

Acts 13:44-52

“And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief man of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. 51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”

Introduction

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“Acts chapter 13, we left off in the area of, if you were here with us, we are up in Pisidian Antioch, up there in this area right there, it’s the city we’re at (see https://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_first_missionary_journey.html), Pisidian Antioch. Ah, metropolitan city, decent population, amphitheater, library and so forth. Paul is there, in chapter 13 we had gone through his sermon, it’s been obvious the importance of the Word, which he mentions throughout, the word of God. Central to the Word is the simplicity, verse 38 and 39 he says **“Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man**

is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:” the message that Paul was carrying into the Gentile world, the forgiveness of sins, **“and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”** (verses 38-39) **“Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue,”** at the close of this sermon **“the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.”** (verses 40-42) **“besought,”** that’s **“continually besought.”** [And these would have been the *God-fearing Gentiles* who had been inside the synagogue with the Jews.] **“Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.”** (verse 43) which would be central to Paul’s theology, the grace of God. In fact again, it’s interesting I think, John only uses the word “grace” seven times. Which we’re not surprised, you’d imagine him to be the apostle of grace, he uses the word “Jesus” more than all the other Gospels combined. But “grace” in the Gospel of John, 1st, 2nd and 3rd John, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation, the combined usage of the word “grace” is seven times, in all of that writing, interesting of John. But he says, **‘No man at any time hath seen God, but we have beheld him,’** he says he’s **‘full of grace and truth,’** that’s his description of Jesus Christ. He basically says if you want to see grace you look at Jesus Christ. Peter, I think uses it twice, but he talks about the manifold grace of God, and it’s interesting, the Greek word is “very colored,” has different hues, has different colors. That’s because he was an emotional man, and he needed grace at lots of different angles, when he was hacking somebody’s ear off he needed grace, when he was saying something he shouldn’t say he needed grace, and when he was out doing something he shouldn’t have got himself into he needed grace. Peter says, **‘You know the grace of God is very colored, it’s got low hues of purple and blue and gray, and it’s got wondrous hues of yellow and red that are warm and brilliant,’** and he had an interesting perspective of the grace of God. But Paul is the one who uses the word over a hundred and twenty times, Paul is the messenger of God’s grace, Paul is the one who hauled men and women to prison, Paul was the one who was most serious about the Law and realized he never lived up to it. So Paul

is the one that the grace of God is magnified in his theology and his probably, this summation of grace that Paul says in Titus, ***‘that the grace of God hath appeared, bringing us to salvation, teaching us in this present world we should deny ungodly lusts, looking forward to the coming of our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.’*** Paul, when he sums up grace, he says ***‘Look, it’s by grace that God has saved, that’s how we got saved, God’s grace. It’s grace that keeps us in this present world, teaching us to deny the ungodly lusts we wrestle with everyday, then he says it’s only grace that could cause sinners like you and I to look forward to the coming of our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, the end of the age, the coming of Christ in power and glory, only grace,’*** the only kind of sunglasses you could ever want to look forward to that event is grace. So, Paul says here, ***‘persuading these new believers to abide, to remain in the grace of God.’***

Some Are Glad And Some Are Mad

Verse 44 says this, **“And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.”** Notice, **“came almost the entire city together”** **“to hear the word of God.”** So many Gentiles that were proselytes that were excited, so many Jews excited, the Word spreading through Antioch of Pisidia, almost the whole town comes together to hear the Word of God. But notice, **“But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.”** (verse 45) interesting, “multitudes,” no radio, no TV, no publications, in a week there are multitudes gathering. That’s a phenomenon. We lack, I lack I know today, something on the vertical. We’re loaded for bear on the horizontal in the churches, we got all kinds of things going, but in a week, it says, the multitudes, when the Jews saw the multitudes, notice this, **“they were filled with envy,”** Paul will speak up about this, as his ministry develops, he’ll realize that he’s making his [Jewish] brethren after the flesh envious, and he’s realizing he’s stirring them up. **“they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul,”** Paul’s talking about the forgiveness of God through Christ, it says here **“contradicting and blaspheming.”** So some of the things they said against Christ,

Paul's message to them was blasphemous. Interesting, isn't this, their refusal is not on an intellectual or theological level, it's sin, it's rebellion, they're envious, they're angry, they're blaspheming, they're refusing. It has nothing to do with some intellectual thing they don't agree with they're wrestling with, it has nothing to do with some theological point they can't embrace. They're envious at the success they're seeing, multitudes gathered to hear the word that they're preaching. And in that, they turn away. And again, just encouraging you, as we look at this, look, here's Paul the apostle. When he shares the Gospel he's not apologetic, he's very pointed, the center of it is the cross, the forgiveness of Christ, repentance. And as he shares it, some are offended and some are warmed and drawn and hungry. And you can expect the same response in your life, some are glad and some are mad, that's exactly what you're gonna do, and don't be shocked when it happens that way. And listen to what he says then, to the Jews. **"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."** (verse 46) The Jews are angry with envy and Paul & Barnabas get even more bold. Paul believed to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. He said, ***'You're the one whose making a choice, you're putting the word of God from you, and you're counting yourself unworthy of everlasting life. We're bringing you the message, and you're deliberately pushing it off, we're bringing you the truth, you're turning away.'*** And some people are just like that. I know, and you've probably known people like that, you share the message of Christ, you know that they're listening, and it's almost as though you know they agree, but they're kind of saying *'you know, I kind of want to sow my wild oats now, I mean, hold that thought for twenty years, before this is all over I'm going to take hold of that, but it's kind of like he wants to interfere with my life, to mess with me, so I really like what you're saying, but not right now.'* It's like putting a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your hotel room door, and not inviting them to come back until you make such a mess of your room you want them to clean it up. He says ***'You count yourself unworthy of everlasting life, so we're turning to the Gentiles,'*** **"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."** (verse 47) They quote from Isaiah. [Comment: Many believers think that Paul went entirely over to witnessing to the Gentiles as his missionary method

