

Crossway Life Group, Week of July 7

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 14:19-28 "The Good of a Hard Journey"

Reading & Discussing Scripture

- In order to set the scene for the main passage, **read Acts 14:8-18**. Note how the people of Lystra wanted to sacrifice to Paul & Barnabas. In fact, Paul & Barnabas were barely able to prevent it!
- Now **read Acts 14:19-28**.
 - **In verses 19-21a**, who led the opposition? Who came to the aid of Paul after he was stoned? How long was it before Paul & Barnabas again proclaimed the Good News, this time in Derbe?
 - **In verses 21b-15**, what was Paul & Barnabas's purpose in returning to the same cities again? What was the primary message that they gave to these churches?
 - **In verses 26-28**, what was Paul & Barnabas's main message to their sending church in Antioch? Given the experience of persecution and even being stoned almost to death, what could have been their primary message?

The Big Idea

The journey of faith in Christ until heaven includes hardship and the blessing of the work and presence of God

Application & Reflection Questions

1. Consider this statement: "Our roots tend not to go deep until they need to!" What does that mean? In what ways have you seen it to be true?
2. Consider this statement: "God uses hardship to help us grow deeper in our knowledge of Him." What does that mean?
3. When have you seen God use trouble to help people come to know Him? What was that like?
4. How has God used trouble in your life to help you grow deeper in your knowledge of Him?
5. What trouble might God be using now in your life to help you know Him and to help you grow deeper roots in Christ? What good work might God be doing in your life because of these troubles?
6. Since God uses trouble to help us grow in Him, how should we live in the midst of our troubles? How should we counsel others as they walk through trouble?

Growing in Cross-cultural Understandings

Different groups of people have very different expectations for future good in this world. Some groups (often those with power and resources) tend to be very optimistic about what the days ahead will bring. Other groups (often those with little power and few resources) tend to be less optimistic. How have your expectations for potential good in the future been affected by your own experiences and the experiences of groups of people you associate with? What impact might that have had on how you approach life, or relate to God? What impact might it have on worship and mission?

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 14:8-18 New International Version (NIV)

In Lystra and Derbe

⁸ In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked. ⁹ He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed ¹⁰ and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

¹¹ When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" ¹² Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: ¹⁵ "Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. ¹⁶ In the past, he let all nations go their own way. ¹⁷ Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." ¹⁸ Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

Acts 14:19-28

¹⁹ Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. ²⁰ But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

The Return to Antioch in Syria

²¹ They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, ²² 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. ²³ Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. ²⁴ After going through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia, ²⁵ and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

²⁶ From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. ²⁷ On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.