



The CHURCH Series

Part 13 – The Galatians

Introduction...



- The last episode ended with this incident:
- *50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city,*
- *raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their region.*
- *51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and came to Iconium.*
- *52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.*
- Acts 13:50-52
- *Paul and the team left Antioch of Pisidia under a cloud of persecution. Yet they continued with the JOY of the Holy Spirit.*

Introduction...

- As we read and reflect on these passages, let us try to take our minds and imaginations back to those times.
- These Men who laid the foundation of the Christian faith and Church give us a model for aspiration and inspiration
- These men were being persecuted and harassed and opposed on all sides.
- Yet they continue in their quest to serve God and spread the message against insurmountable odds!
- What would we do in such circumstances?
- Would the Gospel have spread if you were the one being persecuted?



Iconium...

- *Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews,*
- *and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.*
- *² But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.*
- *³ Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord,*
- *who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.*
Acts 14:1-3



Iconium...

- The pattern of Paul and Barnabas was to connect with the Jews in a New City first.
- This is also a mission strategy. You connect with those who have some affinity first.
- Find the 'man of peace' and launch from there in the pattern of Jesus Disciples in Luke 10.
- It is a strategy of protection and safeguarding.
- You go from the known to the unknown whilst on the mission field.



Warfare...

- The result was a major harvest of souls - *and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. Acts 14:1*
- Then we have the spiritual reaction to the work of God as we discussed in previous lessons.
- *But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. Vs 2*
- This is a pattern of the enemy.
- Poisoned their minds is a classic work of satan



Poison...

- *Poison: A troublemaker plants seeds of strife; gossip separates the best of friends. Proverbs 16:28*
- Between Man and Wife
- Between Children and parents
- Within a Church community
- A business partnership
- In the workplace, in a group...
- Between two ministries
- Between church departments
- Between best friends, Brothers, sisters



Discipleship...

- Paul and Barnabas stayed there longer than they planned.
- They planted the Gospel firmly in Iconium
- The Church was growing
- Many were coming to the Lord
- Signs and wonders were confirming the Gospel
- The art and act of making Disciples requires a lot of intentional and consistent work.



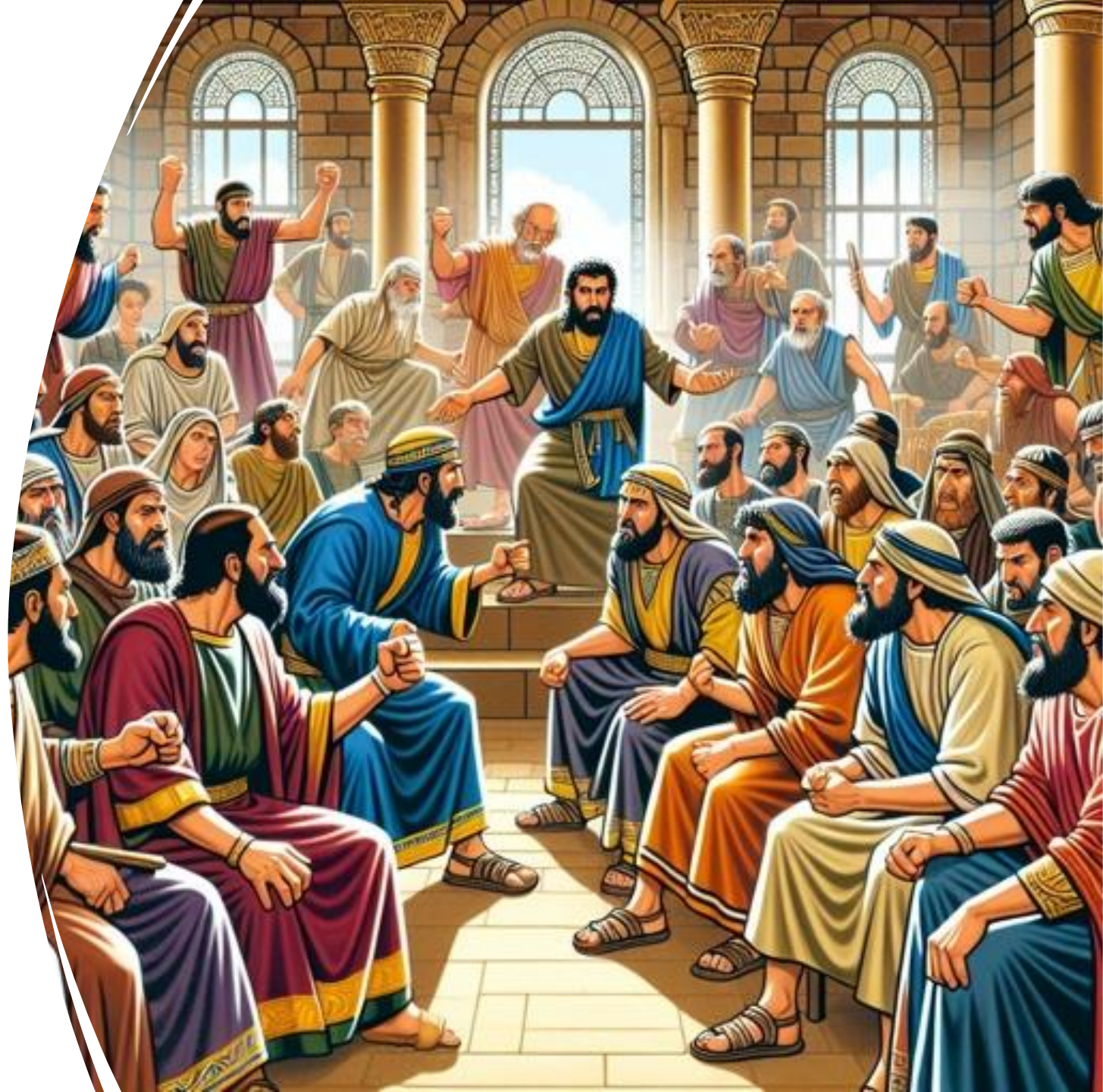
Split!

