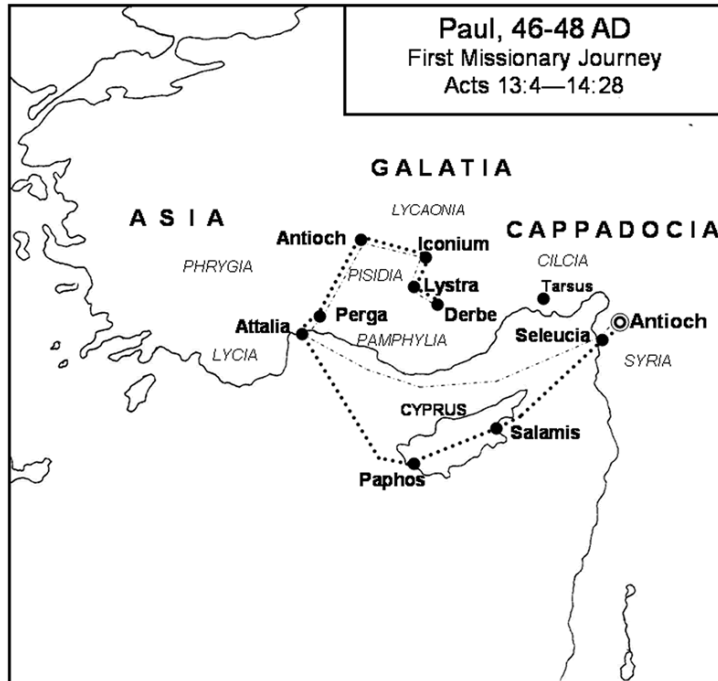


Let's take our Bibles and turn to **Acts 14:1-7**.

I. On to Iconium... (v 1)



The mission continues! Paul and Barnabas have been driven out of Antioch and now they have arrived at Iconium, which is the present-day Konya, Turkey.

It is an interesting concept to think that God was using persecution to advance his gospel. The very thing that the people did to stop the advancement of the gospel, God used it to advance his gospel even further to the ends of the earth!

Paul and Barnabas as they enter into this city, they go into the

Jewish synagogue and they begin to preach. And as soon as they spoke “a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed.”

Here in the passage, there are two responses that the people do when they hear the gospel, what are they?

Answer: A _____ (v 1b) and R _____ (v 2)

When people are met with the preaching of the gospel, this reaction/ response is always the same. There is acceptance and there is rejection. Although in the passage, many people believed, there were also those that rejected this message.

How did those who reject the message react to the message?

Today, when we go out and preach the word of God to those around us, we are faced with these reactions/ responses. There will be many who believe what you say, and there will also be many who will reject the gospel.

Have you ever shared the gospel or shared your faith with other people? If yes, how did they react or respond to you? If no, what is stopping from sharing your faith or the gospel to those around you?

II. Instruments of God (v 3-7)

Even with the unbelieving Jews poisoning the minds of the Gentiles, Paul and Barnabas decide to stay and continue preaching and doing God's work in this place. Now look at the phrasing of verse 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."

We see that the Lord is the key source of this activity. He is the one who bore witness, and he is the one who supports the work of preaching the gospel! As much as we think that Paul and Barnabas are doing their own thing, there is someone who is overlooking this whole missionary journey and that is Jesus Christ. He is our Lord and he is the one who watches over his people as they speak the words of the gospel and as they become instruments for his kingdom. In verse 4, Paul and Barnabas are called **apostles**, meaning commissioned messengers. They were the commissioned messengers who were going wherever the Lord called them to go.

Today, we are all instruments of his grace. We are called to go out and speak the gospel for his name sake!

Wherever we are and whatever we are called to do, we are to do so as God's instrument. Whether you want to be a doctor, businessman, lawyer, or pro-gamer...whatever it is, as God's people, we are to do the faithful role of sharing his love to everyone we meet and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As Paul and Barnabas continued to preach the word of the gospel, they were met with more persecution. And here, we see Luke is showing us the pattern that Paul and Barnabas will continue to go through in their missionary journey. As they go to the surrounding country, they will meet acceptance and they will surely meet rejection.

Today, Let's take some time to pray for the missionaries around the world. There is one missionary I want us to specifically pray for during this time, Missionary Kim who is serving in Mexico. After several attempts to go into Mexico, he finally was able to get into Mexico. But recently near his house, he was robbed, and the robbers have taken his wallet and his important document. As he reported that he was not harmed, let's pray for our missionary and his safety and pray for the Lord's provision as he advances God's kingdom in Mexico.