



**Spiritual Warfare
Who God Uses and Who Satan Uses
Acts 13:44-14:28**

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Acts 13:44–46

“The next Sabbath nearly all the city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first. Since you repudiate it and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.” (NASB 2020)



And organized religion has been an enemy of the true church ever since.

There is a time in every ministry, sometimes multiple times, sometimes consistently, where Satan uses those followers of his in the world system to try and physically hinder the work of the Lord. Spiritual warfare moves from the spiritual to the physical realm. We refer to it as persecution. And yes, we do expect it.

I have seen it with the ministry here at Calvary Chapel. First beginning as doubts while praying but seeing the Lord show up and confirm.

Then finding out believers who promised to support the church plant, never really intended to do so. But the Lord made a way and again confirmed. Meanwhile there is the prayer, on the part of many, for the ministry and what the Lord wants to do here at Calvary Chapel.

There have been days where I have been incredibly down and frustrated. I am learning how to walk much closer to the Lord through all of this. I am sure Paul and Barnabas had their days too.

The enemy has attacked just about everyone who helps to put church together on Sundays. Please pray for us. The spiritual warfare is real since we are in a community that Satan had a foothold in.

There has been the continuing battle for a place to meet in. Rejection after rejection but at the last minute, an answer to prayer and the Lord provided a place for us and continues to do so.

Some who had promised to support us, instead turned to telling stories about us; doing all that could be done to prevent anyone from finding us or even wanting to come. Yes, these were folks who said they were followers of Jesus.

There has been interesting weather that has been thrown at us, as well as circumstances to prevent us from meeting resulting in at least one cancelation.

The enemy switched gears on the attacks we had been dealing with in the Midweek Bible Study and once again, the Lord showed up. Once again we learned promises were just words, and instead stories were fabricated to force us to leave the venue we had been promised and look for another with less than one month to do so. And the Lord again showed up.

In our search for a building, we have been actually told that churches cannot be in retail centers by at least two different brokers representing two different centers. That is not exactly true as the county has indicated no issue with a church in a retail space.

No matter what has been thrown at us or what others have placed in the way, God has a place for us. We are still working on the details of that place, and it may even be a different location than we think. He is in control

But in all of the physical and spiritual challenges thrown up by the enemy, the most disappointing have been those thrown up by others who claimed the name of Jesus Christ.

The enemy will indeed use anyone, and many times it is nothing more than jealousy as a reason, to stop the work of the Lord.



We are beginning a next step for us, that is partnering with Child Evangelism Fellowship to put a Good News Club into one of the schools here in Hobe Sound. Our goal is to expand to both schools next year in Hobe Sound. We want to see children come to Christ and their parents as well.

Will the enemy attack again, absolutely. But we know something. Paul and Barnabas did as well. We serve a victorious risen Savior.

1 John 4:4

"You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." (NASB 2020)

We will indeed see organized religion, imagine that, take the lead in persecution here in Acts as the mission work continues. I have to say, I am not surprised since I have experienced that here in the 21st century as well. Satan does indeed have those he uses lined up and some really do think they are serving God in what they do by standing against the work. Pray for them, I know I do daily.

Let's look at our text again.

Acts 13:44–46

"The next Sabbath nearly all the city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first. Since you repudiate it and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles." (NASB 2020)

Paul was invited back to talk again the next Sabbath. But during the past week, there has been a buzz going on around town. Some of those who were there became believers.

Then those new believers began to tell others about Jesus and to come and hear for themselves.

What Doctor Luke says here is not hyperbole. He was not there but from Paul told him, most of the city turned out to listen.

Let me put you in the mind of the Synagogue leadership who have struggled since arriving there just to get all of the Jews in town serious enough about the Lord to come and study Torah with them and be part of a community.

Then these two new guys show up from out of town and the buzz hasn't stopped. It has nothing to do with them, but with the Word of the Lord being presented by Paul. God's word is doing all the work.

You never saw the meter move for even a synagogue potluck or the BYOB Bring Your Own Bagel Sabbath. Nothing. And now, almost the entire town has crowded in. There are Gentiles all over the place and outside as well. And the local leadership had nothing to do with it.

