

Week of Aug 23, 2020

Acts 14

Q: (vv.21-22) Paul encouraged the new believers in the area to “continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” We are saved by faith in Christ alone, by His grace. But as His follower, we can expect persecution. It helps weed out those who truly believe and those who merely say they believe. How have trials strengthened your faith and trust in Jesus? How can you share your journey and encourage others who may be struggling in their faith?

Q: (v.23) Christ-following “elders” were appointed (or voted on by believers) in the local churches Paul visited along the journey. This was not done carelessly, but orderly, through prayer and fasting, committing these men to the Lord. Why is it critical to be praying for the elders and leaders in your local church?

Q: (vv.24-28) Despite the hardships, what did Paul & Barnabas report about the journey? Why are God-stories so key to the growth and encouragement of the local church? What “God story” can you share with the church family this week, to encourage one another to keep growing in the faith, keep sharing Christ?!

PRAY: Lord help me see other people *not* as enemies, but as people you love and died for too. Give me courage *not to give up* and to keep sharing Christ with them, one step at a time. Help me know when to back off and when to pursue the conversation. Lead my by Your Holy Spirit and help me give You all the glory and praise, in the name and authority of Jesus, Amen!

In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas were sent out on their missionary journey by the local church in Antioch. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they overcame opposition and continued to boldly preach the Word of God, being a “light to the Gentiles.” Many believed and received Jesus as their Savior and Lord. The believers were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit!

Q: Describe a time when have you went through a tough season and wanted to give up. What kept you going during that tough time?

Q: 14:1-3) Paul & Barnabas spoke in Jewish synagogues where they could find God-fearing people open to the Gospel of Jesus. How did they respond to opposition? _____

Q: When talking about Christ with others, how do you respond when facing opposition?

Q: (vv.4-7) Even though God provided “signs and wonders” through the apostles (Paul & Barnabas), some gathered enough opposition and wanted to have them executed (stoned to death). How did they respond?

Q: How can you know when it’s time to walk away from a tense conversation or situation, rather than stay and fight your cause?

Q: (vv.8-13) An ancient legend in that area said that these Greek gods (Zeus & Hermes) once visited the area in human form, but were offended by the people and sent a flood. The locals were determined never to offend these “gods” again. What do we learn about these pagans when the One True God again performs a miracle through Paul?

Q: (vv.14-18) In contrast to the proud King Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:20-23) who accepted worship to himself as a god, how did Paul & Barnabas respond when the people wanted to worship them as gods?

Q: How we respond to praise reveals a lot about where we place our trust and where our heart stands before God. How well do you respond to praise? Do you say “thanks” and give God the credit and glory, or take the credit and glory upon yourself?

Q: (vv.15-17) the apostles were speaking to purely non-believers here. What did the apostles have to explain to pagans that they didn’t have to say to Jews and God-fearers?

Q: (vv.19-20) The crowds in Lystra who once adored Paul as a god, now turned against him and stoned him, and left him for dead. The disciples probably prayed for his recovery and God revived him. Rather than run away, Paul went right back into the very city where they tried to kill him! What motivated him to keep going, to keep sharing Christ, even in such hostile conditions?

*Timothy was from Lystra, and this no doubt, had an impact on his young life.

Q: What motivates you (or what should motivate us) to keep sharing Christ even when people seem to reject Him at the moment?
