

Acts 14

Acts 14.1-7

V1 – Procedure of Paul and companions? 1. Enter the synagogue together (*Romans 1.16*), 2. If they were rejected, they would go to the Gentiles

V2 – Where was most (or all) of their opposition coming from? Not from the Romans, but from the Jews

V3 – Were they afraid to speak out? No!

V4 – What parable of Jesus applies to this subject? Parable of the sower
-How? 4 types of soil: hard, rocky, thorny, good soil (*Matt. 13.1-8*)

V5 – The plan of the Gentiles and the Jews? To kill Paul and Barnabas
-Lystra – 18 miles south of Iconium – a wild and desolate country

V6 – Where did Paul and his companions flee to? Cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe (and the surrounding area)

V7 - Does God allow us to flee persecution? Yes, as long as we take the gospel with us and preach it at the next place (which is what Paul and his companions did)

Acts 14.8-18

V8 – At Lystra, what was wrong with the man that they met? No strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, had never walked (about as hopeless as a case could be)
-What was the profession of Luke, the author of *Acts*? A doctor

V9 – Paul stared intently at the man and could see that he had faith that he could be made well

V10 – Why did Paul shout his message? So that everyone could see what was happening
-How did the crippled man respond? Leaped up and began to walk

V11 – Did Paul and Barnabas understand Lycaonian? No (*v 14*)
-Message? The gods have come down
-A theophany (the appearance of a god)

V12 – A review of the Greek and Roman gods (who supposedly lived on Mt. Olympus):

Zeus	Jupiter	kings of the gods, god of thunder, etc.
Aphrodite	Venus	love
Poseidon	Neptune	sea
Apollo	Apollo	sun
Hermes	Mercury	messenger of the gods
Ares	Mars	war
Artemis	Diana	hunting

Minerva Athena wisdom and learning

-**What pagan god did they think Barnabas was?** Zeus (Jupiter, king of the gods)

-**And Paul?** Hermes (Mercury), messenger of the gods

V 13 – What did the priest of Zeus do? Make preparations for a sacrifice in honor of Paul and Barnabas

V 14 – Reaction of Paul and Barnabas? They rejected the priest's plans for them

-Remember Herod and the worms that ate him because of his blasphemy

-**How is Paul's behavior different from Herod's?** What a contrast!

-**How did Paul describe their pagan religion?** "Vain" (worthless)

V 15 – Notice "the Living" God – the one who made heaven and earth

-Paul said that he and Barnabas were of the same human nature as their listeners were

-They did not refer to themselves as "Saints" that had been given that title by a denominational church

V 16 – God let the nations go their own way in the past (Gentile nations – See *Romans 2.14-16* and the "law of the heart")

V 17 – Should these people have known God? Yes

-**How?** By the rain, the seasons, their food, etc. – **Read Romans 1.18-20**

V 18 – The result? It was still all Paul could do to keep them from offering sacrifices to them as pagan gods

Acts 14.19-23

V 19 – Who else had been stoned? Stephen

-**What did they do to Paul?** Stoned him and dragged him outside the city and believed that he was dead

V 20 – Paul recovered and went on to the next city

V 21 – This shows the courage of these men

-We also see their procedure for establishing congregations

-**What was it?** They were constantly revisiting them and encouraging them

V 22 – Any tribulation today? In some countries, it is illegal to convert a person to Jesus Christ

-In other countries, meetings have to be held in secret

-We should not be so reckless as to say that it would never happen in our country

V 23 – How did they insure the future of these congregations? They appointed elders at these churches

-It is very interesting that these congregations had only been in existence for two years at the most

-But they had men who met the qualifications and were appointed

-Today congregations go for decades without elders, as if the men have to be perfect to hold that position

- It is shameful that at many of these congregations, men at the monthly men's business meeting know that they will lose power if elders are appointed (because they will no longer have a vote)
- Therefore, whenever someone proposes appointing elders, the cry is: "But no-one here is qualified"
- The truth is that men have to meet all of the qualifications to a reasonable degree – not to a perfect degree!
- God's plan for church organization is better than our plan for church organization, and his plan is that elders should be appointed at the earliest possible moment
- Where are these qualifications found?** *1 Timothy 3* and *Titus 1*

Acts 14.24-28

V 24 – They went through two more cities on their journey

V 25 – They preached the gospel at the city of Perga and went down to Attalia

V 26 – They sailed back to Antioch of Syria

-**Why did they go back there?** To make a report on their First Missionary Journey

V 27 – A report to the church at Antioch – **Why?** Because that congregation had sent them out on this missionary journey

-**In their report, was their emphasis on themselves or God?** God

-Any congregation that oversees and supports a mission work needs to get regular reports from the workers (at least once a year in person, if at all possible), plus written reports more frequently than that

-One "missionary" that this writer is familiar with told the elders overseeing his work that his signature on their checks to him was his thank-you! That meant that he was still in the mission field

-He should have had his support removed immediately, but the elders did not take that action

V 28 – **Why did they spend "a long time" with the Christians at Antioch?** To continue to strengthen that congregation

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