Sermon Notes

Hardship to Heaven

Acts 14:1-22 NIV

1. The believers continue to multiply

Acts 14:1 There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed.

1. BUT

Acts 14:2 But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

Acts 14:5 There was a plot afoot among both Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them.

1. Problems are not necessarily a reflection of sin.
2. Acts 14:9b-10

Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had the faith to be healed and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

1. What is keeping you down?
2. Zeus and Hermes

Contrast Paul’s response to King Herod in Acts 12 when the people start to say that King Herod is a deity. Paul tears his clothes.

Paul’s single focus is the worship of God.

Worshipping the wrong God.

1. Zeal

Zeal-Great energy or enthusiasm in pursuit of a cause or objective.

Is zeal always good?

Two examples of misguided zeal

People worshipping Paul and Barnabas

Acts 14:19

Contrast that to Paul and Barnabas and their singular focus (preach the good news and advance the kingdom of God).

Acts 14:19 Paul is stoned and left for dead.

1. Perseverance for a purpose

Kicked out of a couple of cities.

He has some persistent enemies who want him dead.

He isn’t inviting trouble, but he is staying on **Mission**.

Not stubborn, but clay in the hands of God.

1. Time to consider working in the family bakery?
2. Paul and Barnabas go to Derbe

60 miles from Lystra, several day journey.

Acts 4:21 They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples.

God’s kingdom can not be stopped.

Acts 4:21b-22 Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God,” they said.