

# Week 22

## The Church's 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey-Pt2

### The Courageous Journey

Chapter 14 describes the rest of the missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas in Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. When you read the details of their journey, there can be no doubt that these two men were courageous in their dedication to spread the gospel.

In Iconium, they preached in the synagogue (Paul always started there) and gained both Jewish and Gentile followers, but some Jews, (who did not believe) incited the rest of the Gentiles doubters to join them in stoning them. While we don't know if any stones were thrown at Paul and Barnabas this time, or if they were warned before the violence actually started, what we do know is that it was clear their lives were in danger. But danger would not stop their mission and they moved on to Lystra. However, it should be noted that God did mighty and wonderful signs through the hands of both Barnabas and Paul before they left. They were such wonderful signs that many believed in Jesus.

The apostles escaped to Lystra, where they healed a man, lame from birth. Such a miraculous thing caused a great stir among the people, and they were mistaken for gods. Despite their efforts to explain that they were only human, the Jews stirred up opposition against them, and Paul was stoned but miraculously survived. The apostles then traveled to Derbe, where they made many disciples before returning to strengthen the believers in the previous cities they visited.

In this chapter, we see the faithfulness of God to keep Barnabas and Paul from the many attempts upon their lives. The courage and perseverance of the two apostles despite persecution and suffering, was a hallmark of the early church, and a testimony to the power of the Gospel to transform lives. No doubt the challenges of evangelism in a pagan world, which included opposition from both Jewish and Gentile communities, highlight the importance of standing firm in the face of adversity.

The chapter also highlights the importance of preaching and teaching the Word of God, healing and demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit, and strengthening and encouraging new believers.

The Church today can learn many lessons from this chapter including the need for boldness in proclaiming the Gospel, trusting in God's protection and provision, and being willing to endure suffering and persecution for the sake of Christ. This chapter also emphasizes the importance of discipleship and community building in the growth and sustainability of the Church, as Paul and Barnabas were careful to revisit the places they had visited and set leaders in place. Finally, the

chapter serves as a reminder that the work of spreading the Gospel is ongoing and requires perseverance and commitment to the mission of making disciples of all nations. A mission that has never changed and must be embraced in all times and places, until Jesus returns.

#### IV. THE CHURCH ADVANCING TO THE END OF THE EARTH (1228)

##### A. THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (13, 14)

1. The Holy Spirit Set Paul and Barnabas Apart (13:1-3)
2. Cyprus and the Proconsul (13:4-12)
3. Pisidian Antioch: Paul's Sermon & the Reaction (13:13-52)
4. From Iconium to Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe (14:1-7)
5. Lystra: A Lame Man Healed & the Reaction (14:8-20a)
6. The Return to and Stay at Antioch (14:20b-28)

