

TABLE TALK

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE for August 28-September 3, 2022

“ACTS IN 30” Chapter 14: *Miracles, Idolatry, and Church Planting in Galatia*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW: Paul and Barnabas continue their church planting/missionary journey in Acts 14. Most of their journeys occur in the region of Galatia, and some scholars believe Paul wrote his letter to them (the book of *Galatians*) soon afterwards. Although God performed many miraculous signs through their ministry, these cities often became “divided” and Paul and Barnabas are often fleeing for their lives. Regardless of their challenges, they boldly preach the Gospel, raise up leaders and plant many churches in Galatia (v23).

DAY 1: Miracles Confirm Their Message

READ: Acts 14:1-10

REFLECT: As Paul and Barnabas keep teaching and preaching, God keeps confirming their message through “many signs and wonders” (v3). However, some unbelieving Jews and other unbelieving Gentiles stir up controversy against them so much that they have to leave. In the next city, Paul has an experience like Peter in Acts 3 – God miraculously heals a lame man and revival breaks out!

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Do you think it was important for God to continually do miracles, signs and wonders through the Acts of the Apostles as they continued to preach and teach the Good News that Jesus is the Messiah? Why or why not?

Application Question: Do you believe that God still does miracles, signs and wonders today like He did in the Book of Acts? If so, where have you seen or heard of them before? If you don’t believe that God still does these things today, why?

DAY 2: Idolatrous People Worship the Miracle Instead of their Maker

READ: Acts 14:11-18

REFLECT: When the crowds see the lame man walk, they did what came natural to them: they worshipped their Greek gods for the miracle. They called Paul, “Hermes,” and Barnabas, “Zeus” (v12). Even the Priest of the Zeus Temple brought oxen and prepared to make sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas! Although Paul tried to teach them about Yahweh, the One True God, he couldn’t *restrain* them (v18).

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Reflect on the first 2 Commandments in Exodus 20:2-6. What do you think it means that God is a “jealous” God?

Application Question: Do you think it’s human nature to elevate people into idols when God uses them to do signs, wonders, and miracles - like the people in this story did? What’s wrong with that? What does that potentially say about us?

DAY 3: Paul and Barnabas Make Many Disciples, Plant Churches, and - with Prayer & Fasting – Appoint Elders

READ: Acts 14:19-25

REFLECT: Even though they endured much suffering (Paul is violently attacked to the point where people thought he died), Paul and Barnabas successfully, “made many disciples” (v21). They encouraged the new believers and strengthened their faith by establishing churches and (after praying and fasting) appoint Elders to care and supervise the new discipleship community they founded (v23).

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Reflect on The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19. Do you believe Paul and Barnabas modeled it here? If so, how?

Application Question: Do you believe a church gets “strengthened” (v22) by having pastors and spiritual leaders such as “Elders” (v23)? If so, how?

DAY 4: Paul Completes His First (of 3) Missionary Journeys

READ: Acts 14:26-28

REFLECT: What started with a command from the Holy Spirit in Acts 13:2 is completed by the end of Acts 14:28. Paul and Barnabas return to the Church of Antioch rejoicing with the leaders there sharing many amazing testimonies of what God did. They finished well!

JOURNAL or DISCUSS:

Context Question: Some scholars believe that Paul wrote to the people he ministered to here (“Galatians”) once he returned to the Church of Antioch after this 1st missionary journey. What does that say about Paul’s heart for people that he would take time to do that?

Application Question: Paul and Barnabas demonstrated **faithful obedience** to the calling of the Holy Spirit. What are some things that you feel the Holy Spirit is calling you to this season? What can you learn from Paul and Barnabas’ story?
