



Decade of Availability The Spirit & Boldness

Two things become evident as Paul and Barnabas are led of the Spirit. 1) Boldness is required in sharing the Gospel and 2) Both acceptance and opposition to the Gospel follow the preaching of the Gospel. Each of us have been called to Spirit-led evangelism.

The Opposition: Spiritual warfare has its origin in a rebellion of many angels against God. Satan is seen as the prince of this world, leading an array of forces opposed to God. Although disarmed by Jesus Christ on the cross, they remain a threat to the church and to individual believers. *Keep on the armor of God! Eph 6:10-18*

A. Filled with Joy and the Spirit Acts 13:50-52

1. **Leaving Antioch Pisidia:** Paul preached his first sermon in Antioch and many believed in the Gospel. However the opposition rose up and they headed to Iconium—filled with Joy and the Spirit.

B. Sharing the Gospel vv. 14:1-2

1. **To the Jew first:** Even though Paul and Barnabas ‘shook off the dust’ they continue to minister to the Jews.
2. **Receiving and rejecting:** Many believe in the Lord but the ‘unbelieving’ poison the minds of many.

It appears from the Word and observation that when people are open to the Gospel message the opposition does all it can to cause doubt and unbelief.

C. Dealing with the Opposition vv. 14:3-4

1. **It often takes time:** v. 3 It seems odd that in the face of the opposition of verse 2 that the next thing we see is—they spend a long time there and preach with greater boldness.
2. **It ALWAYS requires Spirit-empowerment:** It was the Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit that spoke (prophetically) through the Word into their lives confirmed by signs and wonders.

Note: The signs and wonders were done as a result of Paul and Barnabas laying hands on people—but it was the empowerment of the Spirit that accomplished the work.

D. Fulfilling God’s Purposes vv. 5-7; Acts 14:19-20; 9:16

1. **Faith and suffering:** In this case the Holy Spirit reveals the plot to Paul and Barnabas and they escape. Yet, in the next city in Acts 14:19-20 Paul was stoned and left for dead.

WHY? So why does God rescue in one case and allow pain and suffering in another? Paul’s example: Contentment...

“...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Philippians 4:11-13

Acts 13:50-52 (KJV)

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. **51** But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. **52** And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 14:1-7 (KJV)

1 And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

6 They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:

7 And there they preached the gospel.

Acts 14:19-20 (KJV)

19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

“The fact that Jesus died is more important than the fact that I will die.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

