



Decade of Availability The Spirit & Edification

“He giveth power to the faint;
And to them that have no might he increaseth
strength...they that wait upon the
Lord shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings as eagles;
They shall run, and not be weary.” *Isa 40:29-31*

Background: *vv. 19-20* Paul was stoned and left for dead in Lystra. There is a good chance he was raised from the dead. Also, the young Timothy might have been among those seeing this miracle and Paul probably stayed in the home of Eunice and Lois. (*See 2 Tim 1:5*).

They went to Derbe and preached the gospel and then, amazingly went back to Lystra. There was ‘building up’ work to be done.

A. Strengthening the Believers *vv. 21-22*

Paul and Barnabas retrace their steps and spend time building up the new believers in three ways:

1. **Soul Strength:** Remember the psalmist said, “Why art thou cast down oh my soul?” *Psa 42*. Were the disciples discouraged because of the stoning of Paul or the persecution? Whatever the case...it was time to...wait on the Lord who would renew their soul/strength.
2. **Faith Strength:** Note that we are to ‘continue’ in the faith. This is an exhortation to ‘Faith Life’ — [Expectation-Persistence-Humility] Faith is not a one-time event but a daily walk. *See Col 2:6-7*
3. **Future strength:** Faith does not eliminate all difficulties—continuing faith will bring on tribulation and difficulties. E.M Bounds said, “Only believers who are giving Satan problems will experience his wrath.”

B. Strengthening the Church *v. 23-28*

God-appointed leadership and sharing the works of God (giving a report/testimony) are two ways the early church was strengthened.

1. **Leadership strength:** *v. 23*

(a) Appointing shepherds: It appears that there was no vote taken but that of the Lord. How did Paul know who God was calling? The Holy Spirit revealed them to him.

(b) Prayer and fasting: Part of the selection process involved prayer and fasting. In *Acts 13:1-2* The Holy Spirit speaks through a time of prayer and fasting by church leaders—and calls Paul and Barnabas to this first missionary journey. Now through prayer and fasting the Holy Spirit appoints pastors/shepherds.

(c) Released to the Lord: ‘Commended’ to the Lord means that God works in and through the local church. “*And he gave ...for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ.*” *Eph 4:11-12*

2. **Testimony strength:** *vv. 24-28*

(a) Work fulfilled: *v. 26* They return to Antioch (in Syria) by God’s work of grace. It was a work of ‘fulfilled’ grace. God led them through and sometimes out of the persecution and trials of their faith.

(b) Giving testimony: *v 27* Paul stayed in Antioch for nearly two years. One of the things he did was to tell what happened to him and Barnabas and how the Gentiles had been blessed. The key here is that he gave glory to God for all that God had accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 14:19-28 (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.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

24 And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