from here onwards, but a careful study of Acts chapter 13 through 20 show Paul continued to visit and witness to every synagogue he could when he entered a new city, with the same or similar results, making this statement *'I go now to the Gentiles'* a number of times, only to end up in the next synagogue, witnessing to the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles again until he was booted out, only to end up going to the next synagogue.] You remember Simeon and Anna as Jesus is brought to be dedicated by Joseph and Mary in the Temple, Simeon said ***'A light to lighten the Gentiles,'*** as he held the Christ child, ***'A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.'*** When we get to the 15th chapter, when we come to the conference in Jerusalem, deciding on what needs to happen in the Gentile churches, it is James the Lord's half-brother who says ***'Look, this shouldn't surprise us, to this the prophets agree,'*** he doesn't make a direct quote, but he basically says ***'The Old Testament prophets spoke of the message of God going to the Gentile world, we shouldn't be surprised by it.'*** So Paul says ***'since you're counting yourselves unworthy, we're going to turn to the Gentiles, because the Scripture says that's part of our responsibility, because we're supposed to be a light to the Gentiles.'*** Now look, ***'you,'*** and Jesus said, ***'are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world.'*** Again, that's emphatic, ***'You alone are the salt of the earth, you alone are the light of the world.'*** Not Muslims, not Buddha, not Hindus, you alone, that's what Jesus said, that's his opinion, you alone are the light of the world. Then to chapter 8 of John he said ***'I am the light of the world.'*** Our light is a reflected light, you know, he is the one who is the light of the world, and as he is effective in our lives we are reflecting that light, which is a divine light. The interesting thing, in nature we see a great lesson, the only time, the Old Testament uses the analogy of the sun and the moon, the sun being as it were the Lord, the moon being that reflected light. The only time there is a lunar eclipse is when the world gets between the sun and the moon. And the only time in our lives, really, when our witness starts to be darkened, is when the world gets between the Son and us. Because as long as we're walking in his light, we reflect his light.

As Many As Were Ordained To Eternal Life Believed

He says here, **“so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles,”** quoting Isaiah, **“that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”** (verse 47) **“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”** (verse 48) And Paul no doubt explained that then it was from Isaiah and so forth. “Ordained,” to be put in line, to be put in rank and file, to be assigned. **“And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”** now people want to dig trenches and argue right here, don’t they? It’s interesting, I heard Warren Wiersby, somebody asked him *‘Are you a Calvinist or an Armenian,’* and he said *“I’m neither one, I’m no man’s disciple and I don’t want any man to be my disciple.”* Of course the great thing, it was at a pastor’s conference, and he said *‘If you’re too much of a Calvinist, he said you rob man of his responsibility, if you’re too much of a Arminianist you rob God of his sovereignty and glory,’* he said *‘I’m not interested in robbing anybody.’* But he said to the pastors, he said, *‘But you men need to remember, we’re called to feed sheep and not giraffes,’* so he said *‘I wouldn’t spend a lot of time there.’* You know, you find both. Wonderfully, we’ve been ordained, we’re sitting here this evening believers, because we’ve been ordained to eternal life. Do I believe we’re predestined, ya, it says Christ was offered by the predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge, the Grandville-Sharpe rule in the Greek, which means you can’t separate, some try to say *‘Well God foreknows, and because he foreknows, that then he stands back and knows what’s going to happen.’* No, no, you can never separate God’s foreknowledge from his action. He actually elects because he does foreknow, and because he’s God he can never be static in his foreknowledge. Because of his very nature he must be active in it. So, it’s one of those human difficulties in Scripture. Evidently God doesn’t have a hard time, because in there he says **‘As many as receive him, to them he gives power to become the sons of God,’** Jesus said **‘Of all the Father’s given me I won’t loose one,’** that sounds ordained, and he says **‘Any man who comes to me I’ll in no wise cast out,’** so he doesn’t make it easier for us either. So if you’re sitting here this evening, and you’re wrestling with this, you’re a believer, and you’re saying *‘I don’t know, I don’t believe in predestination,’* I guess you’re predestined not to. Or I do, well you’re predestined to believe in it. You’re sitting here saying *‘that’s not fair, I can only get saved if I’m predestined?’* Get saved then, it’s up to you, do it tonight, if you don’t like the fact that he’s in charge of everything, do it yourself, we’re waiting, and you

get in, you find out you were predestined. It's a wonderful thing, you're never going to figure it out in human reasoning. Again, here's the great thing about all of this, to me, over many years, looking at it, wrestling back and forth, reading until I need to get out my Excedrin. Paul says this, and it's jam-packed in here, **“for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed into the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them also he called, whom he called, them also he justified, whom he justified, he also glorified. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:29-31)** That's how he resolves the whole issue. He doesn't say sit around and argue about it for the next 1600 years. He says **‘What do we say to these things? These phenomenal big things?** They're meant to be a consolation to us, a comfort to us. You know, Luther in his preface to Romans said *‘Who are these audacious young Christians, who they dare to soar the heights of eternal depravity and predestination and the security of the believer, before they understand flesh and temptation and sin?’* and so forth. He said *‘Surely they must fall, for there is a doctrine for every season in a man's life.’* There's a beauty to it, and Paul who understood more than any of us, says to us, *‘you know, the most wonderful response to these deep, incredible truths is this, is that it's childlike. What do we say, If God be for us, who can be against us.’* And if God was for these Gentile believers in Antioch, who could be against them? **“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.” (verse 48-49)**

