

- Here in Acts 14 we find the completion of Paul's first missionary journey.
- We really only met Paul a few chapters ago Ch 9 - Ch 14 (5 wks)
  - ◇ So it seems like Saul was converted only a month ago.
  - ◇ Often we look at characters in the bible and glorify them.
    - Give Paul a month and he is preaching to the world.
  - ◇ Saint Paul, the Apostle. THE Great Evangelist to the Gentiles
- Background - But actually quite a bit of time has gone by here.
  - And these are just regular guys, yes like you and me. Just doing the works the Lord laid out for them.
  - ◇ [Acts 9:23, Gal 1:17] Damascus to Arabia – 3 Yrs (after his teaching there)
  - ◇ [Acts 9:29, Gal 1:21] Tarsus - 10 to 14 Yrs (after his less successful teaching in Jerusalem)
    - So somewhere close to 15 years have gone by.
    - Paul didn't just come out of the shoots running the spiritual marathon.
    - God had to work on him for a while.
    - I so wish God would have given us some stories from those days of refining Paul.
    - My bet is the God was bringing him in to an understanding of submission.
  - ◇ [Acts 11:25] Barnabas retrieves Paul from Tarsus - 1Yr in Antioch.
    - Why? --
    - I think a large part why is in the nature of Barnabas.
    - We often over look Barnabas but he was a man with a great Godly gift.
- Barnabas
  - ◇ Probably saved at Pentecost or one of Peters teachings shortly after.
  - ◇ We are introduced to him in Acts 4, “So Joseph, a Levite who was a native of Cyprus, called by the apostles Barnabas (which is translated "son of encouragement"), sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and placed it at the apostles' feet.”
  - ◇ We then see him in Acts 9 as Paul's only friend in Jerusalem, “But Barnabas took Saul, brought him to the apostles” when Saul presents himself to the apostles for the first time after his conversion.
  - ◇ Then Barnabas is sent to Antioch- Syria to see what is up.
    - Let me read this account out of Acts 11.

**Act 11:20-22** But there were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene among them who came to Antioch and began to speak to the Greeks too, proclaiming the good news of the Lord Jesus. The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. A report about them came to the attention of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

- ◇ Why send Barnabas? Because he is the encourager. God has gifted him with a great love for people and Faith in the Lord.
- ◇ Barnabas knew of Paul's enthusiasm and probably recognized the great ability that Paul had in understanding culture, specifically the Hellenist culture (prevalent in Antioch) as Paul was well trained in Hellenism due to being trained by Gamaliel.
- ◇ So Barnabas retrieves Paul from Tarsus in Acts 11 and they get the missional calling.

Not to steal material from Ben next week, but I would like to complete the picture on Barnabas.

- ◇ Stands by Paul's side in major debates in Jerusalem...
- ◇ After a disagreement with Saul to bring John Mark on the second missionary journey. Paul chooses to bring Silas instead and they part ways.
  - We know they mend their relationship because of 1 Tim 4:11
- ◇ Mark and Barnabas returns to Cyprus his home and nurtures the ministry there.
  - And in the words of Vernon McGee, "At this point Barnabas sails off the pages of the Scriptures."
  - Tradition tells us that Cyprus built a great ministry that spread into North Africa.
- ◇ Just regular guys. But they surrendered themselves and are in service to the Lord .
  - Sometimes they hold grudges, their pride gets in the way, they get in disagreements.
  - Just like the rest of us.
  - But God will do great things through you if you let Jesus lead.



Such as our focus here today, which is the First missionary journey with P. & B.

- ◇ If you recall from last week in Antioch-Syria;
- ◇ "...the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'." [Acts13:1]
- ◇ Then later on in the chapter Paul reveals to us in Antioch-Pisidia (The other Antioch in Galatia) For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have appointed you to be a light for the *Gentiles, to bring salvation to the ends of the earth.*' " [Act 13:47]
- ◇ And thus their Mission is launched.
  - They sail to Cyprus and bring the Proconsul to the Lord after magician was blinded.
  - They sail from there to Perga and then up to Antioch - Pisidia
- Antioch – Syria/Pisidia, Galatia
  - ◇ Seleucus, an officer in Alexander the greats army, came to power out of the collapse of Alexandrian Greek empire.
  - ◇ Seleucus's father Antiochus began a campaign into the region of Galatia. Said to owe the victory to 16 elephants.

