed."



a. Verse 19 is in reference to Antioch Pisidian, a city in Asia Minor with a large Jewish population. But in verse 25 Antioch is referring to Antioch Syria, a city north of Israel with a large Gentile population. It was also a center of Christianity and the third leading city of the Roman Empire after the cities of Rome and Alexandria Egypt. The map above shows the Roman name for the provinces of Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey.

b. Acts 13:45-47 It was in Antioch at Pisidia that Paul first preached at the Synagogue. While the people were pleased and asked that Paul and Barnabas return to preach again the next Sabbath tells us that, “But **when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy** and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. ⁴⁶ And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken **first to you**. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.’”

c. Question: According to Acts 13:45 what was the reaction of the Jews to Paul’s preaching?

d. Question: According to Acts 13:46 who was the Gospel to be preached first?

e. In Romans 1:16-17, Paul amplifies that the Jews are to be the first to hear the Gospel. “For I am **not ashamed** of the gospel, for it is **the power of God for salvation** to everyone who **believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’”

f. Question: Romans 1:16-17 is an important passage for several reasons. What does verse 16 say was Paul’s attitude about the Gospel?

g. Question: In Romans 1:16 what does Paul say is the value of the Gospel?

h. Question: Also, in Romans 1:16 what does Paul say is the criteria for salvation?

i. Question: In Romans 1:17 Paul was inspired to write, “The righteous shall live by faith.” How does this fly in the face of the prevailing 1st century Jewish theology?

j. Question: Why would justification by faith be good news to 1st century Jews?

k. Question: Why is justification by faith also good news for us today?

l. Question: Why do you think it is difficult for people then and now to accept that they are made righteous before God by faith?