

## Galatians: The One True Gospel

### Acts 13-14, 16

#### Paul's Gospel Ministry to the Churches in Galatia

##### Section 1: Paul Proclaims the Gospel in Pisidian Antioch: Acts 13:13-52 (CSB)

<sup>13</sup> Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia, but John left them and went back to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> They continued their journey from Perga and reached Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. <sup>15</sup> After the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, you can speak." <sup>16</sup> Paul stood up and motioned with his hand and said, "Fellow Israelites, and you who fear God, listen!

<sup>22</sup> After removing him, he raised up David as their king and testified about him, '**I have found David** the son of Jesse to be **a man after my own heart**, who will carry out all my will.' <sup>23</sup> "From this man's descendants, as he promised, God brought to Israel the Savior, Jesus." <sup>24</sup> Before his coming to public attention, John had previously proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. <sup>25</sup> Now as John was completing his mission, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the one. But one is coming after me, and I am not worthy to untie the sandals on his feet.'

<sup>50</sup> But the Jews incited the prominent God-fearing women and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their district. <sup>51</sup> But Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet against them and went to Iconium. <sup>52</sup> And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Paul arrives in Pisidian Antioch and immediately goes to the synagogue. Why? To share the good news of the Messiah. Paul preached Jesus. Paul pointed out that all of Scripture was speaking of and fulfilled in Jesus. Proclaiming the gospel was the heartbeat of Paul's missionary journeys.

Amazingly the Jews and gentiles responded well to the gospel message. Many followed and asked them back to the synagogue the following Saturday. Yet the unbelieving Jews gathered up a crowd to drive Paul and Barnabas from the city. The pressure grew so much that they had to move on to Iconium.

##### Discussion Questions:

- ❖ What is the gospel?
- ❖ Why is the gospel important to proclaim?
- ❖ Why should we expect resistance to the gospel?
- ❖ Why should we expect a response to the gospel?

##### Section 2: Paul Proclaims the Gospel through Resistance: Acts 14:1-23 (CSB)

In Iconium they entered the Jewish synagogue, as usual, and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. <sup>2</sup> But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

<sup>5</sup> When an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat and stone them, <sup>6</sup> they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian towns of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding countryside. <sup>7</sup> There they continued preaching the gospel.

<sup>11</sup> *When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted, saying in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!”*

<sup>18</sup> *Even though they said these things, they barely stopped the crowds from sacrificing to them. <sup>19</sup> Some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and when they won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking he was dead. <sup>20</sup> After the disciples gathered around him, he got up and went into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe. <sup>21</sup> After they had preached the gospel in that town and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the disciples by encouraging them to continue in the faith and by telling them, “It is necessary to go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.” <sup>23</sup> When they had appointed elders for them in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*

We see a repeated pattern. Paul goes into the synagogue, proclaims the gospel and then ran out of town. The people of Iconium sought to mistreat and stone Paul. What we are seeing is an escalation in the people rejecting the gospel. Now they are seeking to inflict bodily harm.

They flee to Lystra and Derbe and continue preaching the gospel. Lystra at first seems to be very different than the rest of Galatia. God heals a man through Paul and the people quickly recognize them as gods. Even to the point they were seeking to make sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas. Once Paul finally convinces them that they are not gods...the people stone him, dragged him out of the city and left him for dead. Seems like an unlikely response to man not claiming to be a god. It's at this moment we see how important the gospel is...Paul gets up and goes right back to the people that stoned him. The gospel is so valuable it's worth giving your life for. Not only does Paul preach the gospel again in Derbe, he goes back through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch strengthening the churches. Paul is living out Philippians 1:21 (CSB): *For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*

#### Discussion Questions:

- ❖ The Jews were able to “poison their minds” against the gospel...why is it important to control our minds and emotions and subject them to the Bible?
- ❖ Paul was willing to die to get the gospel to the people of Galatia...how will you fight to get the gospel to your community?
- ❖ Can you say with confidence: for me, to live is Christ and to die is gain? If not, what is holding you back?

### Section 3: Paul Strengthens the Churches and Timothy: Acts 16:1-6 (CSB)

<sup>5</sup> *So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers. <sup>6</sup> They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia; they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.*

On Paul's second missionary journey we see him revisit the church in Galatia. The churches were strengthened in the faith, grew daily and Timothy begins rising to leadership.

Discipleship is not a simple...get them saved and move on. We are called to make disciples by teaching them ALL that Jesus commanded. We see Paul seeking to make disciples, at the risk of his own safety.

#### Discussion Questions:

- ❖ How do we strengthen others in the faith?
- ❖ Are you intentionally seeking out opportunities to strengthen others in the faith?