

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 9

FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY PART 2

Paul and Barnabas leave Cyprus to go to the Roman Province of Galatia. They land at the port in Perga in the Province of Pamphylia and proceed to Antioch in the region of Pisidia in Galatia.

On the Sabbath they go to the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch. After the traditional reading of the Torah and the Prophets, they are invited to speak. Paul took the opportunity to preach a sermon to the Jews and proselytes who were present. We see in Acts 13:42-43 that many of them followed Paul and Barnabas who continued to teach them.

The gentiles also heard what was being said. They asked the missionaries to preach to them on the next Sabbath. The word spread such that when the Sabbath rolled around, almost the whole city of gentiles showed up at the synagogue to hear the message. Many of the pagan gentiles got saved that day (v. 48).

The Jews were filled with envy and jealousy at the massive number of gentiles who became believers. They began contradicting Paul and Barnabas and even accused them of blasphemy. Paul replied that it was necessary to have preached this gospel to them, the Jews, first. Seeing as how only a few believed while most rejected it, it was time to preach it to the gentiles as they were more receptive.

The gospel now began to go throughout the region of Pisidia. The unbelieving Jews began to stir up animosity toward Paul and Barnabas. They spread their poison to the respectable women of Antioch who quickly spread the gossip. They stirred up the prominent men of the city who raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from Pisidian Antioch.

This did not discourage our two men. They were filled with joy to be counted worthy of persecution. They shook off the dust of that city from their feet. Full of the Holy Ghost, they moved on to another city of Galatia named Iconium.

Tomorrow we pick up with their arrival at Iconium as told in Acts chapter 14.

Do we “count it all joy” when we are criticized for our faith? What about if severe persecution were to come? Anything Jesus suffered we can also bear since He will strengthen us. (Philippians 4:11-13.) Many of the martyrs we recently studied counted it as an honor to bear persecution and death for Jesus. He did it for us.