

Study Notes and Questions for Acts 14

- Study note: Iconium was an important crossroads and agricultural center in the central plain of the province of Galatia. It was ninety miles east of Pisidian Antioch on the Roman road. Both Antioch and Iconium were in the district of Phrygia.
- What two things were happening in Iconium? (14:1-2)
- Why do you think Paul and Barnabas elected to stay in Iconium even though some in the city were speaking abusively about them?
- What was God's response to their decision to stay in Iconium? (14:3)
- Why did Paul and Barnabas finally decide to leave Iconium? Can you think of any other reasons they might have wanted to leave that aren't mentioned in the text?
- The Lystrians reacted to the healing of the lame man like typical rural pagans of that time (see 14:8–13). What do you learn from this incident about the religious beliefs of those people and their assumptions about Paul and Barnabas?
- What are some of the assumptions about God or gods, miracles, creation, morality, the nature of man, etc. that people in the world hold today? Which of those beliefs are barriers to understanding and believing the gospel? How can you help them rethink those assumptions?
- Acts 14:15–17 gives us our first example of what Paul and Barnabas preached to purely Gentile audiences, as opposed to Jews, proselytes, and God-fearers. In addition to proclaiming Jesus, what did the apostles have to explain to pagans that they didn't have to say to Jews and Gentile converts to Judaism?
- What does 14:19–20 tell you about Paul's character?
- Put yourself in the place of the apostles in 14:4–6, 19–20. Would you have kept going? What enabled the apostles to do so?
- When the apostles returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to connect with the new believers, they did four things:
 1. They strengthened the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith
 2. They told them, through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
 3. They appointed elders for them in every church.
 4. With prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Discuss the importance of each of things things.

- Despite all the hardships on their trip, what was Paul and Barnabas's verdict when they reported back to the church in Antioch (see 14:26–27)?