

CP - 4/16/23

Acts 14:1–7: Faithfulness and Boldness in Iconium

The church doesn't have a mission; the mission has a church! God invites us to join Him!

SERMON OUTLINE

1. Faithfulness in Iconium (Acts 14:1)

*Paul and Barnabas went to the next major city.

- Paul & Barnabas kicked out of Antioch; they moved on.
- Iconium - 90 miles southeast of Antioch of Pisidia
- Located along the Sebastian Way, the main route that connected Ephesus with Syria and Mesopotamia
- Mixed city (Greeks, Romans, Jews) with Greek influence

*Paul and Barnabas continued the same strategy.

- Went to synagogues first because they had not given up on the Jews
- Also the Jews would not accept them if they went to Gentiles first.
- Gentile proselytes in synagogues would be bridges into Gentile community

*Paul and Barnabas preached the same gospel in the same way.

- The Word was enough in the power of the Spirit to cause people to believe

2. Boldness in Iconium (Acts 14:2–4)

How often we are bold in everything but the Gospel!

*The Jews opposed God's work. (unbelief/disobey - John 3:36)

- Poison, embittered the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas

*Paul and Barnabas responded with boldness.

- Initial opposition didn't scare them away but emboldened them to share more. HOW AND WHY? Back to 13:1-3 - Divine call! What has God called you to? Are you doing something you planned and call God to come to you? Or doing something He called you to do?
- What is our reaction to opposition? Do we realize how easy he have it? (BA)

*As they gave witness, the Lord gave witness.

- God bore witness to the Word of HIS grace!
- May we be a church of the whole counsel! May we preach and teach and believe things that cause us concern and introspection! "Go where they preach about hell, go where the Word pricks your conscience, go where you have to go back home and do some repair!" (Leonard Ravenhill)

May we never soothe our sins but confront and convict them! For this is the work of the Spirit! To convict us of our sin! To bring to our mind what Jesus said! To guide us in all truth! To glorify Jesus!

***Signs and wonders:

Why not in our time? Why don't we see it?

- God grants to confirm the Gospel message (Heb 2:3–4, all throughout Acts)

***Where in Acts has God borne witness so far?

- **Acts 1:** Ascension, **2:** Tongues and conviction, **3:** Lame man, **4:** place was shaken, **5:** Ananias/Sapphira, signs & wonders (5:12), and apostles rescued from jail, **6:** God increases his word, **7:** Stephen sees Christ, **8:** Philip in Samaria, Eunuch, **9:** Saul, Aeneas, Dorcas, **10:** Cornelius, **11:** Hand of the Lord's and Agabus' prophecy, **12:** Peter released and Herod's death, **13:** Elymas blinded and proconsul believes

- God grants for His purposes and glory. (never for ours, Acts 14:14–15)
- Satan sometimes counterfeits (Ex 7:11–12, 22; 8:7, 18; 9:11, Mark 13:22)
- We should not seek them (Matt 12:38–39; 16:4)
- The greatest sign and wonder is a changed life! (2 Cor 5:17)

India, Myanmar, front lines - greatest sign and wonder is a changed life - greatest miracle God can do is to take an unholy man out of an unholy world, make that unholy man holy, put him back into unholy world, & keep him holy!

*The message of Christ always divides in either belief and unbelief. (Matt 10:34–39, Luke 12:51–53, John 3:18, Heb 4:12)

*****Our boldness in America is put down in death by a thousand cuts of doubt. We doubt how this person will respond and if this is the right time or what will happen with my future witness if I share right now and how will people view me and it might be awkward and so on. If we are going to be Gospel people, we must share the gospel.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon in Bible passage today?
2. How did Barnabas and Paul demonstrate faithfulness in Iconium? Why did they go to the synagogues of the Jews first?
3. Discuss Barnabas and Paul's response to the opposition. Why were they able to be bold in the face of opposition? How does the gospel divide? (See Luke 12:51–53)
4. How and why did the Lord bear witness to the witness of Paul and Barnabas? Discuss signs and wonders, how God uses them, and how we should view them.
5. Pray as a group for more boldness. See Paul's prayer in Eph 6:19–20. Who do you need to share with this week?