

Jesus Meets Every Need | Acts 14:1-20 | Keith Simon Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

Icebreaker: What's something people often misunderstand about you?

Recap

Read:

Our big theme in Acts is from Acts 1:8: *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

In Acts 13-17, the church, guided by the Holy Spirit, is moving beyond Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria into other nations with the message about Jesus. Paul, after his own radical conversion, and Barnabas have been sent on a missionary journey to convince Jews and Gentiles in ten places. Acts 14:1-20 tells us what happens on stops five and six as Paul and Barnabus are in Iconium and Lystra.

Discussion

Read:

Acts 14:1-7

¹ At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed. ² But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ³ So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to perform signs and wonders. ⁴ The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. ⁵ There was a plot afoot among both Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them. ⁶ But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country, ⁷ where they continued to preach the gospel.

1. How did Paul and Barnabus respond in the face of resistance?
2. Where or in what way should we expect resistance so that we can be wisely bold as we talk to others about Jesus?

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Acts 14:8-10

⁸ In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked. ⁹ He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed ¹⁰ and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

3. Keith talked about healing being a picture or foretaste of God's kingdom where all will be healed. What are other ways our actions and our works can show people what God's kingdom is like? How does that change the way you see your life?

Acts 14:11-13

¹¹ When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" ¹² Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

Note: *There was a myth about Zeus and Hermes visiting this area. A thousand people did not welcome them in, but one elderly couple did. They were rewarded while a flood was sent to swallow up the rest. Seeing Paul and Barnabas do something miraculous made them think Zeus and Hermes had come back.*

4. Paul and Barnabas' picture is misconstrued, which tells us something about the way the people in Lystra saw the world. How might people today misconstrue the message of Jesus because of the current worldview?

Acts 14:14-18

¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: ¹⁵ "Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. ¹⁶ In the past, he let all nations go their own way. ¹⁷ Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." ¹⁸ Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

5. How do Paul and Barnabas talk differently here to those who are from a Greco-Roman religious background than how they talk to a Jewish audience?

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6. What can we be listening for when we are having conversations with people who don't know Jesus so that we can contextualize the message of Jesus?

Acts 14:19-20

¹⁹ Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. ²⁰ But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

7. What can help us keep going as we follow Jesus even when we might be misunderstood or disliked?

Sharing and Prayer:

We all need the courage and the wisdom to represent Jesus and to talk to others about him. God has promised us that any who lack wisdom should come to ask it of him. That's what we are going to do.

Break into groups of 3. **Share how you need courage and wisdom to represent Jesus and talk to others about him this week.** Pray for each other in groups.

Resource for further study:

- Bible Recap video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7KC0IOOudY>

Passages for the next two weeks:

- February 8: Acts 14:21-28
- February 15: Acts 15:1-35

Feel free to do your own study to prepare for our next study.