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La Jolla Christian Fellowship

Paul's First Journey. Ep.7 A Plan Of Attack

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ACTS 14:11-20

¹¹When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!"

¹²Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. ¹³The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

¹⁴But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: ¹⁵"Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. ¹⁶In the past, he let all nations go their own way. ¹⁷Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." ¹⁸Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. ²⁰But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

No Such Thing as a Secure Life

Helen Keller, who lost both her sight and hearing in childhood but became a renowned activist and author, said that there is no such thing

as a secure life. “It does not exist in nature.... Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.” Risk, then, is not just part of life. It is life.

The place between your comfort zone and your dream is where life takes place. It’s the high-anxiety zone, but it’s also where you discover who you are. Karl Wallenda, patriarch of the legendary high-wire-walking family, nailed it when he said: “Being on the tightrope is living; everything else is waiting.”

Spiritual Victory: Vs. 10 and (Paul) called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

- Spiritual risk is the key ingredient of spiritual victory.

“There is no neutral ground in the universe; every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.” C.S. Lewis

Temptation: Vs. 13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd **wanted to offer sacrifices to them.**

Satan is more than willing to use your suffering or success to separate you from Jesus.

Spiritual Attack: Vs. 19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. **They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.**

- **Jews from Antioch were not the enemy: Ephesians 6:11-12**
Put on the full armor of God, so that you can make your stand against the devil's schemes. 12For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world's darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Spiritual Community: Vs. 20 But after **the disciples had gathered around him**, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

- Spiritual victory is rarely won in a bubble.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Spiritual victory rarely happens apart from spiritual risk. Where if anywhere are you taking spiritual risk?
2. First they wanted to worship Paul, then stone him. Is it harder to follow God when you are crushing it or when you feel like you are being crushed?
3. The bible says that people "Flesh and blood" are not our enemy Ephesians 6. Is that hard to remember when you are being attacked by others?
4. Paul was raised because a group of disciples gathered around him. Do you have any "disciples" that gather around you?
5. Spiritual victory is rarely won in a bubble. How do you respond when the chips are down? Do you have a plan for victory?