Enter jealousy, stage left. Satan will use anything to try and stop the message and the work of the Holy Spirit. To include, organized religion.

I still remember the early days of the Jesus Revolution in the late 60's and 70's. The Lord was doing a work, thousands were being saved, just not in most of the traditional church venues around town. Organized religion for the most part had failed.



And the people being saved didn't look saved even after they were saved. They still had longhair and beards and now toted their Bibles with them everywhere and had notebooks too. And the music?

I remember being saved at that time and wanting to see the Spirit move just as He was elsewhere, but at the church I was saved in, "we don't do that."

They were jealous. I went to Bible school and guess what, most of the folks there were, to include many of the administration, were jealous too. I even had to sign a document that said I would not go to movies, dance, or attend Calvary Chapel. No, that wasn't there but what they taught, and we teach here at Calvary Chapel as normative for the New Testament Christian was referenced. No tongues speaking, no healing, no miracles, no Holy Spirit, but lots of dead religion. Those who went to Calvary Chapel at the time joked it was the no Calvary Chapel clause. But my roommate was still miraculously healed of cancer starting my search for what was the truth of being a follower of Jesus Christ.

I still remember the week Chuck Smith came to speak at Chapel, 2/3rds of the students didn't want to go, but it was mandatory and yes, they took role. His message was the most powerful thing I had heard in years. And the band that came with him, Sweet Comfort Band, wow.

That Friday, the student paper had a lengthy discussion on what apostasy looks like and started comparing that to what he had said. And then there was a lengthy discussion of how rock music, even if in the name of Jesus, was still evil. They did stop short though of advocating a return to Gregorian Chant.

All of this is jealousy. In the Synagogue in Pisidia Antioch, in the church I was saved in and in the Bible School I attended. Jealousy that the Lord was moving, and people were being saved, just not in my ministry. It took awhile for the school to get it. My freshman year women must wear skirts, floor length preferably, and the men, slacks, dress shoes and dress shirts. By my senior year, women could dress in casual attire to include pants, and skirts that might show their knees. And the men could wear blue jeans and casual shirts. But t-shirts if they had the school's name on it. I was in.

Oh, and the no Calvary Chapel clause disappeared with the jealousy that caused it.

We learn here from Doctor Luke that Jealousy is a sin. It is from the pit of hell. It arises out of, coveting what someone else has, and here that would be a following.

But we fail to realize that it is not the person who is being followed doing the work, it is the Holy Spirit who is using them. They are along for the ride. Who are we to quench the Spirit?

Organized religion, in this case Judaism, in my case Conservative Baptists, Southern Baptists, Quakers, and others, but all organized religion, became the enemy of what the Lord was doing.

I went to a concert at Calvary Chapel and saw people run to the front to be saved. I was learning how to be a Berean and seeing what organized religion can and still does to moves of the Holy Spirit even today.

There in Antioch, many of the Jews as well as Gentiles welcomed the gospel and did the logical thing, invited their friends and neighbors to come and hear.

The jealousy started in the leadership. When it says the Jews, it is not all of the Jews, just a few vocal leaders. Paul and Barnabas picked up on what they were saying and in his ever-loving way, he pointed it out to those that he considered to blaspheming the Lord.



Acts 13:46

"Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first. **Since you repudiate it and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.**" (NASB 2020)

Paul is actually reminding them of what Isaiah reported God said of the suffering servant as he tells them we are turning to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 49:6

"He says, "**You will do more than restore the people of Israel to me. I will make you a light to the Gentiles, and you will bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.**"'" (NLT)

Acts 13:47

"For so the Lord has commanded us, '**I HAVE APPOINTED YOU AS A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.**' '" (NASB 2020)

So much for having large attendance Saturday, most of those there would not return anytime soon as they are now part of the church and will be doing worship, elsewhere. This will not be the first time organized religion will get in the way.

