

Saved by Grace

Small group questions

Worthless idols – Acts 14

Leaders – if the questions make no sense or you don't know the answer – please contact bishop@bathurstanglican.org.au

1. Mark suggested that we now live in a “Post-Christian age”, giving an examples last year's mess with Andrew Thorborn and the Essendon football club. What did he mean by “post-Christian age”? Do you agree? How does this reality impact your life and witness?
2. You may enjoy reading Acts 14 again. Did anything stand out for you from the passage? Or is there anything about which you need clarification?

TOUGH

3. In 14:2, Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas. In v19, Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over against Paul who they stoned. In today's social media and online comments on articles, we also see people urgently wanting to turn people off from having anything to do with Jesus. Why such fierce opposition then and now?
4. v3 – what was Paul and Barnabas reaction to the opposition? (See also v7 where although they had moved on, they *continued to preach the good news*.) How do you keep going in the face of opposition? (You may like to read the passage Mark referenced from 2 Cor 11:24-27 where Paul recalls how tough doing mission has been.)
5. How does what Jesus said in John 15:18-19 prepare us for the opposition we find today?

FLEXIBLE

6. What were the differences between Paul's message to a **Jewish** audience in Ch 13 and his message to a **Gentile** audience in Ch 14?
7. How might our approach differ when speaking with a non-Christian retiree who has grown up in church, compared to a young adult who has only ever come across Jesus in a few SRE lessons in primary school?
8. How do you think we can get through to the people of central and western NSW where people follow 'worthless idols' and many seem content in living they do (without Jesus)?
9. How might the way we do church need to change to reach today's outsider?

GOD'S

10. What stands out from Paul and Barnabas' return to base and how they reported back?
11. God had initiated the mission, been with them throughout and was mightily at work through them, drawing people to himself. How can this give us confidence for *our* mission here and now?
12. What was the place of prayer in this (look back to the start of the mission in Acts 13) and how can we as a church, look to the Lord more and more in fervent prayer?

Pray that we be equal to the challenge of doing mission in secular age, heeding the warning of the Lord Jesus that as the world hated him, so it will hate us. Pray that we might rest in the fact that the work is entirely the Lord's. And perhaps you might give some thought to establishing a regular prayer time at your church?