

## STONED MID-SERMON

### I. Acts 14:1-20

A. Last week we were in Pisidian Antioch (*Turkey today*) where Paul & Barnabas proclaimed the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles. Many believed while others rejected their message. Acts 13:49-52 says: "And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit."

B. Have you ever faced opposition for saying and doing what was right? Have you ever been the victim of slanderous rumors and accusations, or an angry crowd hell bent against you? Did this happen to you because you loved Jesus and were faithfully proclaiming the Gospel? So let's see what's next for Paul and Barnabas?

### C. Acts 14:1-20 Paul and Barnabas in Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe...

1) **V1-7** "Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, and there they continued to preach the gospel." (**Being led or 'having fled' - either will get you where God wants.**)

2) **V8-10** "Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking." (**Did he go walking and leaping and praising God like Peter's healed cripple? Most likely!**)

3) **V11-13** "And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds." (**An ancient local legend purported that Zeus and Hermes once came to the hill country of that area disguised as men. Only one elderly couple extended hospitality to them. Afterwards their cottage was transformed into a temple with a golden roof and marble columns while their neighbors homes were destroyed. Perhaps they thought Paul & Barnabas were those gods incognito.**)

4) **V14-17** Listen to the tag-team preachers: "But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. In past generations He allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet He did not leave Himself without witness, for He did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." (**They're trying to sacrifice oxen to perceived gods in human form while Paul and Barnabas want them to know how the God of all Creation actually sacrificed His very own Son for them!**)

5) **V18-20** And mid-sermon this happens: "Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them. But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe." (**Just how bloody and bludgeoned was Paul that they thought he was dead? How'd Barnabas dodge the rocks? Was a young Timothy watching with his mom & grandma? What did the healed cripple think of this? Did Paul think back to Stephen as the stones were striking him?**)

D. So Paul & Barnabas are mid-sermon when the stones start flying. They were pointing them to the *Maker and Creator of all things seen and unseen* and to His Son our Savior and the mob starts heaving rocks. What would have been next for their sermon? I suspect they would have moved from common grace to Amazing Grace; from universal grace to the Word of Grace which truly saves; from general revelation to the specific revelation of God the Son, Jesus Christ, who was 'appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the worlds!' (even *Jupiter and Mercury!*)

E. The Brothers may have been headed for a pre-epistle version of 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: Now, brothers and sisters, (we want to tell of you of our Gospel). By this gospel you (can be) saved, if you hold firmly to the word (we are preaching) to you. Otherwise, (you'll be believing) in vain. For what (we) received (we) pass on now to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... Or maybe they would have shared something like Ephesians 2:4-9 as their Word of Grace sermon text: But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved (you), even (though you are) dead in (your)

trespasses, (*can make you*) alive together with Christ—by grace you (*can be*) been saved—and raised up with Him and (*seated*) with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward (*you*) in Christ Jesus. For by (*this*) grace you (*can be*) saved through faith. And this (*won't be*) your own doing; (*because*) it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

## II. Communion

**A. As we take the Bread and Cup this morning, you should know and we all should be reminded, of this same Word of Grace. We should be reminded that Jesus gave Himself to die for us. Jesus said this in John 10:14-18 (ESV) **14** I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me, **15** just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. **16** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. **17** For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. **18** No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from My Father.” **(The Bread and Cup proclaim to our hearts that Jesus laid down His life for us!)****

**B. And then we have Paul, writing to the churches of Galatia, the vast area that encompassed Antioch Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. His words also remind us that Jesus gave Himself to die. Galatians 1:3-5 (ESV)** To the churches of Galatia: **3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, **4** who gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, **5** to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

\* Prayer and Serve Communion...

\* Benediction verse - Galatians 1:3-5...

## Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

### Acts 14:1-20 (ESV)

**1** Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. **2** But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. **3** So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. **4** But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. **5** When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, **6** they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, **7** and there they continued to preach the gospel. **8** Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. **9** He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, **10** said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And he sprang up and began walking. **11** And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, “The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” **12** Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. **13** And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. **14** But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, **15** “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. **16** In past generations He allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. **17** Yet He did not leave Himself without witness, for He did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.” **18** Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them. **19** But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. **20** But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.

### Zeus and Hermes - Theological Note on Acts 14:12-13

Reformation Study Bible

**Acts 14:12-13:** An ancient legend circulated in Lystra that the Greek gods Zeus and Hermes disguised themselves as men and came to the Phrygian hill country, seeking hospitality. Only one couple welcomed them, and in return their cottage was changed into a temple with a golden roof and marble columns. The houses of those who refused the gods were destroyed. The Lystrans may have been thinking of the legend when they welcomed Barnabas and Paul and prepared to sacrifice oxen, mistaking them for the gods, revisiting the region incognito.

