

Ministry in Southern Galatia

1. God used the apostle Paul to heal a man who was lame from birth. Some people claim that God still performs these kinds of miraculous “signs and wonders” in the same way today.
 - a) According to Acts 14:3b, why did God grant these signs?
 - b) What reason did Mark give for these signs (Mk. 16:20)?
 - c) What does Paul call these signs and wonders in II Corinthians 12:12?
 - d) Read John 3:2; how did Nicodemus interpret the “signs” Jesus did?
 - e) Read John 7:31; how did the Jews interpret Jesus’ “signs”?
 - f) Read Acts 2:22; what reason did Peter give for Jesus’ performing miracles, signs and wonders?
 - a) Does it appear from Scripture that “miracles, signs, & wonders” are the normal Christian experience?

2. Read Acts 14:18-19.
 - a) What was the attitude of “the multitudes” in verse 18?
 - b) What was their attitude in verse 19?
 - c) What does this indicate about people?

3. You have heard the saying, “Trouble just seems to follow me.” The apostle Paul must have felt that way when “Jews from Antioch and Iconium ... persuaded the multitude,” and they stoned him.
 - a) What was his reaction to being stone (v.20)
 - b) Lystra was 60 miles from Derbe; how long did Paul take to recover before this arduous walk?
 - c) Did this persecution stop the mission (v.21)?
 - d) What can we learn from this account?

4. Read the apostle’s quote in verse 22b.
 - a) What do you think this quote means?
 - b) What kind of tribulations could we face today?
 - c) Do you think North American Christians are “soft”?
 - d) What specific steps can you take this week to be a bolder witness for Christ?

5. Some Christians become cynical when they see how fickle people can be. Rather than looking to Jesus for strength, they focus upon the weaknesses of men for whom Christ died. When this happens, they often withdraw or limit their future fellowship with others to casual friendships. As faithful servants of God, Barnabas and Paul respond to the severe treatment they had received from the people of Lystra by simply continuing to do the work that God called them to do (v. 20-22). The two missionaries returned to Antioch, strengthening the believers as they went (v. 21-26). What did they do when they finally returned to the church (v. 27, 28)?

6. The ministry pictured in chapters 13 and 14 is all-encompassing. Paul and Barnabas did not simply preach sermons, they poured out their lives so that others might know Christ and grow in Him.
 - a) What lessons are here for you?
 - b) Are you involved in personal ministry?
 - c) Is there anything stopping you from coming alongside other people and helping them to grow spiritually?

¹Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. ²But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. ³Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

⁴But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. ⁵And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region. ⁶And they were preaching the gospel there.

⁷And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother’s womb, who had never walked. ⁸This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, ⁹said with a loud voice, “Stand up straight on your feet!” And he leaped and walked. ¹⁰Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” ¹¹And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹²Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.

¹³But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out ¹⁴and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, ¹⁵who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁶Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” ¹⁷And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

¹⁸Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. ¹⁹However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

²⁰And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²¹strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

²²So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. ²³And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. ²⁴Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁵From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

Read: Acts 15

Monday

v. 1 — Certain men from Judea taught that, "unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." Is there anything wrong with their statement? What had Paul and Barnabas been preaching (Acts 13:38,39)? See also Peter's statement in Acts 10:34 and 35.

Tuesday

v. 1,2 — A vital doctrine was under attack; theologians designate this doctrine "Soteriology" or the doctrine of salvation. Can a church be a "healthy church" if it gets salvation wrong? How did Paul and Barnabas react to the teaching (v. 2)? What solution did the church come up with (v. 2)?

Wednesday

v. 1-5 — Salvation based upon good works is generally referred to as "legalism." The apostle Paul dealt with this issue and the same type of people (Judaizers) in his epistles to the Romans, Philippians, Colossians and Galatians. In God's perfect timing, Paul and Barnabas were present at Antioch when this false teaching arose (Acts 14:27,28). Who do you think the believers in Antioch would tend to believe: the faithful missionaries Paul and Barnabas (v. 25,26), or "certain men" from Judea (v. 1)? Praise God for the wise and godly men He has used down through the ages to protect us from false teachers.

Thursday

v. 6-11 — Why was Peter the most qualified to address the issue of Gentile believers (v. 7)? Did God require the first Gentile believers to be circumcised before salvation (v. 8)? What did God do instead (v. 9)? Does God have a different method of salvation for Jews and Gentiles (v. 11)? Can anyone be saved by adding good works to God's grace?

Friday

v. 12-31 — Why do you think Paul and Barnabas mentioned, "how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them"? What did James use to base his argument and decision on (v. 15)? Who ultimately made the decision on the matter (v. 22)? Who did the church send back to Antioch (v. 22)? This issue was critical to the life of the church, and the church took it seriously. They did not make a hasty decision but "tested the spirits" (John 4:1).

Saturday

v. 32-41 — The church at Antioch benefited from the wisdom and leadership of the Jerusalem church. What other benefits did they reap (v. 32-35)? Paul and Barnabas had a burden for missionary work and God was about to send them on another journey, yet a sharp contention would endanger the mission. Do you think Paul or Barnabas was right? Do you think that, in light of eternity, it really matters? We may never know who was right but we do know that God is faithful and He would still use the missionaries (v. 41).
