



## The Acts of the Spirit

TURNING TO THE GENTILES



# ACTS 14:19-28

"THE CHALLENGE"

MAY 19, 2024

## SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor Jeff reminded us this week that God does great things through hard things. There is no greater example of this than the finished work of the cross. But this universal truth rings through the whole bible and our lived experience. As believers, we can often see God at work doing amazing things while facing hardships that are close at hand.

Pastor Jeff highlighted this truth in Acts chapter 14 and the stoning of Paul in Liconium. The apostle was brutalized at the hands of the very people he was proclaiming the Gospel to. Speaking the truth in love, he experienced hate and physical harm in return. But he also saw MANY people trust Christ and become part of this growing family of God. Amid the pain, he was able to rejoice in God's triumph in the lives of lost people and continued to serve these new believers. This joy fueled Paul, and despite the pain, they returned to the cities that rejected them so they could disciple these new believers.

Pastor Jeff wants us to see that God is able to do great things through hard things when we allow him to work through us. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, we can develop resilience and perseverance that pushes us through hardships to see the Gospel go forth in our community and the world.

Let's discuss today where we see these truths present in our lives and the scripture so we may continue to see God do great things through the hard things in our lives.

## DISCUSSION

### Expand Your Awareness

Ask anyone who has lived beyond adolescence, and they will tell you that good and hard go hand in hand. Life is made up of joys and pains, triumphs and trials, that exist simultaneously. This is even more amplified in our faith as we experience opposition to living life with/for God, yet seeing God's hand at work in our daily lives.



*This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.*

*Group facilitator: you do not need to ask every question but can select the best ones for your group dynamic.*



## ACTS 14:19-28

- How have you experienced this tension in your life?
- Why do you think this is how life works?
- What trials, hardships, or opposition are you facing now, and how are they impacting your life/faith?
- What are some areas in which you see God at work in your life right now despite these challenges?
- What about our church...what trials, hardships, or opposition is our church facing right now, and how is it impacting our congregation?
- What are some areas in which you see God at work in our church right now despite these challenges?

### Extract the Truth

### Read Acts 14:19-28

- What jumps out to you from the text?
- Where do you see evidence of this tension of good and hard intertwined?
- What feelings do you think Paul and Barnabas were experiencing, seeing many new disciples come to faith and yet being left for dead after stoning at the hand of their Jewish brothers?
- Pastor Jeff highlighted that it would have been easy for Paul and Barnabas to recoil in order to recover from their wounds ... yet they chose to return to these cities that stoned them to encourage the new disciples.
- What perspective do you think they possessed that allowed them to return to Iconum despite being stoned near death?
- What had they experienced with God that fueled this level of resolve?

### Experience Transformation

There are four components present in Paul/Barnabas story:

1. A clear Mission worth fighting for
2. Reliance on God's Spirit
3. A resolve to overcome obstacles for the sake of the mission & people's faith.
4. People to go through these trials and triumphs with.



## ACTS 14:19-28

- Which of these components jumps out to you as one you need to cultivate more of to emulate Paul & Barnabas's faithful perseverance?
- What factors are getting in the way of you demonstrating this level of resilience for the Kingdom?
- As a church, which of these components do we need to cultivate to be more effective in our kingdom mission?
- As a church, what factors are getting in the way of demonstrating this level of resilience for the sake of the Kingdom?
- What can you do this week to grow in that area?
- What can we do as a Church to grow in that area?
- How can we put these into spirit-filled action this week?

### Prayer

Pray for:

- A clear Mission worth fighting for
- Reliance on God's spirit
- A resolve to overcome obstacles for the sake of the mission & people's faith.
- People to go through these trials and triumphs with



**PREPARE FOR  
NEXT WEEK:**

Read Acts 15:1-5