

# **OASIS SERMON NOTES**

## **WEEK OF AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2021**

As the Holy Spirit filled the early church, the Gospel began to spread as new communities of faith were formed reflecting Jesus and the values of His Kingdom. Some people accepted this Gospel with great joy while others rejected the Christian's witness and in so doing brought significant resistance, opposition, and persecution to the believers. The same holds true today.

Jesus Christ told his followers "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." It's only through Jesus' example and ultimate victory that we, like Him, can stand up in our culture and speak the truth with grace in hope that our family, friends, co-workers and neighbors will turn to Jesus who alone can save us from ourselves, deliver us from evil, and restore our relationship with God. But this message comes with a cost. How are we to respond when the Gospel is resisted?

### **My Story**

1. How did you feel when you learned of the fall of Afghanistan this past week and the cries for help from Christians (and others) who were awaiting certain death at the hands of the Taliban?
2. What can Christians in America learn from this current event?

### **Digging Deeper**

3. In Acts 14:1-7 we see that not only was the Gospel embraced but it was also strongly resisted. Why?

Read 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

- a. What does it mean for you to “spread the fragrance” of the knowledge of God and how can you do that in your sphere of relationships?
- b. What are two responses that can be expected from doing so?
- c. Describe a time when you shared a challenging truth with someone. What was their response?

4. In Acts 14:8-23, Paul and Barnabas have a very successful encounter as they shared the Gospel accompanied by a healing. The crowds began treating them as celebrities, calling them gods.

- a. How did Paul and Barnabas respond? What is the temptation they overcame?
- b. What do verses 14:18-19 reveal about human nature?
- c. How easy is it to walk away from God when you are fickle?

5. Read Acts 14:19-22.

- a. Like those early disciples, we too need our souls to be strengthened. What areas do you feel weak in right now that needs to be strengthened by God's truth and grace?
- b. In what ways might you be tempted to give up and not "continue" in the faith? Why is that?
- c. In the Gospel of John, we see the disciple Peter had great intentions of following Jesus. (John 13:37-38) Jesus' response is sobering. What alone will keep you from denying your faith?

## **TAKING IT HOME**

Being a follower of Jesus has tremendous benefits and rewards. Not only are our sins forgiven and we are reconciled with God, but our whole life purpose and eternal destiny are forever changed. We now have the privilege of helping others find a new life in Jesus. We do, however, discover that in this world not all people share the same passion and joy that we have discovered. Friends and family may resist our faith, scoff our beliefs, and even tempt us to turn away from following Jesus. As the days become increasingly challenging to stand for Christ, we are reminded that resistance to the Gospel is a call for us to mature and endure. "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." We were never promised a trouble-free life, or a life where we would be accepted and loved by all, but were promised that the Holy Spirit would fill and empower us just as He did Jesus so that we can faithfully love God and love others just as Jesus did.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, fill me with your Holy Spirit so that the life of Jesus can live through me to others for your glory and my joy.  
Amen.