During the reformation, Luther and others spread the gospel but it was the Anabaptists who most actively evangelized 16th century Europe. "The three principal reformers wanted to reform the church, but the Anabaptists wanted to revolutionize the church and restore it to New Testament purity. This course brought them into conflict with both Catholics and Protestants, and both persecuted the Anabaptists unmercifully." (Terry 1994, 80-81)

What did they believe that set off the organized world of religion? The Schleithem Confession adopted in 1527 had seven major points:

1. Baptism for mature persons who had made a profession of faith;
2. Banning from the Lord's Supper those who were living immorally;
3. Only baptized believers were allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper;
4. Pastors to lead the faithful;
5. Separation from the evil and wickedness of the world;
6. Non-participation in war and military service;
7. Refusal to take oaths or swear allegiance. (Terry 1994, 82)

They also believed passionately in religious liberty and the separation of church and state doing so in a time where the church and the state were in cahoots with each other. One of the leading evangelists of the 16th century, Balthasar Hubmaier, was in Moravia and through his work saw over 6,000 people come to Christ and baptized in one year. He was pursued by the state and the Catholic Church, captured and publicly burned at the stake in Vienna in 1528.

Praise the Lord we haven't seen that level of persecution here in this nation, yet. But it does exist elsewhere and the roots of it are visible in this nation.

Paul and Barnabas are telling the Synagogue leadership that they will no longer be teaching there. I wonder how many showed up the next week?

The Jewish leadership had made a decision there in that community on behalf of all Jew's there, whether they wanted this or not, that they were rejecting the message. So, for this community, it is now a Gentile only mission taking place.



How did the large number of Gentiles there in the synagogue react to this announcement?

Acts 13:48–49

“When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and all who had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region.” (NASB 2020)

Paul and Barnabas make the announcement and applause breaks out, from the Gentiles. Then Paul and Barnabas walk out, followed by all of the Gentiles as well as the Jewish believers. And now the Synagogue has gone from its largest attendance ever, to its smallest.

The Jewish leadership did not merely reject Paul and Barnabas. “They did not merely reject a sermon they did not like. They rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and the message of God’s free grace in him. In doing so they judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life.” (Fortner 2007, 183)

Not every Gentile in Antioch came to Christ, but all of those who did came to Him with enthusiastic faith. They were excited that the message is now being expanded to include them as well.

What this reflects also is wisdom on the part of Paul and Barnabas.

They had confronted a group of seriously hardened hearts. The leadership began with jealousy and then moved to flat out rejection of the offer of eternal life. They will then turn towards active persecution of those who are providing the message.

When you or I are being lied about, hindered in the ministry, blocked by others or not provided a place to meet. Our first reaction should be to pray for those doing this since they are just listening to Satan and doing what he wants. We still want their hearts to be softened and for them to come to Christ. For those who stand up in organized religion to stop the work, walk away.

Those who stand against the work of the Lord are telling us they are not interested in reaching the world for Jesus Christ. They are not interested in His offer of eternal life; they do not want to be challenged with the need for accountability before their creator. And if they say they are followers of Jesus, they have no interest in making disciples or upsetting their country club. Instead, they are opting for the things that the world system offers, all of the material goodies they can have here and now.

Paul showed wisdom in not spending all his time trying to persuade hardened hearts. We know that even after he made Gentiles the focus of his evangelistic efforts, he still prayed earnestly for the salvation of Israel (Romans 10:1), but he spent his missionary time ministering to more open hearts. (Guzik 2013, Ac 13:46-48)

One more thing is happening here too. Because of the reaction of the Jewish leadership, and we will see that they will become very active trying to destroy the mission and the men doing it, this is a pivot point.

Verse 46 contains a stinging indictment by Paul and Barnabas against the Jewish leaders. In this verse, Luke records a massive missiological shift—a watershed moment in the Acts narrative. The gospel will advance to the Gentile world. Paul now becomes the apostle to the Gentiles. (Mohler Jr. 2019, 18)

The Jewish leadership responded with blasphemy, the Gentiles, great joy. Watching everyone leave, Satan suggested something to the remaining leadership and they took action.



Acts 13:50–52

“But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.” (NASB 2020)

Organized opposition for Paul and Barnabas is not anything new. They have already seen that back in Jerusalem. The decision was to force them to leave and not come back. But it is already too late, salvations are taking place, and the Church has been planted.

The Jewish leaders could not prevent the Gentiles from accepting the gospel, but they could make the place too hot to hold the missionaries. This they did by prejudicing the civic authorities of Pisidian Antioch against them. (Bruce 1988, 268)

Do not forget this tactic by the way as it is one in constant use against the work of the church today.