*The Envious Unbelieving Jews Expel Paul & Barnabas –
They Move On To Iconium*

Now to the Jews [the unbelieving, envious Jews], Paul says, you count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, it says the Gentiles were ordained, so there's your choices, very interesting in the picture. **“and the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.”** We read about that once we get into Europe, in Thessalonians chapter 1, it says the Word of God sounded out from among them, where Paul says **‘We didn't even need to speak**

anything when we came into the area.’ **“But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.” (verse 50)** King James says “honourable” it’s “prominent women,” and you want to get some prominent women mad, you got something going. It doesn’t tell us whether they just forced them out or threw them out, it doesn’t seem to be a lot physical here, but it says, **“But they”** this is Paul and Barnabas **“shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.” (verse 51)** Now that’s a typical Jewish custom in the land of Israel, when they would leave the land of Israel and come back into the land, they would shake off the dust of their feet from Gentile territory before they entered the land, because they considered the land itself holy, it belonged to God. Jesus, when he sent out his disciples, he said **‘If they don’t receive you, you shake off the dust of your feet against them, because the territory where they’re standing is no longer holy, if they’re refusing the message of the Gospel.’** So it’s something they understood, there here are Paul and Barnabas, we don’t know if they looked at each other, they got yelled at, chased out of the city, walking outside the city limits, maybe they just nod their heads and shook off the dust and laughed, and moved on from there. But it says they shook off the dust of their feet, and then they came to Iconium. So, we’re going to see our journey here, there’s Antioch, they come down to Iconium. That is about 80, 83 miles, ok. Antioch to Iconium, that’s easy to read, one verse, a couple words here, but remember they’re on foot. So, they have a lot of time to talk, they have a lot of time to talk about what happened in the city of Antioch. No doubt their theology was formulating in some degrees, their message, as they’re walking, talking about the church and so forth. And look what it says here, it says **“And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.” (verse 52)** this is in Pisidian Antioch who have been saved, **“were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”** These disciples are babes, they just seem to be a few days old, they’re filled with joy, with the Holy Ghost. Paul and Barnabas leave the area trusting that the Lord, who ordained them to eternal life, would also care for them. It’s just a remarkable thing, when we go through this and watch it, and you realize, several days [of having Paul and Barnabas], that’s all they had, they answered as many questions as they could, they invested the Word of God in them. When they leave the area they leave a brand new baby, fledgling church community, and it says here that new community is filled with joy and with the

Holy Ghost. And they [Paul and Barnabas] are leaving the area because of hostility, but they're completely content to leave that new group of believers to the care of the Lord, who was so evidently present to them.

Acts 14:1-20

“And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. 3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. 5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, 6 they were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: 7 and there preached the gospel. 8 And there sat a certain man of Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: 9 The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, 10 said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. 11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. 12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. 13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. 14 *Which* when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard *of*, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, 15 and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: 16 who in times past

suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. 18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them. 19 And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch [of Pisidia] and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. 20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.”

Introduction

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“It says **“And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.” (verse 1)** [again, these two groups being called out of the membership of the synagogue, Jews and *God-fearing Gentiles*.] Again, that’s their normal process. **“and so spake,”** now it’s almost written like you and I are supposed to understand that we have the sample of Paul’s preaching in chapter 13. **“and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.” (verse 1b-2)** King James is “evil affected,” I really like the NIV here, it’s **“they made their minds poisoned against the brethren.”** They spoke to them, talked to them no doubt theologically, they challenged them, we’re starting to see this whole world of the Judaizers are arising, that will follow Paul through his ministry, constantly saying *‘This man’s wrong, he’s saying to turn away from the Law of Moses, he’s telling believers they don’t have to be circumcised and so forth, they don’t have to keep the dietary law.’* Now we’re going to come to the settlement of that in chapter 15. This is giving rise to it. And again, look, some of these Jews were believers, not disbelievers, but misbelievers. You understand, they’re, these Jews were not telling these new converts not to believe, where some of them have come to

the faith, but they're struggling, 'What do we do with 2,000 years of Judaism, just throw it out the window?' And they're [the Jews in the synagogue, I believe Pastor Joe is saying] are not telling the new believers to go worship pagan idols or to drink blood, what they're just saying is, 'you know, you should probably be circumcised, you should probably keep the dietary law, we should probably worship on sabbath and not on Sunday,' and so there's a real contest in some of their hearts, where they're very genuine, and they're having to settle all of this. [Comment: I highly recommend Oskar Skarsaune's scholarly research book "In The Shadow Of The Temple," which goes into the cultural and religious setting of the early New Testament churches, in Jerusalem, Judea and then Asia Minor. He paints a very convincing, historically and archeologically accurate picture of those whom God was using Paul to call out of these synagogues, and what their worship practices were within the new churches that were being formed. His research has, obviously, become the backbone of the Messianic Jewish view of the early Church, both within Jerusalem, Judea and Asia Minor. And these were Sabbath/Holy Day observing churches, which more than likely kept the dietary laws. Again, for a research article using Skarsaune's book, along with Rodney Starks 'The Rise of Christianity,' and Ray Pritz's 'Nazarene Jewish Christianity,' see <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/index3.htm>] Then there is another group of the Judaizers, which are not believers, that are antagonist, and they're constantly trying to drag the new believers under the Law of Moses. [It was only this group of Judaizers that plagued Paul at first, and they were the one's Luke describes as the Jews who didn't believe within these synagogues Paul was preaching in. They were trying to protect their synagogues, as Paul was draining them of their membership, (haha, smile). The second group of Judaizers, whom Paul described in Galatians chapters 1 & 6, were quasi-believers which came out of Jerusalem and followed Paul around, plaguing him. I describe this group of Judaizers in <https://unityinchrist.com/galatians/Galatians1-1-24.htm> and <https://unityinchrist.com/galatians/Galatians6-1-18.htm>] And in chapter 15 kind of comes to a head, at the council in Jerusalem, where they settle what was required of Gentile believers in regards to the Law. But here it says **"But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren."**(verse 2) and Paul, look what it says then, **"Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of grace, and granted signs**

