

## Preach. Heal. Pray.

### Acts 13-14

**Introduction:** Last week we saw that the Holy Spirit commissioned Paul and Barnabas to leave the church of Antioch and go out as missionaries. The church of Antioch fasted, prayed, and sent them out (Acts 13:1-3). Paul and Barnabas first went to Cyprus, where Barnabas was from (Acts 4:36). On that island they encountered both the opposition of Elymus (or Bar-Jesus) and the openness of Sergius Paulus in the city of **Paphos** (Acts 13:4-12).

### Preaching (Acts 13-14)

**1.1 In Antioch of Psidia (13:13-50).** They went on to **Antioch in Psidia**, which was in the region of Galatia. There the men continued their practice of ministering (preaching) in the synagogue before ministering to Gentiles (Acts 13:13-41). Both Gentiles and Jews heard the Word of God (Acts 13:42-43). The jealous Jews opposed the gospel, so Paul and Barnabas focused on Gentile ministry and many were saved (**Acts 13:44-48**). The success of God's Word brought opposition from the Jews who "stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city" (Acts 13:49-50). This caused **Paul and Barnabas to move on to Iconium** (Acts 13:51-52). The disciples left behind in Antioch of Psidia remained full of joy and the Holy Spirit (13:52).

**1.2 In Iconium (13:51-14:3):** the same pattern: synagogue preaching (14:1). Both Greeks and Jews listened and believed. Despite opposition, Paul and Barnabas continued to faithfully preach (14:2-3).

**1.3 In Lystra (14:4-20)** When the missionaries' lives were threatened, they moved on to **Lystra and Derbe** (14:4-7). In **Lystra** Paul healed a lame man who had faith in God (14:8-10). As Peter had healed the lame beggar in Acts 3, Paul healed the lame man here. Once again, the healed man responded with leaping and walking (14:10). Peter's healing caused the Jewish leaders to investigate; Paul's healing made the heathen people of Lystra worship the healers- Paul and Barnabas (14:11-18). Paul and Barnabas, unlike Herod, rejected worship. They made clear there is one Creator who left a witness in nature to His existence (14:15-17).

These worshipers were quickly dissuaded from their adulation to hatred. Jews of Antioch and Iconium incited people to stone Paul. They believed they had killed him (14:19). Paul got up when fellow disciples gathered around him (14:20). Once again, Paul and Barnabas left the city, fleeing persecution, seeking to keep their lives.

**1.4 In Derbe and back (14:20-22)** Their next stop was **Derbe** (14:20). They made "many disciples" in Derbe. Then they reversed course→ back to Lystra→ back to Iconium→ back to Antioch of Psidia (14:21). **In these stops they took time to encourage disciples to be faithful, reminding them that discipleship entails suffering** (14:22).

### Healing (Helping)

**2.1 The priority of the missionaries was the gospel.** They came to proclaim salvation to sinners. In this mission trip, much of Acts 13-14 has two especially noteworthy sermons. The first was in the synagogue of Antioch in Psidia (13:15-41). Paul addressed those who knew the

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Bible but rejected the Messiah of the Scriptures (13:46-47). The second was to the unbelievers of Lystra (14:14-18). Here the Creator God with His witness in nature is preached. Preaching was the highest priority. As the missionaries returned home, they continued to disciple new believers with biblical comfort (14:22).

**2.2 Nevertheless, like the Lord Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry, they did not ignore physical needs.** Jesus fed multitudes and proclaimed that He came as the Bread of Heaven to meet both physical and spiritual needs (John 6). He came as the Great Physician and healed the blind (John 9), lame, paralyzed (Mark 2), and leprosy. He raised the dead (John 11). As the Lord in the Old Testament gave Elisha's servant Gehazi leprosy when he took Naaman's possessions in payment for God's healing (2 Kings 5:20-27), so we see Paul revealing the spiritual blindness of Elymas by blinding him in Paphos of Cyprus (Acts 13:9-11). This missionary gospel outreach included bringing healing to the crippled man in Lystra (Acts 14:8-10). Thus we see the great priority of gospel proclamation entwined with miracles of healing in this time (Acts 14:3).

**2.3 God's people must care for others both body and soul.** God has made us in His image; it is a good thing to help brothers and sisters who have financial, physical, or other needs as we are able to. We can both pray for them and help them in other practical ways.

### Praying (Acts 14:23)

**1.1 Preachers Appointed.** As we have seen the power of the gospel to salvation to those who believe (for Jews first then for Gentiles) (Romans 1:16-17), we have seen the proclamation of the gospel far and wide. We have seen concern for eternal souls and perishing bodies. As the disciples went home to the first Antioch to report, notice the final emphasis on this mission trip: discipleship. Paul and Barnabas didn't evangelize and abandon the new Christians. They set up elders to continue teaching and preaching the Scriptures (Acts 14:23). We are told that each church received elders. God's people need preachers.

Pastors and teachers are God's gift to the church (**Ephesians 4:11-16**). God equips Christians to do their work in His body through pastors' preaching His Word, teaching, explaining the will of God (Eph 4:12). Faithful Scripture teaching gives Christians discernment, so they don't follow faddish false teaching (4:14). This teaching must be done with faithfulness to the truth as well as love for God and His people (4:15). God uses His rightly divided Word and His Holy Spirit to promote unity within His church (4:16).

Pastors have the responsibility both to preach the Word (2 Timothy 4:1-2). They care for the flock God has entrusted to them (1 Peter 5:2). Both preaching and praying are the prioritized duties of pastors (Acts 6:3-4). All Christians should study God's Word. All Christians should pray. But pastors have an even greater responsibility to be an example of the believers in this.

### 1.2 Prayers for the churches.

Notice Paul and Barnabas did more than appoint elders. They committed the leaders of the churches— and the churches— to the Lord in prayer. This was diligent, fervent prayer with fasting.

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How these men must have needed the wisdom of God as they led their young churches of new believers! How these men must have needed courage to be bold as lions among hostile Jews and Gentiles! They had been charged to be faithful— and to suffer (14:22). How earnestly must those prayers have been that these men would grow in faith, grow in grace, grow in knowledge of God and understanding of the Scriptures that they had to expound to their people!

Paul and Barnabas doubtless prayed not only for the church pastors but also for the church people. How they must have longed for people to grow in knowledge of the Scriptures, in love for one another and exponentially in love for their Redeemer! How they must have prayed that God would preserve them from their adversary, Satan with all his wiles! How full their hearts must have been for their spiritual children entrusted to these new undershepherds!

They made their way back to their home church in Antioch, continuing to preach as they went (Acts 14:24-28). Once home, they reported to the church what God had done.

**Conclusion:** Brothers and sisters, let us rejoice in the Scriptures the Lord has given us! Let us love the gospel and proclaim it! More than that, let us regard the Scriptures as the Bread of Heaven that nourishes our hungry souls! Let us be both hearers and doers of the Word of God! As we minister to one another and love one another, let us look for opportunities to be a blessing to our brothers and sisters and sisters in Christ. Above all, let us pray for one another! Pray for those who minister to you- by preaching, interpreting, teaching, recording, and helping musically! Pray that all of us would be preserved from sin, kept close to the Lord, and have good success both spiritually and in our lives. Let us have compassion on our hurting, our shut-ins, and seek every means to show God's goodness as we have ability!

**Prayer Requests: *Brethren, Pray for us!***

#### **Missionaries**

**Seoul Bible Church**

**Seoul Christian School**

**Bob Jones Seminary**

#### **Physical needs**

**Traveling mercies/ Life adjustments**

**Financial needs**

**Spiritual needs**