

## Paul's First Missionary Journey Part III

### *Taking the Gospel to Southern Galatia*

(Acts 14:1-28)

#### Introduction:

1. The missionary journey continues in the region of “**Southern Galatia**” where Paul and Barnabas will visit three more cities (See Map of Paul's First Missionary Journey) before they complete their first tour of duty:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
2. Although Paul will also visit the region of “Northern Galatia” on his second missionary journey; it is believed, that it is this group of believers located in these cities of southern Galatia, are the recipients of the Epistle to the Galatians.
  - One suggestion is that Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians when he returned to Antioch of Syria after completing this first journey and sometime prior to the meeting of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). The suggested date for writing this letter is 48 A.D.
  - Another suggestion is that Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians sometime during his third missionary journey which would make the date around 55-57 AD.
3. Our lesson picks up from Paul and Barnabas leaving Antioch of Pisidia due to severe opposition from the Jews and now heading to Iconium.

## Taking the Gospel to Iconium (Acts 14:1-6)

1. A little background on the city of Iconium:

- It is located about \_\_\_\_\_ miles southeast of Antioch of Pisidia
- While once controlled by the Roman Empire it was conquered by the Ottoman Turks and now a part of the country of Turkey.
- Its modern name is **Konya** and is on the western edge of what is referred to as the great Anatolian Plateau.



View looking west from Konya towards the twin conical peaks of Mt. Philip (left, south) and Mt. Thecla (right, north). The road from Iconium to Pisidian Antioch – 100 mi. [165 km.] distant – heads off in this westerly direction.



View looking south over the modern city of Konya (population about 900,000). The green trees on the left horizon mark the rise where the heart of the ancient city of Iconium was located. The site has not been excavated

- During the time that Paul and Barnabas visited Iconium; it was a bit of a cultural “melting pot”. The city consisted of native **Phrygians, Greeks and Jews** from the Seleucid period, and those **Romans** who came to colonize the area.

2. Paul and Barnabas enter the synagogue at Iconium (Acts 14:1-2)
  - We are told that a large number (both Jews and Greeks) of people in the synagogue believed. (Acts 14:1)
    - 1) As we have discussed before; Paul would typically enter the synagogue first out of respect, concern, and opportunity - for this is where he would often find people already interested in the things of the Lord.
    - 2) Why were their Greeks in the Jewish synagogue?
  - We are also told of another group who did not believe (Acts 14:2)
    - 1) How did they respond to the message of the Gospel?
    - 2) Why did they respond this way?
3. If there was opposition to the preaching of the Gospel; why did Paul and Barnabas spend a “long time” there? (Acts 14:3)
4. The preaching of the Gospel in Iconium produced pretty much the same results as what occurred in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 14:4-6)
  - Some \_\_\_\_\_ the message of the apostles. How did this manifest itself?
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5. Just a side note; the use of the word “**apostle**” is intended to also include Barnabas – it does not identify him as one of the “12” but its meaning is to be understood as “**messenger**” or “**one who is sent**” to deliver a message.
6. Another side note; at some point (perhaps even on this visit) Paul will have an impact on one noticeable resident of Iconium, and his name is \_\_\_\_\_. (See II Timothy 1:16-18, 4:19)

### **Taking the Gospel to Lystra & Derbe (Acts 14:7-20)**

1. A little background information on Lystra & Derbe:
  - Here are some modern day pictures



View looking west over the top of Lystra at the 7,500 ft. [2300 m.] high mountains of the Erenler Dagi that block routes from proceeding due west from Lystra. Indeed traffic was diverted north to Iconium before it headed west through a pass in these mountains.



View looking east towards Derbe — about 60 mi. [100 km.] distant (as the crow flies). Just left (north) of center on the horizon is a low hill is visible in the haze. [Derbe](#) is located a few miles beyond this hill.



View from the top of Derbe looking west. The mountain in the distance is Kara Dag (west northwest of Derbe). Lystra is about 60 miles [100 km.] northwest of Derbe - a walk of two or three days.

- Lystra & Derbe were both cities in the region known as Lycaonia
  - 1) Lystra was about 18 miles east of Iconium and also located in the Roman province of Galatia
  - 2) Lystra was the probable home of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 16:1, II Timothy 1:5)

2. Paul and Barnabas continue to do the same thing which was to \_\_\_\_\_ the Gospel although there apparently was no synagogue there. More than likely they were preaching out in the open. (Acts 14:7)
3. The next thing that Luke records is an encounter that Paul has with a \_\_\_\_\_ man while Paul is preaching. (Acts 14:8-10)
  - We are told of his condition and it was pretty serious – he had never walked in his life!
  - This will be the third time where a crippled person was healed in the Book of Acts:
    - 1) The crippled man in Acts 3:1-10
    - 2) The paralytic man (Aeneas) in Acts 9:33-35
    - 3) Now this significantly handicapped man here in Acts 14:8-10
  - This healing (initiated by Paul) closely resembles the manner in which the crippled man in Acts 3 was healed.
    - 1) Both were lame from \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2) Both Peter and Paul gazed (looked) at the one who was to be healed.
    - 3) Both men responded \_\_\_\_\_ by being able to walk.
  - What would be the significance to the healing performed by Paul being similar to the healing performed by Peter?