and wonders to be done by their hands.” (verse 3) Because there was a contest, Paul says *‘This is what I love, I love the contest, they got mad at us, we’re staying here a long time.’* **“Long time therefore”** I just like that **“abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony”** the Greek grammar there *‘The Lord is the one there who gave testimony’* **“unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.”(verse 3)** now the Lord is the one who granted the signs and wonders to be done by their hands. Look, the signs and the wonders had not happened in Antioch (of Pisidia), God didn’t see that they were needed there. Here at Iconium he’s granting that miracles are taking place, and please note what it says, miracles are bearing testimony to the word of his grace. It isn’t vice versa. Today in so many places, to me sometimes we see in the newspaper we see, advertisements on TV, somebody’s ministry is coming to town, *Signs! Wonders! Healings! Come!* I’m thinking, if all of that stuff is going on, what do you need the newspaper and radio for? It’s like multitudes were following Jesus, he didn’t need all of that. And so much of that that happens today, they’re using the Word of God trying to justify their strange behavior that’s attached to it. And the truth is, in many of those ministries, there isn’t a bonafide documented healing that’s ever taken place. In this scene, it’s the Word of God that’s preached, and the Lord decides to grant signs and wonders to bear witness to the Word that was preached. Do miracles still happen? Yes they do. Do we see miracles here? Ya we do. Just a few weeks ago somebody that we had prayed for them, not thinking much, they came back a week later and said the cancer was gone. We hear it, we don’t then run to the pulpit and say *‘Hey, this is what happened!’* because we don’t want the church or the elders or the pastors or anybody but the Lord to get the glory. When people in our church are healed they share with their friends, they share with their relatives, and it’s in the right context. [Comment: there is a genuine faith-healing man that occasionally comes to our Messianic congregation, he takes absolutely no credit for the healings that do occur, but gives all the glory to Yeshua, Jesus Christ. We advertise him locally, without fanfare, usually amongst believer friends and their relatives. Not everyone is healed, but some are, and it’s genuine, as I have experienced a healing myself. But his ministry is not a religious side-show, and God gets all the glory. I wish there were more men of genuine faith like this man, who go about strengthening the Body of Christ. That is the genuine fruit of his ministry, is that it strengthens the faith of believers. So, there

are a few, very few, faith-healing ministries. I'm not giving his name, because, as he would say, it's not about him, but Jesus, Yeshua.] But we're always willing to pray for the sick. Are as many people healed as we would like to see healed? No. Why? I don't know. I don't even understand "ordained to eternal life," how am I supposed to understand that? But the Lord does heal. And to the degree we see it in the Book of Acts? Maybe in the mission field, maybe in some context in the world today. Here the wonderful thing is, sometimes we do see the Lord heal. The hard thing is, sometimes we pray, and pray, and pray, and pray, and the Lord will take an individual home. Or the person will have the long process of a difficult health problem. But he does heal. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. And we do pray, and we do see some miraculous things take place. But here, wonderfully, it is the Lord who is granting the signs and wonders, to bear witness to the wonder of his grace, and signs and wonders to be done by their hands. **"But the multitude of the city was divided:"** So even with the miraculous, **"and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles." (verse 4)** "apostles" plural, so he's referring to Barnabas, one of the apostles, certainly they recognized that there were the 12, were distinct in some ways, but there was a larger group that went out to carry the message, that were also at times recognized as apostles. Some held with the Jews, some held with the apostles, **"And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, they were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:" (verse 6)** So we're talking 40 to 50 miles now. So, they flee from Iconium here, see where we are, to Lystra and Derbe, this area here.

[see https://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_first_missionary_journey.html] Ah, here it is, Iconium, to Lystra and Derbe, we're up in the whole area of Galatia now, which is about 3500 foot above Pamphylia where they came onshore there, where Paul may have contracted malaria, we're not sure, but they're up in this higher plateau. And it says at this point in time they fled, they were being chased, no doubt. I don't know if you guys have ever been in the circumstance where you've run for your life? Anybody? I remember running while somebody was shooting at us with a rifle, it's very uncomfortable. In those circumstances you have much more adrenalin than you think you do, you have much more stamina than you would think that you would. For some reason you forget all

about being winded and being tired, and your legs just keep moving as long as you can hear the bullets winging off of objects close to you. And it is not a fun experience, and when it's over you are so worn out from the use of adrenalin it's a bad feeling. But here are these guys who fled for their lives, it says. They were aware of it and they fled to Lystra, that's 40 or 50 miles, we're not told how many of those miles they were running, looking over their shoulder, but uncomfortable, they **"fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: and there they preached the gospel."** (verse 6b-7)