- Theological Note on Acts 14:12-13, Reformation Study Bible, Reformation Trust-Ligonier Ministries, p. 1941.

### [1 Corinthians 15:1-4 \(NIV\)](#)

**1** Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. **2** By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. **3** For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

### [Ephesians 2:4-9 \(ESV\)](#)

**4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

### [John 10:14-18 \(ESV\)](#)

**14** I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me, **15** just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. **16** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. **17** For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. **18** No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from My Father."

### [Galatians 1:3-5 \(ESV\)](#)

To the churches of Galatia: **3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, **4** who gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, **5** to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

### [Film Clips & Other Links](#)

**Christian Martyrs - Randall Niles - Voice of the Martyrs**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnSeX3P7L6s>

**Paul's Journeys - What's in the Bible?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy4K1pP408Y>

**Louisiana Pastor Shot Dead Mid-sermon**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9Wudp5mvPc>

**"Table of Grace" - Cover by Jack 41401**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlZe7AUjsOQ>

**"Song of Grace" - Mathias Michael**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-No3Y68iGk>

**Paul Stoned at Lystra - From the Movie, The Book of Acts**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YERV7Afr5uA>

### [Bonus Stuff](#)

#### [Romans 3:20-24 \(NIV\)](#)

**20** Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. **21** But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. **22** This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

#### [Hebrews 4:14-16 \(ESV\)](#)

**14** Since then we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **15** For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. **16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### **Titus 2:11-14 (NKJV)**

**11** For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, **12** teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, **13** looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14** who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

### **Galatians 2:17-21 (ESV)**

**17** But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! **18** For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. **19** For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. **20** I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **21** I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

### **The Net**

During the building of the Golden Gate Bridge over San Francisco Bay, construction fell badly behind schedule because several workers had accidentally fallen from the scaffolding to their deaths. Engineers and administrators could find no solution to the costly delays. Finally, someone suggested a gigantic net be hung under the bridge to catch any who fell. Finally in spite of the enormous cost, the engineers opted for the net. After it was installed, progress was hardly interrupted. A worker or two fell into the net but were saved. Ultimately, all the time lost to fear was regained by replacing fear with faith in the net.

- Richard Baxter, *The Free Gift*.

### **Unmerited Favor**

When a person works an eight-hour day and receives a fair day's pay for his time, that is a wage. When a person competes with an opponent and receives a trophy for his performance, that is a prize. When a person receives appropriate recognition for his long service or high achievements, that is an award. But when a person is not capable of earning a wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award—yet receives such a gift anyway—that is a good picture of God's unmerited favor. This is what we mean when we talk about the grace of God.

- G.W. Knight, *Clip-Art Features for Church Newsletters*, p. 53

### **Martin Luther on the Cost of Grace**

"Although out of pure grace God does not impute our sins to us, He nonetheless did not want to do this until complete and ample satisfaction of His law and His righteousness had been made. Since this was impossible for us, God ordained for us, in our place, One who took upon Himself all the punishment we deserve. He fulfilled the law for us. He averted the judgment of God from us and appeased God's wrath. Grace, therefore, costs us nothing, but it cost Another much to get it for us. Grace was purchased with an incalculable, infinite treasure, the Son of God Himself."

### **Quote by Charles H. Spurgeon**

"Repentance was never yet produced in any man's heart apart from the grace of God. As soon may you expect the leopard to regret the blood with which its fangs are moistened,—as soon might you expect the lion of the wood to abjure his cruel tyranny over the feeble beasts of the plain, as expect the sinner to make any confession, or offer any repentance that shall be accepted of God, unless grace shall first renew the heart."

### **Quote by Matt Chandler**

"The idolatry that exists in a man's heart always wants to lead him away from his Savior and back to self-reliance no matter how pitiful that self-reliance is or how many times it has betrayed Him."

### **Quote by John Piper**

"Picture salvation as a house that you live in. It provides you with protection. It is stocked with food and drink that will last forever. It never decays or crumbles. Its windows open onto vistas of glory. God built it at great cost to Himself and to His Son, and He gave it to you. The purchase agreement is called a 'new covenant.' The terms read: 'This house shall become and remain yours if you will receive it as a gift and take delight in the Father and the Son as they inhabit the house with you. You shall not profane the house of God by sheltering other gods nor turn your heart away after other treasures.' Would it not be foolish to say yes to this agreement, and then hire a lawyer to draw up an amortization schedule with monthly payments in the hopes of somehow balancing accounts. You would be treating the house no longer as a gift, but a purchase. God would no longer be the free benefactor. And you would be enslaved to a new set of demands that he never dreamed of putting on you. If grace is to be free - which is the very meaning of grace - we cannot view it as something to be repaid."

- John Piper, *Future Grace*.