- *⁴ But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles.*
- *⁵ And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them,*
- *⁶ they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe,*
- *cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region.*
- *⁷ And they were preaching the gospel there. Acts 14:4-7*



Split!

- The city was split due to the work of the Gospel and the work of the enemy.
- As we press forward with the agenda of the Kingdom, the forces of darkness come up in opposition.
- The spirit of violence and the spirit of murder came upon the opposition, and they planned to stone (or lynch the Apostles).
- We need to be alert as we do the work of the Lord. In the natural and spiritual, we need to have intelligence to warn us.



Lystra...

- Paul and Barnabas flee to Lystra and Derbe about 20 miles away.
- This was about a day's journey in ancient times.
- These two places are in Galatia
- So when Paul writes the Book of Galatians, it is to these cities and regions, he is writing.
- Unlike the other cities – Iconium, there is no synagogue in Lystra.
- This is fully Gentile territory.
- Jesus helps them by healing a crippled man that was born disabled!
- This 'advertises' the Gospel in a sensational way and the people are stunned with the supernatural work of God.



Stand Up!

- *⁸ And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting,*
- *a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked.*
- *⁹ This man heard Paul speaking Paul, observing him intently*
- *and seeing that he had faith to be healed,*
- *¹⁰ said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!"*
- *And he leaped and walked.*
Acts 14:8-10



Zeus & Hermes...

- *11 Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language,*
 - *“The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!”*
 - *12 And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.*
 - *13 Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city,*
 - *brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.*
- Acts 14:11-13



Superstars...

- The people reacted in the way humans all over the world do
- They elevated Paul and Barnabas to the level of gods!
- This natural human worship tendency of man is inherent in all tribes and nations.
- We do to those with exceptional gifts – superstars, singers, athletes, Ministers of the Gospel, Politicians and the mega rich.
- One of the greatest temptations to the human soul is worship from another human being!



Mere Men...

- *¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out*
- *¹⁵ and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you,*
- *and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven,*
- *the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,*
- *¹⁶ who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways.*
- *¹⁷ Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”*
- *¹⁸ And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.*



Glory...

- What Paul and Barnabas did here is uncommon.
- To demote yourself when men have highly elevated you!
- Even with their correction, the people wanted to worship them!
- The general tendency is to accept a 'little' of the adulation and adoration.
- Give God the most but keep a little for yourself
- This is going to be the undoing of some Megastars, Pastors and Celebrities at the JUDGEMENT.
- *You are worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power...Rev 4:11*



Stoned...

- *19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there;*
- *and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul*
- *and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.*
- *20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city.*
- *And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. Acts 14:19-20*



Stone-cold...

- Human beings are fickle!
- One minute they are hailing Paul as a god, the very next, they are stoning him to death?!
- For them to think him dead, they must have done some serious damage!
- You don't just think a person is dead except there is a lot of blood and physical evidence on the body.
- Some scholars think that Paul may indeed have died and then come back to life when the brethren prayed for him.
- Some also think this was when he was translated in 2 Corinthians 12





Caught UP!

- ³And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—
- ⁴how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.
- ⁵Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. ⁶For though I might desire to boast,
- I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.
- ⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, **a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me,** lest I be exalted above measure.
- 2 Corinthians 12:3-7



The Thorn...

- The theory is that when he was stoned heavily at Lystra, he died and went to Heaven.
- He came back because his task and ministry was not over.
- The 'thorn in the flesh' people think was from the bodily damage he received.
- Some believe that his body may have picked up some physical ailment from which he didn't fully recover.
- Whatever it was, it did not hinder Paul ultimately from his task of preaching the Gospel.

Return...

- ²⁰ However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went 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 made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch



STAND!

- Paul was unstoppable!
- Rather than run from the fight, he confronts the fear.
- This is an example for all of us!
- Never BACK DOWN!
- Do not let anything stop you in line with God's destiny for your life!
- Let the Grace and Power of the SPIRIT surge through your soul and body and spirit!
- Stay focused on the Divine task!



We Must...

- ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying,
- **“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”**
- ²³ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and **prayed with fasting**, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
- Acts 14:22-23



Homecoming....

- *²⁴ And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.*
- *²⁵ Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.*
- *²⁶ From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.*
- *²⁷ Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ So they stayed there a long time with the disciples. Acts 14:24-27*

