

Commentary on Acts 14-15

by Chuck Smith

Transcript

Paul and Barnabas, in carrying the Gospel, have come into the uncharted territories as far as the Gospel is concerned into Asia Minor. They came from Cyprus to the area that is now known as Turkey. They did not remain in the coastal plains of Pamphylia. It is thought that Paul probably got malaria fever. It was a very prevalent thing around the coastal plains of Pamphylia at that time.

And later on when Paul wrote to the Galatians and he spoke to them of how sick he was when he was there with them. So the fact that Paul did not stay in Pamphylia, but immediately moved into the upper plateau country of Pisidia to the city of Antioch, that he was going up there for actually health reasons as much as anything else. Coming into the area of Galatia.

There in Antioch they went into the synagogue. They preached Jesus Christ, and there was a tremendous response the following week. Practically the whole town came out to listen to them, which created a jealousy in the hearts of the Jews in the synagogues, and they turned the people against Paul and Barnabas. So Paul and Barnabas left Antioch, and as we come into chapter 14, they went from Antioch about fifty miles away to Iconium.

And so when they came into Iconium, [as was their procedure] they went into the synagogue again on the sabbath day, and they again spoke, and a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against Paul and Barnabas and those who had believed. And so they remained there a long time speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and the Lord granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands (Act 14:1-3).

So they were facing opposition in Iconium. And rather than fleeing from the opposition, they stayed there a long time in order that they might really root and ground those who believed in the faith. I think that one of the weaknesses of modern day evangelism is the lack of follow up. It is rather tragic to bring people to a birth in Jesus Christ, but don't

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