

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## Lesson #13 -Perseverance through Struggle

Scripture Reading: Acts 14:18-20

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### Introduction:

1. Any goal in life worth accomplishing will always be accompanied by adversity.
2. There will always be struggles when preaching the gospel and striving to live the Christian life.
3. Today we glean some lessons from the missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas.

## I. ICONIUM

### A. EVENTS OF THE CITY

1. Paul and Barnabas began in the synagogue of the Jews -vs. 1, 2
  - a. Many of the Jews and Greeks believed at their teachings
  - b. The unbelieving Jews stirred up the people against them
2. Paul and Barnabas remained bold -vs. 3
  - a. The potential for converts kept them there for a while longer -Ref. 1Co 16:9
  - b. They proved their point with signs and wonders
3. The city was divided over the doctrine -vs. 5
  - a. Both the Gentiles and the Jews became violent against them
  - b. They plotted to abuse and stone them
  - c. Because of this, they fled to Lystra and Derbe

### B. APPLICATION FOR TODAY

1. When things are going good, remember the devil will seek to destroy it -1Pe 5:8
2. The hardened heart will not be persuaded by words or by miracles -vs. 3, 4
3. When rejection occurs, it is best to move on
  - a. Paul and Barnabas were about to be stoned and they departed.
  - b. Jesus taught lessons on rejection:
    - i. "Be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves" -Mt 10:16
    - ii. "Shake the dust off your feet" -Mt 10:14; Ac 14:51
    - iii. "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another" -Mt 10:23

## II. LYSTRA

### A. EVENTS OF THE CITY

1. The healing of the crippled man
  - a. This is very similar to the lame man healed in chapter three
  - b. This parallel reveals that Jesus can heal both physically and spiritually.
2. The people attempt to worship Paul and Barnabas
  - a. There is a legend of the gods (Zeus and Hermes) coming down in the flesh -(Roper, 516)
  - b. The people of this city did not want to make the same mistake found in the legend.
  - c. NOTE: The people were afraid not to worship them; Paul was afraid to be worshiped!
3. Paul is stoned and left for dead
  - a. The Jews came down from Antioch and Iconium -vs. 19
  - b. They stirred the crowd against Paul and Barnabas
4. The disciples gathered around Paul -vs. 20
  - a. Timothy was from this area -Ac 16:1, 2
  - b. Paul wrote to Timothy regarding his suffering -2Ti 3:10, 11

## B. APPLICATION FOR TODAY

1. We give all glory to God (i.e. we can not save anyone from their sins, but we can point them to the One who can!)
2. We never stop preaching the gospel -2Ti 1:7

### Conclusion:

1. We preach, teach, and live godly in this world, not because we have freedom, but because Christ has taught us to do so!
2. Note the words of Jesus, "...In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." -Jn 16:33b
3. Note also the words of Peter, "Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter." -1Peter 4:16