4. Take note as to how the people responded to the healing of the crippled man. (Acts 14:11-20)
  - The Gentile (pagan) response (Acts 14:11-13)
    - 1) These people were steeped in pagan ritual, idol worship, and worshipping all sorts of false gods.
    - 2) How did they evidence their lack of knowledge of the One True God? Who did they think Paul and Barnabas were and how did they respond towards them? (Acts 14:11-13)
  - The response of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14-18)
    - 1) Once Paul and Barnabas realized what was happening, they tore their clothes (which at that time universally symbolized their dissatisfaction) and then began to tell them what they were doing was wrong.
    - 2) What does Paul tell them that shows true humility? Where did he learn this from?
    - 3) Note the contrast in this message that Paul declares to these heathen (Acts 14:15-16) and the message that he proclaimed to the Jews at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:16-41). What notable differences existed between these two groups (Jews and Gentiles) especially as it relates to the One True God?

- 4) Does this lack of knowledge excuse the heathen? (Acts 14:17, Romans 1:18-21ff)
- 5) Even after Paul tells them not to worship them, the people still want to offer sacrifices to them. This evidences the tremendous need for further training and discipleship which is shown through the various epistles written by Paul to those who were not raised with the true knowledge of God.
- 6) This also serves as a good reminder to us as to our responsibility to train and disciple those who come to Christ and know so very little about Him!

- The Jewish response

- 1) Take note of the loving response of the Jews who came from Antioch and Iconium. What was their reaction to Paul's message? (Acts 14:19)
- 2) Once again, some Jews proved themselves to be the enemies of the Gospel and turned the crowd against Paul. They had him stoned (A Jewish punishment for blasphemy), dragged him out of the city and left him for dead.
- 3) There are some who conclude Paul "literally died" and then was restored to life but it is probably best to interpret this as him going into a severe unconscious state and then awakening later. (See II Cor. 11:25, II Tim. 3:11)
- 4) After awakening he does return to Lystra and no additional harm comes to Paul. (Acts 14:20a)

5. A brief ministry in Derbe (Acts 14:20-21)
- This was the furthest east that Paul went on his first missionary journey.
  - There is no recorded opposition from anyone in this city
  - There were numerous converts to Christ (Acts 14:21, Acts 20:4)

### **The Return to the Sending Church – Antioch of Syria (Acts 14:21-28)**

1. Paul and Barnabas will retrace their steps through Asia Minor with several purposes in mind:
- They \_\_\_\_\_ the souls of the disciples; which means they taught them the Word of God. (Acts 14:22)
  - They \_\_\_\_\_ the believers in the faith; which means they exhorted them to put into practice those things which the apostles taught, them as well as to \_\_\_\_\_, even in adversity. These are things that Paul will later write about in his Epistle to the churches in Galatia. (Acts 14:22)
  - They appointed \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of adding structure and accountability (Acts 14:23). These were not novices (I Timothy 3:6) but probably were believing Jews who may have already been elders in the synagogue.
  - They \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with them
  - They \_\_\_\_\_ them to the Lord as a vital part of the Body of Christ.
2. They also passed back through the provinces of Pisidia and Pamphylia with no notable opposition or recorded events.



3. They did make a stop in Perga to preach the Gospel (Acts 14:25)
- If you recall back in Acts 13:13-14; they did not preach then due to what most conclude was Paul's desire to head further inland because of his bout with malaria.
  - This was also the same time that Mark had left them which may have been a factor in their decision to move further inland.
  - Whatever the reason for not preaching in Perga the first time was taken care of this time by Paul and Barnabas.
4. They return to Antioch of Syria to provide a full report of their first missionary journey (Acts 14:27-28):
- They informed the people that a “**door of faith**” has been opened to the Gentiles.
  - They spent a long time with the disciples (Acts 14:28)
    - 1) During this time Paul may have wrote Galatians
    - 2) They probably briefed them on events of their journey
  - What exactly was accomplished on this first missionary journey?
    - 1) They covered some 700 miles by land, and 500 miles by sea in 1-2 years.
    - 2) Many people embraced Christ by faith and they were discipled. Churches were also established.
    - 3) The most significant accomplishment was the barrier that separated the Jew and the Gentile was demolished and they were freely embracing Christ (Ephesians 2:14-16).  
**This will be tested at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) and the main thrust of our next lesson....stay tuned.**