

SESSION 11 REVIEW: DECEMBER 9, 2012  
CALVARY METHODIST CHURCH  
ACTS Chapter 14-15 (NIV Translation)

### At Iconium

**14** Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. **2** But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. **3** Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness **to the word of His grace**, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. **4** But **the multitude of the city was divided**: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. **5** And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, **6 they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe**, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region. **7** And they were preaching the gospel there.

### Idolatry at Lystra

**8** And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. **9** *This* man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and **seeing that he had faith to be healed**, **10** said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked. **11** Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian *language*, "*The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!*" **12** *And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. 13 Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.*

**14** But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out **15** and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, 16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." **18** And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

### Stoning, Escape to Derbe

**19** Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul *and dragged him* out of the city, **\*\*supposing him to be dead.** **20** However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

**(A LIST OF THE ADVERSITIES PAUL RECOUNTS 2Corinthians 11:23** " *Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool —I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure (more than I can recount), in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in*

*fastings often, in cold and nakedness— 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. )*

**\*\* Paul's vision of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Heaven, although the word does is not explicit about this I believe that this may have been a near death experience for Paul at which time he visited heaven and 'returned as it were from the dead.'**  
*: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago— whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— 4 how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. 5 Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities.*

### **Paul & Barnabus return to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to strengthen the Converts**

**21** And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, **22** strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, **“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”** **23** So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **24** And after they had passed through **Pisidia**, they came to **Pamphylia**. **25** Now when they had preached the word in **Perga**, they went down to **Attalia**. **26** From there they sailed to **Antioch**, (Syria) where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. **27** Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. **28** So they stayed there a long time with the disciples. (The beginning of this mission had its inception in Antioch, *“Separate to me Barnabus and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”* the message given by the Holy Spirit.)

CHAPTER 15: DOCTRINAL DISPUTES: **Remnants of Judaism:** - - The Jerusalem Council  
(See discussion points below)

**15** And certain *men* came down from Judea and taught the brethren, **“Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”** (Adding to the Gospel or mixing law and grace)**2** Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

**3** So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. **4** And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. **5** But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.”

**(Read Paul's account of the conflict of Grace vs Law and tradition: Galatians 2:1-13) RE: The Jerusalem Council**

**6** Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. **7** And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up *and* said to them: **“Men and brethren, (allows for some in the audience who are not in the fellowship of the faith.)** you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth **the Gentiles should hear the word** of the gospel and believe. **8** So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He did* to us,**9** and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

**10** Now therefore, **why do you test God** by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? **11** But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.” **12** Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them **among the Gentiles**. **13** And after they had become silent,

**James answered, saying,**

“Men *and*brethren, listen to me: **14** Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. **15** And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: **16** *‘After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.’*

**18** “Known to God from eternity are all His works. **19** Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, **20** but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. **21** For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

**The Jerusalem Decree**

**22** Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send **chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas**, leading men among the brethren. **23** They wrote this *letter* by them: (This Judas Barsabas may have been the man with whom Saul stayed in Damascus after his encounter before Ananais found him. See Chap. 9)

The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: *Greetings. - - 24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, “You must be circumcised and keep the law” -to whom we gave no such commandment— 25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.* Farewell.

**Continuing Ministry in Syria**

**30** So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. **31** When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. **32** Now **Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words**. **33** And after they had stayed *there* for a time, they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles. **34** However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there. **35** Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

**Dispute arises concerning John Mark** (This parting of ways at Syrian Antioch)

**36** Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “**Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing.**” (This would be an enormous and time consuming undertaking.) **37** Now **Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark**. **38** But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, (See Chapter 13)and had not gone with them to the work.**39** Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And **so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus**; **40** but Paul chose Silas

and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

(Barnabus pairs with John Mark leaving for Cyprus; Paul and Silas to make the rounds again to Syria and Cilicia. It was at John Mark's mother's house where the brethren prayed for Peter who had been imprisoned Acts 12:25)

#### **Additional information on Mark the apostle:**

1. Mark was among the original 70 disciples during Jesus' earthly ministry
2. It was at his mother's (Mary's) house where Christians met. It was here that Peter came after the miraculous release from the prison.
3. Paul thought he may not be reliable or perhaps lacked commitment, when he departed to return to Jerusalem instead of forging onward into the regions north of Cyprus.
4. Tradition holds that after the death of Peter Mark left Rome for Alexandria Egypt and here established the first Christian settlement. (Coptic Christians) dates vary but some say 49.a.d.
5. Mark is the author of the fourth gospel. His insignia among the gospels is the lion.
6. He was a kinsman of Barnabus (presumably a cousin or nephew) and there was a strong family attachment throughout the time of their ministry together
7. The gospel of Mark may have been inspired by the teachings and preaching of Peter
8. Coptic tradition holds that he was martyred in Alexandria in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Nero's reign 62 a.d.
9. It is thought that the last supper was at the home of John Mark's father who by then had passed away.
10. John Mark accompanied Peter and Sylvanus on a missionary journey to Rome about the time of Claudius Caesar's reign (42 a.d.) (Peter's reference is 1Peter4:12)
11. Later we see him in Rome where Paul is under house arrest. During reign of Nero. John Mark is noted in Paul's letter to Colossians. 60-62 a.d.

#### **More on the Jerusalem Council**

1. Approximately 20 years had passed since the resurrection and the birth of the church.
2. James is the leading voice of the church in Jerusalem.
3. The doctrine of grace versus works has been a lingering issue for those who have come out of Judaism, especially those pharisees who were brought to faith.
4. Peter was shown clearly that God had open the Gentiles to faith through Cornelius.
5. Paul, Barnabus and Titus received notice after returning from their first missionary journey to Antioch that Jewish law was being required to be saved. They had to confront this and returned to Jerusalem to meet with Peter, James and John.
6. Read the **Galatians 2** account to hear the different tone than Luke uses in **Acts 15**.
7. James in his epistle gives a tone of works that are evidence of faith. Especially giving.
8. The council determines that certain levitical practices (Lev.17-18) shall be preserved.
  - a. food sacrificed to idols
  - b. sexual impurity
  - c. eating of blood
  - d. meat that contained blood, resulting from strangling
9. Some experts say that Galatians 2 is not describing the same event as described in 15. Acts
10. Remember that Christianity at this time was entirely Judaic in its roots, scripture and traditions. The belief that Christianity had replaced Judaism had not crept in. Replacement theology holds a view that the church IS Israel and prophetic passages associated with Israel do not apply to them but to the church.