

The Book of Acts

GROUP CURRICULUM

SERMON ENCOURAGEMENT WITHIN TRIBULATION (ACTS 14: 1-28)

DATE MARCH 29, 2020

¹ Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. ² But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ³ So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ⁴ But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. ⁵ When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, ⁶ they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, ⁷ and there they continued to preach the gospel.

⁸ Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. ⁹ He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, ¹⁰ said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking. ¹¹ And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" ¹² Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. ¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, ¹⁵ "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. ¹⁶ In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷ Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." ¹⁸ Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.

¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ²⁰ But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹ When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. ²³ And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵ And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia, ²⁶ and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. ²⁷ And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ And they remained no little time with the disciples. (ESV)

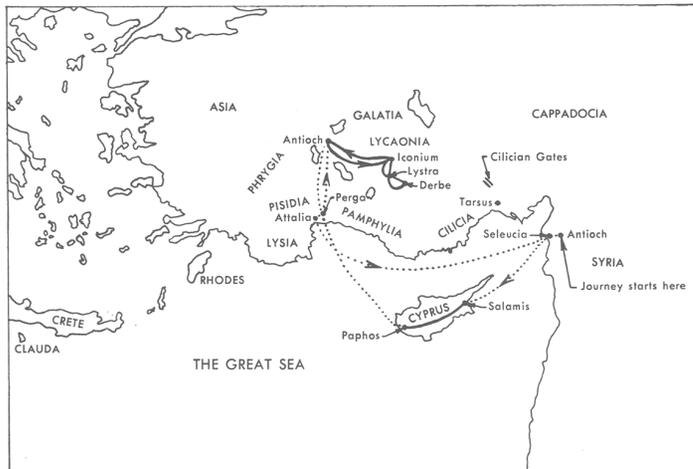
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1. Summarize the main point of this weekend's message in one clear sentence.
2. Begin your time together with prayers of thanksgiving for what God has done in your life specifically this week.
3. The Book of Acts covers over 30 years of church history with events taking place across three continents. To get a sense of the scope of this week's passage highlight or underline every city or location mentioned.



4. How was the miracle of healing that occurred at Lystra (14:8-10) similar to one that occurred in Acts 3:1-10? Why was it significant to say the man was lame from birth?
5. What three things did Paul and Barnabas do when they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch (14:21-23)? How can you specifically do likewise this week? Can you think of a person or persons that you could serve in this same way?

6. Take some time to meditate upon and pray over three verses Robbie mentioned this weekend. Which verses particularly stand out to you? How do these truths reshape how you are facing difficulty?

For the fearful...

If God is for us, who can be against us? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:31, 37-39)

For the person suffering with uncertainty...

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

For the person starving for security...

Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:54-55)

7. Read **John 16:33**. Consider the truth Robbie reminded us of this week: "Tribulation is not an option for the Christian life, it's a guarantee." Can you think of reasons why God would bring tribulation into our lives? Where possible provide Scripture to back up your answers.
8. How have the events of these past few weeks clarified your perspective on the Lord? Write down the name of a person or persons whom you can pray that they too would see the Lord more clearly.
9. Once Paul and Barnabas returned to the church at Antioch in Syria, what did they do (14:26-28)? How important is this step for the church? Consider closing your time together as a group sharing some of what God has done in your lives this week in this way.