There have even been attempts to exclude, in some locations, churches from even being able to build or minister in a community. Fortunately, we still have laws in this nation to combat that, but it is something I have seen consistently for decades being used against the church.

It always seems there is an exclusion for those religious organizations who are already established and there, versus those works that are coming in with a new work. For example, the two brokers who informed us we could not have a church in a retail location. A completely wrong assertion.

In our nation today, in fact in the west, “there is a hostility toward Christians and Christianity at least as irrational as any anti-Semitism. In fact, recently in the United States overt hostility toward certain Christians has been far greater than overt hostility toward Jews.” (Yancey and Williamson, *So Many Christians, So Few Lions: Is There Christianphobia in the United States?* 2015, 12)

We see the reaction of Paul and Barnabas, nice to know, but we will keep going, and they did until forced to leave by governmental intervention or by violence.

Churches are making decisions today in relation to the pressures from the culture over those things we understand to be truth versus what the culture would want us to do. George Yancey discusses this further. “Christians might choose to agree with these individuals and try to make peace with them. After all, has not Jesus called us to be peacekeepers? But if we think deeply about it, we realize this is not a good option. It allows those outside or marginal to our Christian community to determine what we believe, implying that our Christian faith offers nothing unique to the larger society. Living in fear that we will experience disapproval from society cannot be the predominant Christian strategy. If Christ had given in to the demands of the larger society, he would not have been crucified. Many Christians endure jail or other punishments because they refuse to parrot the larger society’s message. They live their faith because they believe Christians have something special to offer others in society. We do not have to endure the physical punishment that some Christians face, but we still have to decide if we have something special to offer. If so, then we are going to disagree with those who do not like what we provide.” (Yancey, *Hostile Environment: Understanding and Responding to Anti-Christian Bias* 2015, 67)

Just as the example being provided to us by Paul and Barnabas.

The charge from Jesus is simple. Compromising the truth is not part of it, not even referenced in it. Wise compromise when the truth is not involved is good, worldly compromise, not so much.



We compromise all the time in marriage, family, business, and even politics. No one can have everything their way all the time. Many things in life can be compromised without violating any essential principle. Biblical submission—a willingness to yield to others, a lack of self-centeredness, and a concern with what others think—is a form of wise compromise. (Hitchcock and Kinley 2017, 67)

Worldly compromise though is where the culture wants us to go. They want us to compromise the truth of the scriptures.

To be accepting of and embrace certain lifestyles which the Bible calls sinful. “To seek to be friends with those who will not be the friends of Christ is to be a traitor to our Lord. Darkness and light can never be brought together by talk. Some things are not negotiable.” (Tozer and Bailey 1997, 188)

We can compromise on many things in life, and we are wise to do so, but we are not to be open minded when it comes to the gospel and its implications for daily life. (Hitchcock and Kinley 2017, 68-69)

Matthew 28:18–20

“Jesus came and told his disciples, **“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”**” (NLT)

Paul and Barnabas knew this and took it seriously. This was not open to compromise. They did not leave until a riot was threatened and the city booted them out. Paul would later remind Timothy of what took place.

2 Timothy 3:11

“You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra—but the Lord rescued me from all of it.” (NLT)

As they leave, they do something that Jesus referred to to be reserved for those who do not want to hear the truth.

Mark 6:11

“And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, **shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.**” (ESV)

Acts 13:51–52

“But they shook off the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.” (NASB 2020)

Ok, so what does shaking the dust off as a testimony mean.

The act is symbolic; how serious it is Matt. 10:15 states; and it means that the dust is left behind as a testimony or witness (Mark 6:11) that the kingdom had been brought near by the feet of these messengers whose dust was thus left behind (Luke 10:11). That dust will testify on the day of judgment that wicked obduracy drove the messengers away. (Lenski 1961, 555)

In other words, it is a way of saying, we warned you, you ignored us, hell is on you

But there is good news from what ministry they were able to achieve there in Antioch. Those new believers they left behind were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. In the Greek, the word



for being continuously filled is in the imperfect. This describes this condition as one that continued on indefinitely.

