

# Jesus Builds – the book of Acts

## Lesson Seventeen | Acts 14

### Background

The book of Acts was written by the physician, Luke, as a continuation of his Gospel. Jesus said he would build his church and Acts is the earliest history we have about that. It begins with the Ascension on Mount Olivet and then tracks the development of the early church with a particular focus on Peter in the early chapters and Paul in the later chapters, taking us to the early AD 60s.

### Context

In Acts 13-14 we find Paul on his first missionary journey, which likely took place in AD 48-49. He and Barnabas were sent out by the now prominent church at Antioch. The developing pattern, especially in Acts 14, is Jewish resistance to the gospel, so much so that Paul is stoned. But several new churches were planted.



### Paul's First Missionary Journey (Part 2)

- Travels in Acts 14:** At the end of Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas traveled from Pisidian Antioch to Iconium (Acts 13:51) in the province of Galatia. From there, they went to Lystra (14:6) and then Derbe (14:20), both cities in the region of Lycaonia (14:6). From Derbe they returned to Lystra, then Iconium, and back to Pisidian Antioch. (14:21) They passed through the provinces of Pisidia and Pamphylia (14:24) to Perga and into the province of Atalia (14:25), and then sailed back to Antioch where they had started (14:26).
- Preaching in Iconium (1-4):** They began at the synagogue and the gospel was received by a large number of Jews and gentiles, but again (compare 13:45-50) there was stern opposition from unbelieving Jews. (14:1-2) Although the message was validated with signs the audience was divided. (14:3-4)
- Conspiracy to Murder (5-6):** Some people planned to stone Paul and Barnabas so they fled to Lystra and Derbe.
- Superstition in Lystra (7-14):** In Lystra, the text does not say they started at the synagogue. Instead, for the third time in Acts, a cripple is healed. (Compare 3:1-10, 9:33-35 and 14:8-10) But instead of ascribing this to God, the crowds believe their "gods" have come in the persons of Paul (Hermes) and Barnabas (Zeus). (14:11-12)
- Sermon in Lystra (15-18):** The sermon is tailored to the audience, denouncing the "gods" and proclaiming the creator God (14:15), the provider of the rain and fruitful seasons (14:17).
- Paul was Stoned (19-20):** Non-believing Jews traveled from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, stirred the crowds and stoned Paul and left his body outside the city. (19) After the attackers left, Paul stood up very much alive. (20)
  - Paul was either dead or at death's door (see 2 Cor. 12:2-4)
  - Paul would later recount his stoning and persecutions (2 Cor. 11:25; 2 Tim. 3:11)
- Appointing Elders in Every Church (23):** Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in charge of the newly formed churches before they returned. (23)
  - Where do some churches find the concept of voting?
- Back to Antioch (26-28):** They returned and gave a report of their ministry.