The Healing Of The Crippled Man At Lystra: Hearing The Voice Of The Lord

He describes three different ways here as the Holy Spirit moves on the heart of doctor Luke to give us a picture. **"And there sat a certain man at Lystra,"** number one it tells us he was impotent in his feet, no strength at all, no ability to stand or walk, **"impotent in his feet,"** secondly it says he's impotent in his feet because **"being a cripple from his mother's womb,"** and he's called a man here, he's an adult, thirdly it says **"who never had walked:"** (verse 8) So we have an interesting picture, this is the third cripple healed in the Book of Acts. Remember we had the man at the Gate Beautiful, and it tells us there he was crippled from his mother's womb. We have Ananias in chapter 9, near Jerusalem when Peter's traveling to Joppa, and it says he had kept his bed for 8 years, he had more than 8 years. This one is extremely remarkable, this is a man with no strength in his legs, he had been crippled from birth, from the womb, his entire life. Is he 30, 40, we don't know. He's a man who had never walked. And Paul is going to tell him to rise up, and it's going to say **'and he jumped up, and he leaped, he walked.'** And again, medical people, try to imagine what that means. This is a man without muscle tissue, this is a man whose all of his nerves, if there had been any there when he was born, had atrophied years ago. There's no nervous control of his ankles, of his toes, of his feet. You need so much strength and communication simply between your big toe and your brain to get up and jump and walk. And there had been no communication, no nerve endings, everything had been atrophied, ligaments, tendons. This guy, when he jumped up, he

must have been ***snap! crackle!*** and ***popping!*** he must have sounded like a box of Rice Crispies, this guy. This is a remarkable, remarkable miracle, and when we read about them in the Scripture, you need to back off and think about them a little bit, because this is an act of Creation. Instantaneously he has muscles that did not exist a second before that. Instantaneously he has well-formed nervous connection that had not been there a second before, instantaneously he has tendons, ligaments that had not been there. The joints, meniscus, everything necessary there, cartilage, for the joints to work properly. OK, here's this man, impotent in his feet, crippled from his mother's womb, who had never walked, the Holy Spirit wants us to understand, gives us a doctor's description. **"The same heard Paul speak: who"** Paul **"stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed," (verse 9)** now isn't that interesting? The man is listening, had the man got saved before he got healed? It seems like that, because Paul, he's listening intently, Paul has this sense that the Gospel has just this moment taken root in this man, and looking at him he perceives that he has faith to be healed. Now is the word of knowledge working on Paul's life? Possibly. As we go from the Book of Acts into Corinthians we're going to talk about the gifts of the Spirit. Possibly the word of knowledge, Paul recognizes, you know, **'looking stedfastly at this man,'** no doubt the Holy Spirit telling him **'this man has faith to be healed,'** and he **"said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked." (verse 10)** Now, before you tell somebody whose been crippled from their birth, to stand up and walk, you'd better be sure you're hearing the Lord. And we see too much of it, which is strictly imitation. A man like C.T. Studd, if you read his life, I can't explain that, he was an evangelist, and when people would come to his meetings that were crippled, before he prayed for them, he broke their wheel chairs and their crutches, and then he prayed for them, and they were healed. People who could hardly see that wanted prayer for their eyes, he would first take their glasses, throw them on the ground and crush their glasses, then pray for them, and their eyes were healed. God's not called me to that ministry. But the problem was, people who learned ministry watching him, tried to imitate that, and God hadn't called them to have C.T. Stud's ministry [see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Studd]. So they have some poor person come with crutches or a wheel chair, they break up the wheel chair, the crutches, and tell the person to walk and they couldn't walk, and somebody had to carry them out the meeting

because they didn't have their wheel chair or crutches anymore. You have people who watch that, who step on somebody's glasses, then they'd have to leave the meeting like this, not being able to see. You need to know the Lord's telling you to do these things. I remember years ago in Costa Mesa during the JESUS Movement, the days were pretty fresh, Chuck [Smith] was teaching, and there were two people sitting in the front in wheel chairs, and at the end of one of the meetings, Chuck went down, he looked at the one person in the wheel chair, took him by the hand and said *"In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk,"* and he yanked the person out of the wheel chair, and they, and they walked, and everybody was freaking out. Then nobody wanted to go home, we just wanted to worship at that point in time. And his son told me, he said afterwards, *"Dad! What about the guy next to him, why didn't you jerk him out?"* he said *"The Lord didn't tell me to jerk him out, he'd have fallen out on the floor if I'd have pulled him out."* The question is, isn't it interesting, these folks through the Book of Acts, again, were that attuned to the Word of God. And I'm amazed, listen, and I think about it, I have had a privilege several times to spend several days with a man, Dr. Leonard Muller, who has been involved in the exploration of Mount Sinai in Arabia [Saudi Arabia, where Ron Wyatt first discovered Mount Sinai in the Saudi desert], and he is the head of the department at the Karlinski Institute in Sweden, he has 120 PhDs working under him. And his particular department, he said, there you become a medical doctor, then you either go to clinical practice or you go to research. He said "I see patients for other doctors, but I don't have patients, I'm in research." And his department is toxicology, environment and nutrition. And he's the world's leading DNA researcher. And we talked once, and he said *"People, the way they live, you get up in the morning, tired, and you have a cup of coffee to get yourself rolling, you watch the news, you watch the weather, you check your emails, you get on your cell phone, you get in your car, you turn on the radio, you try not to text while your driving, you're on the cell phone, you get to work, you sit down at your computer, on the way home, you're back again on your cell phone, you listen to the radio, you get home, you check your emails, you go through that whole process, you watch the news before you go to bed,"* and he said, *"by the time you go to bed, your neurological system is so ramped up from stimulus that you can't get a good night's sleep."* He said *"A farmer who didn't do all that, all he did was work all day, he collapses in bed,"* he said *"he'll get a deeper sleep in five hours than this other person is going to get in eight hours,*

