

Crossway Life Group, Week of June 23

See sermon notes on [CMC's webpage](#) for background information

Community

Take time to share and pray for each other's concerns and joys.

Scripture: Acts 14:1-7 "Bringing New Life"

Reading & Discussing Scripture

- Many things in our world are produced through a process that can be simplified as:
 - **Inputs** → **Processing** → **Outputs**. For example, a good group meal has *inputs* (ingredients, inviting people,) a *process* (cooking, interaction) and *outputs* (yummy food, fellowship).
 - What other things are produced in this way? Can you describe the input, process, and outputs?
 - The **process** part can sometimes be unseen, unpredictable, or even a bit mysterious (for example the chemistry of ingredients becoming tasty food, or the 'chemistry' of people's fellowship). How does this unpredictable aspect affect the process and the people involved?
- The book of Acts was written by Luke...a doctor, historian, and author. His goal was to transform people and churches by a strategic, inspired, and reliable telling of the stories of God's and human's work in the early church. Acts 14:1-7 describes inputs, process, and output of how God brings new life in Christ.
- **Read Acts 14:1-7.**
 - What are the "inputs" that God uses to bring about the "output" of new life in Christ?
 - What is the invisible "processing" as people come to new life in Christ?
- Proclamation = *telling an important and wonderful message with matching enthusiasm and power*. How does Acts 14:1-7 illustrate this definition? Why are all parts of this definition important?
- What are the different reactions to the gospel in Acts 14:1-7? What groups of people believe, and what groups refuse to believe? Why do you think Luke included these details in the story?
- How do Paul and Barnabas react to opposition to the Gospel? How do you suppose they knew when to stay and when to flee? Even when fleeing, what is consistent about their lives?
- God's miraculous actions do not end opposition to the Gospel. In fact, people seem even stronger in their stance (belief or opposition). The same was often true when Jesus performed miracles (see John 5:16-18). What are the implications for our proclamation today?
- Do you have any questions about the sermon or the Bible passage?

The Big Idea

The proclamation of the Gospel brings many to new life in Christ while some oppose it and try to keep others from believing.

Growing in Cross-cultural Understandings

Christians are called to proclaim the gospel (explaining with words) as well as to live out the gospel (demonstrating with actions and relationships). In today's world and especially our church, sharing the gospel means communicating and living across cultures. Acts 14:1-7 shows people from diverse cultures both believing the gospel as well as refusing to believe the gospel. Some individuals and cultures may value words more than actions; some may value actions more than words.

- Why are both words and actions important in the process of God bringing new life in Christ?
- Considering your culture, your religious background, or your personality...is the tendency to value actions or words or both?

- What aspects of the Gospel are more easily understood or received in your home culture? What aspects are challenging or more likely to be rejected? How can knowing these differences help you (or others) explain the Gospel in your culture?

Application & Reflection Questions

1. Consider your own faith journey, whether you have new life in Christ or are still seeking...
 - What are the “inputs” that God used or is using in your life?
 - What was or is the invisible “processing” for you? How did God work in your heart? How is God still working in your heart?
2. The church is made up of many different people with different gifts, abilities and passions. What are examples of the teamwork that make up some of the “inputs” leading to new life in Christ? Where might you fit in that community effort?
3. How can your life group help each other proclaim the Gospel well, optimistically, boldly and persistently (even in opposition)? Which of the following would be helpful for you to discuss?
 - How would you simply, clearly explain the essential parts of the Gospel? a) God’s holiness, b) human sin, c) God’s grace in Christ, d) the Spirit’s work and human faith
 - What stories can you share to help others understand these parts of the Gospel?
 - Where is God prompting, confirming, and connecting you to others? What relationships can you invite others into so they can be friends with Christians?
 - What is your tendency when you face opposition to sharing Jesus? What helps you to be realistic yet unafraid and persistent even in light of opposition?

Serving beyond ourselves

What are ways that your group can be for the benefit of people beyond yourselves? In particular, in what ways can you be Spirit-filled messengers of the Good News about Jesus Christ?

Acts 14:1-7 New International Version (NIV)

Paul & Barnabas at Iconium

At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed.² But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ³ So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to perform signs and wonders. ⁴ The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. ⁵ There was a plot afoot among both Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them. ⁶ But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country, ⁷ where they continued to preach the gospel.