

Study Guide for May 8th, 2005. Acts 14:1-28: Advancing through Hardships.

Introduction:

I. Iconium: Bold Speech and Signs. (Acts 14:1-7)

- A. Where do Paul & Barnabus begin to preach? What was the effect?
- B. How does Luke describe the preaching? How did God confirm their message?
- C. How do Paul & Barnabus respond when they discover a plot to mistreat them?
- D. Jesus said, "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd snakes and as innocent as doves." (Mt. 10:16) How might that warning be applied today in light of hostile responses to Christian missionaries in some places?
- E. The city of Iconium was different after Paul and Barnabus spent time there. What evidence should we expect today in towns where the gospel is preached? Why do you think we see less evidence than that which we read about in Iconium?

II. Lystra: A Cripple Healed: Confusion then Contempt. (Acts 14:8-20)

- A. How does the healing reported here (Acts 14:8-10) compare with the one recorded in earlier (Acts 3:1-10)? How are they similar and / or different?
- B. How does the crowd explain the miracle? What is their reaction?
- C. How do Paul and Barnabus react to the priest's offer?
- D. Evaluate Paul's speech (vs. 15-18). What does Paul's approach here in Lystra teach us about relating the gospel to those who have no knowledge of the Bible?
- E. How do you explain the crowd's attitude change? (see Luke. 19:37-40, 23:23)
- F. Reflect on Paul's words in II Cor. 4:7-12. What encouragement do you find?

III. Return and Report to Antioch. (Acts 14:21-28)

- A. As Paul & Barnabus return to the new churches, what message do they deliver?
- B. How are elders appointed for these young churches (see also I Tim. 3:1-7)
- C. What stands out in the report Paul & Barnabus give to the church in Antioch?

Paul's first missionary trip encompassed about two years. What are some lessons for us?

