

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 9/8 thru 9/14
Acts 14:21-28



WHATS THE STORY?

Paul and Barnabas visit the cities in which they had established churches during their journey, appointing elders while praying and fasting with the new believers. Afterwards, they return to Antioch with a joyful report of the spread of the gospel.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What would it be like to see the impact you've had on fellow believers?
- What joys have you gained from sharing the gospel?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: What is a missionary?

Why did the early church pray and fast together when making big decisions?

What does spreading the gospel mean in a world as connected as ours?

A Deeper Look

Although their stay in Lystra ended poorly (to put it lightly), Paul and Barnabas are blessed as they return to the churches that they established throughout their missionary journey. Departing from Derbe and heading back through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas encourage these new believers to remain strong in the Lord before appointing elders to watch over these congregations, praying and fasting with them. This encouragement from Paul is a large part of his ministry, as evidenced by his own letters. Throughout his letters, Paul is consistently encouraging those receiving the letters (even when they are about to get called out later on in the same text!), thanking God for their commitment and lives.

When Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch of Syria, they excitedly relay to their congregation everything that had happened on their journey. What excites Paul and Barnabas is the fact that the Gentiles have received the gospel so willingly and excitedly; more and more, the church is coming to both realize and accept that the gospel and the Kingdom of God is a much bigger reality than they had once believed. God has now invited all people to become a part of his world, and invited them into the life of the church, no matter their race, gender, ethnicity, or culture. However, the church will soon have to tackle this question head on: if we allow the Gentiles to be a part of the church, what parts of their lives need to change so that we can have unity?