As followers of Jesus Christ, once the Holy Spirit enters, He never leaves. And to be filled with the Holy Spirit means we have indeed been enabled and empowered by the Spirit. Paul preached in the power of the Holy Spirit, and now there is a city full of those talking about Jesus who are also empowered with the same Spirit.

The missionary team leaves and heads to Iconium which is 85 to 90 miles away to the east and the eastern most part of Galatia. We have seen a pattern established that will be repeated again in the future.

The first place that Paul and Barnabas will go to preach is the local Synagogue. Yes, the Gentiles are responding, but they go to the Jews first.

This is not a once-and-for-all turning to the Gentiles as some seem to think; because as they move onto the next city, they again continue with the same basic pattern of going to the Jews first. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 18)

Acts 14:1–7

"In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a way that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brothers. Therefore they spent a long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be performed by their hands. But the people of the city were divided; and some sided with the Jews, while others, with the apostles. And when an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and the Jews with their rulers, to treat them abusively and to stone them, they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region; and there they continued to preach the gospel." (NASB 2020)

A fantastic initial positive response to the presentation of the gospel. As the text tells us, large numbers came to Christ. But, as in the last town, not all of the Jews believed. Here they use a tactic that is also still in use today. Organized religion claiming there is something wrong and counter cultural to what is going on and doing so to those outside the religion.

How do people stir up the masses today? The right news story should work, or rather, the right twisted story. First make sure that as the author of the story, "the slanted selection of sources shapes your beliefs. When you see the vast majority of people cited expressing anti-biblical views, you are being shaped to think that no one really supports biblical views. You are being demoralized. You are being manipulated. You are being made to feel as if you're standing alone, and if you're alone maybe it's because you're wrong and the vast opposing side is right." (West 2025, 226) But it is deception.

This is what the Jewish leaders were doing to Paul and Barnabas. They were stirring up the minds of the Gentiles. Organized religion was busy publicizing stories that would make those who are not religious at all, think that the missionary team were a bunch of maniacs. That what they were doing was hazardous, counter cultural and wrong headed.

The same thing we hear today coming from the more liberal denominations as they condemn us for being homophobic and racist because we insist on a Biblical standard and refuse to compromise the truth of God's word as they have. They will use words to inflame others who have no idea what we are teaching to think we are dangerous to all we come in contact with.



How did that go for the missionary team? This approach took some time because we read, they were there for some time speaking boldly and performing signs and wonders in the community.

Probably the “considerable time” meant weeks and perhaps months, as they made certain the church was strong enough for them to go on to the next town.” (Osborne 2019, 257) It seems they are beginning to pick up on the enemy and his attacks re not going away.

The signs and wonders most likely resulted in a positive public perception of their work, and for some of the unbelieving Jews, they would begin to wonder if this was a new age of the prophets. But in the end, the group stirring the pot managed to obtain a consensus.

This consensus included some of the rulers of Iconium and notice this, Barnabas and Paul are called apostles here by Doctor Luke.

As in the past, they were prepared for the persecution, but when they learned that there was to be a murder attempt through stoning, it was time to move on. We will later learn that they would even go as far as pursue the team out of town.

When the Word is preached it always produces a division. Division happened from Jesus’ and Paul’s ministries, and it happens when the gospel is preached today. When the Word of God comes into a dark area, whether a dark human heart or a darkened environment, it does what light always does. (Boice 1997, 251)

Here is the thing for all of us to remember in the 21st century, following Jesus comes at a cost. Rejecting self in favor of Jesus and what He wants for us. The benefit plan He has is out of this world.

Acts 14:8–18

“In Lystra a man was sitting whose feet were incapacitated. He had been disabled from his mother’s womb, and had never walked. This man was listening to Paul as he spoke. **Paul looked at him intently and saw that he had faith to be made well, and he said with a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet!” And the man leaped up and began to walk. When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have become like men and have come down to us!” And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, since he was the chief speaker. Moreover, 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. But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard about it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men, of the same nature as you, preaching the gospel to you, to turn from these useless things to a living God, who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND EVERYTHING THAT IS IN THEM. In past generations He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.” And even by saying these things, only with difficulty did they restrain the crowds from offering sacrifices to them.” (NASB 2020)**

Paul and Barnabas have moved on and are now in Lystra, a town which had been made into a Roman colony in 6 BC. Obviously, there is no Synagogue here in this town and the team is doing the typical Greek practice of public oratory. Paul looks at this man and the Holy Spirit shows him as a word of knowledge; he has the faith to be healed.