and then you wake up in the morning and you're still tired, and the worse thing you could do is watch television before you go to bed, because it ramps up your whole system." But the other thing we talked about, hey look, imagine 200 years ago, not only that, I think back to the 1950s and 60's, I was born in 1950. We had one car, our whole family. When I was 16 my father let me drive it, that was unbelievable. There were so many times I almost wrecked our only car, and they didn't know [haha, there were many things our parents didn't know]. We had one phone, and you had to dial it for it to work. It was downstairs, you had to run down to get to the phone [so far I'm maintaining that simplicity, with one phone downstairs, and it's an old Western Electric push button phone.] We didn't have central air, my dad used to brainwash us all with this fan he put in the window in the summer, and he always made the fan blow out, because it sucked the cool air into the house. [I keep the cellar door open, with the cellar windows open, and have a window box fan upstairs blowing out, it works fine, saves a lot of electricity.] I didn't know where the cool air came from, I know there was no cool air, but he used to say *"Doesn't that feel good?"* and we'd all say 'Ya,' like we were all dumb, somebody must have been feeling cool air. No cell phones, no computers, I remember you'd go through a whole day without a phone call. I was depressed as a teenager, sometimes I'd go three days without a phone call. I can't get away from my phone now. Again, my wife got one of those iPhones, now anywhere we go it's the three of us, [chuckles] me, her and emailing, it's just you can't get away. And our sensitivities are on such overload. You know, these are people who walked from Antioch to Iconium, and as they walked they didn't get a phone call, they didn't see the news. What is a human mind and a human neurological system capable of, relative to communicating with the Lord? Andy Wildersmith when he was here at the old building with us, he had three PhD's in three different fields, was considered one of the twelve brightest people on the planet, he spent time with Stephen Hawking and Carl Sagan and all these guys, in fact he told me he was riding on a train and was sitting next to a guy who was a chemist who was trying to figure out how to synthesize vitamin C, and he said *"I saw what he was doing wrong, I took a napkin and corrected his formula, and he won the Nobel Prize for synthesizing vitamin C."* but just a brilliant guy. But he does this study *"God knoweth our thoughts afar off"* that's where he starts, and he ends up in Australia looking at platypuses and describing the fact that God made them from left over parts to freak out scientists. And he said *"One thing about them,*

they have these little ports around their bills, for years we didn't know what they were, we realized that finally they're electronic sensors, because a platypus can swim in water with it's eyes closed, and all of a sudden it will dive down and drive it's bill into the mud and pull out a crayfish or a worm." and he said, "because it will sense the motion in its neurological system, electrical charge. Those sensors are so sensitive, you have to understand, in modern science we don't have anything that's that sensitive." he said "The fact that those sensors can sense the neurological system of a worm through mud and water, where it's so diffused and drive in and hit it accurately, is something that's just phenomenal to us." Then he goes back and says "God knoweth our thoughts afar off, you have to understand, God's way more sensitive than a platypus, and you're brain puts out way more of an electrical charge than a worm," and he said "God has no problem knowing our thoughts, and the intentions of our hearts." We don't have to get on our knees and fold our hands to pray, he's listening to us all day, 'Lord, get these other people off the road, they shouldn't have licenses,' he hears me, he knows. Do we hear him? Elijah, the still small voice, God was not in the fire, he was not in the earthquake, this is the man of power, as he sat quietly, he heard the voice of the Lord, it was a still, small voice. We look at these men, this missionary journey begins with the Holy Spirit saying **'Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the ministry I have called them to,'** and the church hears that, **'being sent therefore by the Holy Ghost.'** But we're going to watch them, and they knew the voice of the Spirit. Paul looks at this man in Lystra, whose listening to his message, who has never moved a muscle, doesn't have a muscle, and perceives, understands spiritually, his receptors are sensitive enough and he knows this guy will get healed, he has faith to be healed. And he says to him, **'Rise up and walk,' 'In a loud voice in front of everybody,' "Stand upright on thy feet."** **(verse 10)** Stop there one second, back up, I guess the exhortation in regards to the Lord is, **'I will be enriched if you cultivate your ability to hear the Holy Spirit,'** how much room does the Holy Spirit have in your life and in my life? It will enrich me and enrich this church, the more spiritual, the more tuned out you are to unnecessary distraction, I understand there is necessary distraction. But the more tuned out you are to unnecessary distraction, and the more tuned in you are as an individual to the voice of the Lord, to the leading of the Holy Spirit, the more enriched I will be. And I assume you feel the same, vice versa. You want a pastor, and you want pastors and elders and leadership in this

church that are not just distracted with everything in the world, but they get up in the morning and sit alone with the Lord, that you want us doing our best to cultivate our ability to hear his voice, particularly in the days that we live in now. And that will be enriching in your life, while it's enriching in ours when you take ownership too. Very important too. ok.

The Pagans At Lystra Take The Healing The Wrong Way

“And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done,” now that's wrong, Paul had not done it, but that's what they thought, that's how it appeared, **“they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.” (verse 11)** *‘They cry out in the voice of Lycaonia’* **“the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas”** who no doubt is bigger, which is Zeus, he's the bigger one, **Jupiter; and Paul they called Mercurius”** Hermes **“because he was the chief speaker.” (verse 12)** Mercury, who was the chief spokesman for Zeus, Mercury, he's the one who travels at such incredible speed, that he was then sent of the gods, to Zeus, to be a messenger, he always was the one to be the spokesman, Hermes. And they say that Barnabas is Jupiter, Zeus, and Paul is Mercurius or Hermes, because he was the chief speaker, it says of Paul. **“Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.” (verse 13)** Somebody went down and told him *‘Hey, aren't you the priest of Jupiter?’* he said *‘Ya,’* they said, *‘Jupiter's up the street, you'd better get up there.’* **“Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people” unto Barnabas and Paul.** Now look, there is a background to this, in this whole area, ok, of Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, the whole large plateau up there, the Greek writer Oved tells us that somewhere up in this area at one point, that Jupiter and Mercurius took on human form, part of Greek mythology. And they no doubt knew about it here, and what they said was that these two gods came through that territory, looking for hospitality, and they were constantly shut out of people's houses. Finally they came to an old couple, the old couple, the husband was named Philemon, his wife's name, I can't remember, it only works with one couple