- ◇ Seleucus, son of Antiochus, continued the campaign all the way to Syria where he founded the city for military strategic reasons in 300 BC by Seleucus. Named it after his father Antiochus.
- ◇ Seleucus founded 16 cities named Antioch after his father.
- ◇ Antioch – Syria, very possibly funded the trip and was the starting/ending point for all Paul's missional journeys
- ◇ Antioch – (Pisidia), Iconium, Lystra, Derbe; in the region of Galatia
  - Antioch - Pisidia, Galatia
    - ◇ Standard practice of teaching at the synagogue
    - ◇ Draws entire city – They rejoice
    - ◇ Jews get the high ranking to kick them out of the city

⊗ So let us read of the conclusion to this famous trip

Acts 14:1-6

- [Acts 14:2] Poisoned their minds. What a graphic expression
  - ◇ It is so applicable today, the poison that is injected into the public under the banner of truth.
  - ◇ Let me use a graphic analogy of the poison. Drugs can give you some pretty remarkable feelings, but really they are poison.
  - ◇ Even thought that may have been a killer high the truth is brain damage.
  - ◇ The Jews inject poison into the crowd at Iconium, they it seemed truth the truth is death.

But...

Acts 14:7-13

- Worship of Paul and Barnabas
- Hermes – The winged Messenger of the Gods, thus Paul being the speaker.
- Zeus - Was Hermes father...What does that say about Barnabas.
  - ◇ I totally see this as the scene from Apocalypse now...Anyone? Anyone?
  - ◇ All long to Worship – It is what we were made to do. It is our ultimate purpose.
- Worship of others
  - ◇ Our culture and the unmitigated worship of the famous and of wealth.
  - ◇ We even have shows, American \_\_\_\_? Idol! We don't' even hide the fact.
    - Good thing I didn't live in the early 60s' (Beatlemania and all)
  - ◇ In us seeking Worship, it is as Satan fueling our pride
- That is why it is good having friends for accountability. Not that I am saying Paul would have become Marlon Brando, but much easier to stay focused on the Lord when you have a some one of of like mind seeking the Lord along with your.

## Acts 14:14

- “They tore their cloths” – middle eastern people are so emotional.
  - ◇ This expression goes all the way back to Gen.
  - ◇ One would tear their upon hearing of one’s death.
  - ◇ It is a physical – emotional sign of the soul shedding its outer garments.
  - ◇ It grew to express the broken heart of the mourner, torn cloth over the breast...

## Acts 14:15-18

- Their response of course is to teach the truth.
- Why sometimes Luke records Paul’s speech and sometimes not (remember scroll length).
  - ◇ Paul’s pattern – synagogue, get followers, gentiles
  - ◇ Lystra had no synagogue, showing less than 10 Jews.
  - ◇ So they were teaching in the city center.
  - ◇ And you notice that most of Paul's teaching up till now have been rooted in the truth of the Torah and the prophecies of Christ shown in the prophets...but here
- Speech founded on nature – Lystra' big export was corn
  - ◇ Ps 19
  - ◇ You can really see where Paul got the material to write Rom 1:20

⊗ With Paul’s great popularity they probably were quite taken by his speech I am sure...let us read...