The phrase... should be rendered “faith necessary for the purpose of saving” (i.e., to be physically delivered, the common non-theological use of the term “salvation”). (Bock 2007, 475)



What we see is Paul's first public miracle here in Acts. The Holy Spirit has pointed this out to Paul, and we see that the man is indeed receptive to healing as he does exactly what Paul asks of him. And that's when the real fun begins. Those who are witnesses to this are Greek pagans and they have been worshipping other gods.

For the Lystrans, seeing the instantaneous cure performed on the lame man, concluded that they were being favored with a divine visitation. Local legend told of earlier occasions when the gods came down to them in the likeness of human beings—in particular, the two gods known to the Greeks as Zeus (father of gods and men) and Hermes (his son by Maia, and messenger of the gods). (Bruce 1988, 274)

Initially, Paul and Barnabas just continue on teaching, but then they notice something.

The local priest of Zeus shows up with oxen and garlands to sacrifice to who he thought, were the gods come to down to earth. That was not the case. Paul and Barnabas, when realizing the people thought they were Hermes and Zeus, tear their robes and begin to make sure the people understand in no uncertain terms they are not gods.

Paul uses this as an opportunity to proclaim the true living God. We do not see anyone saved in this event.

Acts 14:15–18

“and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men, of the same nature as you, preaching the gospel to you, to turn from these useless things to a living God, who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND EVERYTHING THAT IS IN THEM. In past generations He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.” **And even by saying these things, only with difficulty did they restrain the crowds from offering sacrifices to them.**” (NASB 2020)

Paul calls on the people who are there to sacrifice to him and Barnabas, that those things they normally worship, God made them.

Paul knew his audience and the Holy Spirit once again provides wisdom as he speaks. No God talk here. “Paul did not preach to these pagan worshippers the same way he preached to Jews or those acquainted with Judaism. He did not quote the Old Testament to them, but instead appealed to natural revelation, to the things that even a pagan could understand by looking at the world around them.” (Guzik 2013, Ac 14:14-18)

But even with all they said, it was difficult for them to stop the proceedings.

But they were followed. It took a few days, but those who had been chasing them down and wanted them dead from Iconium made it to Lystra. Over 100 miles they traveled, that is true hatred and reminds us that Satan has some highly dedicated people in his employment.

Acts 14:19–21

“But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking that he was dead. But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe. And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made a good number of disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch,” (NASB 2020)



Talk about fickle people. One day they want to sacrifice to you, the next, they want to sacrifice you. The traveling persecutors convince the people to stone Paul, so they do.

This was a lynch mob with rocks. Paul would later include this in his resume to Corinth.

2 Corinthians 11:25

“Three times I was beaten with rods. **Once I was stoned.** Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea,” (ESV)

He apparently lost consciousness and those who were throwing stones stopped thinking his was dead, so they drug him out of town.

Those believers who were there gathered around his body and he gets up and goes back into town.

Did he carry the bruises from this? We are not told. Did he die, apparently not. If you are going to run a lynch mob, you do need to understand when the one you are lynching is truly dead. The Lord provided an incompetent lynch mob.

The next day they go to Derbe and have an eventless time. And now it is time to return to Antioch, the starting point of the journey so they begin the process of retracing their steps and encouraging the new believers and making sure the churches have the necessary leadership.

Acts 14:21–28

“And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made a good number of disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, “It is through many tribulations that we must enter the kingdom of God.” When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia. When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been entrusted to the grace of God for the work that they had accomplished.** When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all the things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they spent a long time with the disciples.” (NASB 2020)

They returned to Iconium and to Antioch. And this time taught their way to the coast to include in Perga before boarding ship and returning home to end the first missionary journey.

On arrival they gathered the church and reported what God had done through them, literally ‘with them’, ‘in conjunction with them, as his instruments, his agents, his co-workers’. In particular, they reported the great innovation, how God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. (Stott 1994, 234)

The message they gave continues to be our message today.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13



"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."" (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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