though, and they welcomed them into their home and they fed them and gave them a place to sleep, and then Jupiter and Mercurius revealed to them who they were, and took the elderly couple on top of a high hill, and a flood came into the area and wiped out the population and all of those who had refused them hospitality were destroyed and judged. So there's that lure attached, so no doubt then, these pagans who were in darkness and [spiritually] blind, when they see this miracle, this is a man who had never moved, they say *'Uht-oh, we remember this story, here they are, the gods are come down to us again, and if we're not nice to them, we're all gonna get drowned before this deal's over.'* So, they go get the priest, he comes down the street and is going to do sacrifice with the people to them, **"Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:"** (verses 14-15) *'the reason we're here is to try to get you to turn from these things, not that you got to sacrifice to us as gods, we want you to turn from these vanities'* **"unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:"** (verse 15b) *'We're here to turn you from these things,'* they tear their garments, as Jews they knew that was blasphemous to take any credit of God. Again, you guys are familiar with Captain Cook, an explorer, his story is that he came to an island he and his first mate, those on the island said *'These are gods,'* they played along with it, and let it happen, and it was kind of great for awhile, getting lots of dinners delivered and the best place to sleep and all their needs taken care of, until Captain Cook himself indulging with the women on the island picked one young woman that was beautiful, and it happened to be the wife of a young husband who in anger and jealousy, lost his cool for a little bit and hit the god on the back of the head with a club. Well when he hit Captain Cook on the back of the head with a club, Captain Cook went down on the ground and started moaning, was bleeding, holding his head, and the chief and the other leaders of the tribe said *'Wait a minute, gods don't bleed, gods don't moan when you hit them with clubs, these guys have deceived us, and they beat Captain Cook to death,'* that was a marvelous story, you can make application in any way you want, it's just free information. But Paul and Barnabas knew not to touch this with a ten foot pole, they said

‘the very reason we came here is to turn you from these things, to the God who made heaven, and earth, and all things that are therein:’ “who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” (verses 16-17) now Paul can’t go with these Gentiles [who actually were pagan Gentiles, unlike the God-fearing Gentile he was used to preaching to in the synagogues] back to Abraham and so forth, so he’s talking to them about Creation, you know, ***Psalm 19*** tells us this, it says ***‘The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament sheweth forth his handiwork, day unto day they utter speech, night unto night they shew forth knowledge, there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.’*** That lines up with ***Romans chapter 1***, ***‘that says that God’s eternal power and his Godhead are clearly seen in the things that are made.’*** It doesn’t say the Gospel is communicated in the things that are made. But what it says is ***‘Every thinking individual, if he looks at the world around him, will see order, and there cannot order without information.’*** And the fact there is information attached to Creation, again, matter and energy never produce life, it was matter, energy and information that produced life. And it’s only in our own day that we have done something worse than the pagans in the past, nobody back then was an atheist, you were stupid if you were an atheist through most of human history, they may have had the wrong god, but everybody had a god. Everybody understood the things that existed couldn’t be there without a Creator, you just had the wrong god. We’ve done the worst things now, ascribed some of the most remarkable things that we see now and in more depth than we’ve ever seen to nothing, to chance. [see

<https://unityinchrist.com/dinosaurs/molecularmachines.htm>]

. . .Paul, a wiser man than most, he says ***‘Don’t sacrifice to us, we came to turn you from this emptiness, from the vanity to the true Living God that made heaven and earth and everything that’s in it. He hasn’t left himself without witness, that he’s done good, he’s given us the rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.’*** ***“And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.” (verse 18)*** And look, for Paul and Barnabas, this is the first time they’re encountering this. They’ve argued with pagan theology, they’ve argued with the Jews in the

synagogues, but this is the first time anybody's wanted to sacrifice to them and make them gods. So this is a completely new experience for them in their new role as missionaries.

Paul's Evangelism To The Local Pagan Population Backfires

And there it says **“And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.” (verse 19)** Now look, they're [these angry Jews who thought Paul was dividing up their synagogues] following Paul all the way from here's Pisidia in Antioch, this is 85 miles or so to Iconium, and now we're down here in Lystra, another 20 miles or so, these guys are determined --a hundred and twenty miles some of them come to hassle Paul and chase him down. And they come into the area now, and it says is what they do is they convince the people there that Paul and Barnabas are trouble-makers. Now look what's happening, you have to understand. These people are discouraged, all of their hopes got up, they were so excited, *‘Zeus and Hermes are here! This is great, they've come back to us, let's get the priest, let's have a sacrifice, let's get the whole town,’* and they got Paul and Barnabas tearing their clothes, saying **‘You guys are crazy, we're not Zeus and Hermes, we came to turn you away from this foolishness,’** and there must be a letdown, people are scratching their heads, and now here come these Jews from the cities of Antioch and Iconium, saying **‘These guys are trouble-makers, you let them in!? They're going to disrupt your whole, they messed everything up.’** And it says they **“persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.” (verse 19)** That word “supposing” 15 times in the New Testament always means “believing,” it always means “knowing.” This isn't supposing, *‘maybe he's dead, maybe he's not.’* No, it's always when they suppose something they took it for granted it was so, in every use. The Jews were involved, that's why the stoning was part of this. They had stoned enough people no doubt, Paul's probably laying there battered, bloody, he says he bears in his body the marks of Christ, no doubt some of them were received at this point in time. Look, be careful. In the afternoon, people want you