## Acts 14:19-20

- Stoning of Paul
  - ◇ Notice how quickly the pagan turns, what is his certainty. At one moment ready to worship and the next destroy the same object of worship.
  - ◇ This actually fits quite well with today’s post modernist concepts.
    - When one has no concept of a truth and especially truth absolute.
    - Truth is relative to each individual, now what truth is that! It is not it is opinion
    - Subject to each whim, each emotion, each pleasure, each anger...need I go on.
    - This post modernist philosophy has quietly seeped up the streams of love and compassion turn it to a polluted and river of empathy.
    - And it is nothing less than satanic.
  - ◇ And tell me of the value of popularity – there is no truth in mob mentality.
  - ◇ But Paul gets up, by miraculous means, and returns to the city.
    - Some make claim that he sustained injuries that were with him the rest of his life.
      - ◇ The thorn in his side ref. 2 Cor 12

- But if that was the case or not, it was no less than miraculous.
  - ◇ Even if he wasn't dead and God raised him  
(these gentiles weren't quite as good at stoning as the Jews)
  - ◇ Then he would at least been beaten to unconsciousness by rocks.
  - ◇ There has to be a concussion or at the minimum.
  - ◇ And he gets up and reenters the city and continues his mission.
- Peace
  - ◇ What was he thinking going back into the town...I don't know, but I can tell you this.
  - ◇ He had peace. Now it doesn't look like peace. Being beat in the head with a rock certainly is not what most would call peace.
  - ◇ But in light of what Jesus said in Jn 14
  - ◇ Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be distressed or lacking in courage...." [Jn 14:27]
  - ◇ You have to ask, what is peace truly.
    - It is not of this world and you are gonna need courage
    - Is it belief in Christ that gives us peace? Yes.
  - ◇ But may I examine belief; for Satan believes in the existence of Christ, so it must be more than that.
  - ◇ It is belief, belief that he is king and savior and we his servants. A great master he is, such that he adopts us prideful disobedient slaves into his own family.
  - ◇ It is in our surrender that we are offered peace. He is king and may do as he wishes.
    - Belief partnered with action
      1. Our surrender, not just knowledge.
      2. [Jas 2:26] "... also faith without works is dead."
    - It is not that works may save you but that in true surrender to the Lord we are his servants and He has work for us.
    - If I were to claim myself a Christian and spend my days in selfish matters paying no heed to His calling; I would put my salvation in question.
      1. Don't go and create something to do to prove your salvation though.
      2. Go to the Lord and pray, what would you have me do Lord, I surrender myself.
  - ◇ It is In this attitude, we see Paul get up and return to Lystra.
- Is this peace impenetrable? Once offered and we rest for all our days? NO.
  - ◇ There is a thief. As I give way to the original sin that is rooted in my core.
  - ◇ My pride congers up anger frustration even fear. And the Lords peace is robbed.

- ◇ We will actually see next week where I believe Paul allows his peace to be robbed.
- ◇ But don't fear God will use all things for the good of those who love him [Rom 8:28]
- ◇ Just return to him in humility and all is well.
  - Illustration – Stress does not affect me very much
    - ◇ Stress at work, list of phone calls, things to prepare that I have procrastinated, GU BBall game. – looking at the smokers...longing for a vice to release stress.
    - ◇ Looked up at the sun and saw the Glory of God.
    - ◇ My lack coming to him and surrendering as his servant...just too busy.
    - ◇ My pride of deserving anything...I am so spoiled.
    - ◇ My arrogance that it is I people seek for advice and counsel...It is only through Lord that I might even muster any wisdom at all....and it is my Job to give myself up and listen to Him, and obey Him.
    - ◇ Then humility returns, then peace returns.
  - ◇ Even in the midst of being beaten to death...all is well. The King will do good
- If you haven't noticed there is a Theme of persevering in faith.

⊗ The perseverance of Paul and Barnabas leads them back through all the towns they have just been run out of.

#### Acts 14:21-28

- They return to the cities and established churches. They encouraged and appointed elders.
  - ◇ Faster to go straight to Antioch - Syria on foot (closer)
  - ◇ On return writes letter to Galatians, before 2nd missionary journey
- Success through trials
  - ◇ Acts 16:1, 2 Tim 3:10 – Timothy is saved from the 1st missionary journey.
  - ◇ Listen to what Paul wrote to Timothy
  - ◇ And hear it as it is to you.

|2Ti 3:10-16

|2Ti 4:1-2