to be God, and by the end of the day, they stone you. Politics in this country run the same way. This is people traveling from Antioch and Iconium to convince them. If they had NBC, CBS, the major networks to convince somebody was bad, our populace is constantly manipulated by the media. I remember when I was a kid, it was a long time ago, but, there was a role in the media to inform the public, now the role of the media is to “form” the public, not to inform the public. **You** have to be Bereans, you have to dig, you have to use the Internet, you have to use alternative sources, you have to take hold of the world you live in, you have to put it all through the lens of the Scripture, and you have to make wise decisions and wise choices. [i.e. do you believe our current history books and media when it comes to US history? For an interesting alternative, digging deep through various sources, it’s not so beautiful and pristine as you would imagine. See

<https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans1.htm> and read through those 6 “html” pages.]

Because people are so easily swayed. This town of Lystra in the afternoon want to do sacrifices, ‘*Praise the gods, here they are, let’s sacrifice bulls to them,*’ and then how long does it take for the same people now to stomp on Paul, it’s like ‘*Hosanna, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,*’ before the week is over they’re crying ‘*Crucify him, crucify him! Give us Barabbas, crucify him to death!*’ So you can’t, I’m not saying be paranoid and suspicious of everybody in church, ok, this is the best dysfunctional family going, you’re actually safer here than you are anywhere. Stay on your toes, but you’re safer here than you are anywhere. But the world out there is fickle, and one day somebody’s patting you and the back, next day they’re putting a knife in your back. Here they stoned Paul, no doubt take him out of the city, threw him into the dump, supposing he’s dead. [Here we see in Luke’s historic account a classic example of why Paul’s evangelism to the Gentiles was almost always to the *synagogue-attending God-fearing Gentiles*, and not to the pagan Gentiles. The *God-fearing Gentiles* **always** received Paul and his message well.] And it says “**Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.**” (verse 20) Now there’s disciples plural, those who have come to believe. No doubt one of them is Timothy, whose a young man at this point in time, standing there watching this apostle leading. There are disciples standing around, and it just says “**he rose up,**” that’s the same phrase used over in verse 10, it says “**and he leaped and**

walked” the crippled man, **“he rose up”** it says here, Paul, that’s all it says. And then look what it says, **“and came into the city:”** to Lystra. If I survived that I would be headed to another town, I wouldn’t go back into the town where they stoned me, unless he went in and said *‘Finish the job, you guys are lousy stoners, I should be dead.’* Because I think, this is my own conviction, you’re entitled to your own, all of us are, in **2nd Corinthians** Paul says this, **‘It was not expedient for that was to glory, I will come to visions or revelations of the Lord,’** speaking of himself he said **‘I knew a man in Christ, about fourteen years ago,’** that’s our timing here, **‘whether he was in the body I cannot tell, or whether he was out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth, such an one caught up to the third heaven, and I knew such a man, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth, how that he was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.’** I think Paul’s experience, I think Paul was dead there or on the verge of death, and I think it is that experience there at Lystra where he is caught up to the 3rd heaven and is given visions of Paradise. And here he said it would be a crime, it would be unlawful, it would be a crime to try to put them into human language, realizing that there’s no linguistic ability to communicate the things that he experienced there, there’s no nomenclature, there’s no way to describe it. But I think it was that experience, when they get this guy up, when he gets up, he goes right back into Lystra. And again, at that point, what’s the worst that can happen? He can live, that’s the worst that can happen. Again, I have a friend, he’s in Florida right now, but he came to church for awhile, he died twice. He told me *“Joe, they paddled me, and brought me back twice,”* he said *“I can’t tell you about the beauty, the light, I saw the Lord, I didn’t see his face,”* he said *“I did not want to come back.”* And then he commenting on what happened, he would say *“Well, what’s the worst that can happen?”* I said *“Well you’ll die,”* he said, *“Wow! You live, that’s the worst that can happen.”* We see Paul comes marching back, when he came back into Lystra was he all lumpy and bloody? did he have lumps all over his noggin? Was he coming in like this? We’re not told, but no doubt something is instilled in him at this point, that drives this man, there was no thing in this world that would stop him for the cause of Christ. He saw things, he experienced things that he said it would be a crime to put in human language. But he knew those things were laid up for any sinner who would come to God for forgiveness through Jesus Christ. He knew the glory and the

wonder of Paradise, the things that he experienced were there for any sinner, because he calls himself the chief of sinners. And he knew the third heaven was close at hand. The Bible says the first heaven is the sky, the atmosphere around the earth, the second heaven is the stellar heavens, outerspace, the stars. But there is a 3rd heaven the Bible speaks of, and that is the spiritual heaven [and it is outside space-time, the space-time continuum]. Jesus said the Kingdom of heaven is in your midst. Remember after his resurrection he stepped into and out of the room, he was transversing dimensions, he stepped out of one dimension and into another, from the Kingdom of Heaven, right into our world. He said the Kingdom of Heaven is in your midst. There's a 3rd heaven, Paul now at this point in time. [transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 13:44-52 and Acts 14:1-20, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

Audio version: <http://resources.ccphilly.org/SPM610>

Map of Paul's 1st missionary journey: https://bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_first_missionary_journey.html

For a Messianic Jewish version of Paul's evangelism to the Gentiles, see <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/index3.htm>

The pagan world, and now the atheist world needs to know God exists before they can receive the Gospel. see <https://unityinchrist.com/Does/Does%20God%20Exist.html>