



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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**Acts 14:8-11 & 19-23**  
**New American Standard Bible**  
**December 17, 2017**

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, December 17, 2017**, is from **Acts 14:8-11 & 19-23**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Acts 14:8) At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked.**

After Paul and Barnabas finished their missionary work on Cyprus, they went to Perga in Pamphylia (where John left them and returned to Jerusalem). Then they traveled to Antioch in Pisidia (not the Antioch in Syria), where after

leading many to believe in Jesus, they were driven out of the city and went to Iconium. In Iconium, many believed the gospel, but they had to flee the city and went to Lystra in Lycaonia.

This lame man was similar to the lame man that Peter healed in the temple; all the people knew that this lame man had never walked. None of their gods, priests, or sorcerers had been able to help him.

**(Acts 14:9) This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well,**

In the temple, Peter's faith in Jesus healed the lame man. In Lystra, this lame man had listened carefully to Paul, and the word of God created faith in the man as he recognized and believed the truths he heard proclaimed. Luke implies that Paul had told about the miracles of Jesus, and this and other truths led the man to have faith in Jesus.

**(Acts 14:10) said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and began to walk.**

Paul did not touch the man. He gave a simple command and the man's faith in Jesus and Jesus' power moved him to obey Paul's command. True faith in God always leads to obeying God. Immediately, the man began to walk.

**(Acts 14:11) When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us."**

God created the world with the spoken word. God healed the man through Paul's spoken word. The idolatrous pagans assumed that some of their gods had come down to earth looking like them in human form, but not in real human bodies. In Greek thought the body was considered evil and to their mind a god would never take on a real human body; that is why they thought two gods had come down "in human form."

**(Acts 14:19) But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.**

After Paul and Barnabas proved they were not gods, they preached about the true Son of God, who came into the world in a real human body and died and rose again for the forgiveness of sins. Many of these pagans came to believe in Jesus according to the Scriptures and became disciples. Some Jews who had rejected the gospel where Paul had preached earlier came and pressured a large crowd to stone Paul to death (the penalty for blasphemy). In this case, the Holy Spirit did not temporarily blind the

crowd. God could have blinded the whole crowd as the angels did to save Lot from the crowd in Sodom. These Jews hated Paul and the gospel so much that they would have made sure he was dead before they dragged him outside the city. Paul demonstrated that the Christian faith was worth suffering and dying for, even as Jesus had suffered and died to save us from our sins before God raised Him from the dead.

**(Acts 14:20) But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe.**

The disciples no doubt prayed around Paul. God miraculously resuscitated Paul and healed his bleeding, broken, and bruised body. He walked back into the city as God empowered him. The next day he was strong enough to walk with Barnabas to Derbe: this too was a miracle.

**(Acts 14:21) After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,**

Probably some disciples from the cities they had preached in accompanied Paul and Barnabas from Lystra to Derbe. They could reaffirm what Paul preached and what had happened to Paul when he was stoned and then healed by Jesus. Therefore, a large number became disciples. Rather than return the short way home to Antioch in Syria, Paul

chose to return to the cities where he had preached in order to create new churches and appoint elders, so the work of the gospel could continue in these cities in his absence. Disciples are followers and students, and the new disciples of Jesus would have followed Paul and Barnabas as far as possible to learn as much as they could because they would form and lead churches in the cities Paul had visited.

**(Acts 14:22) strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."**

Even though Paul faced more persecution by returning to the cities he had been forced to leave, Paul was faithful to his task of explaining the gospel thoroughly and insisting on the importance of faithful obedience to the teachings of Jesus. He taught by both word and example, and his new disciples concluded, "we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." Disciples faced hardships if they were rejected by family and friends for their faith in Jesus and obedience as citizens in the Kingdom of God where Jesus was their newfound King. As followers of the King, they began living in a new kingdom that would prepare them for further training in heaven and their great eventual reign with Jesus on the new earth when they returned with Him.

**(Acts 14:23) When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.**

From spending much time with these new Christians, they knew who to appoint as church leaders in their absence. After prayer and fasting the Holy Spirit through Paul appointed those of the Lord's choice. Everyone put their trust in the Lord knowing Paul would need to continue in his missionary work elsewhere.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. Name two things that happened wherever Paul preached the gospel.
2. What role did faith have when Peter healed the lame man at the temple? What role did faith have when Paul healed the lame man in Lystra?
3. What happened to Paul and Barnabas after Paul healed the lame man?
4. What happened to Paul after some Jews who opposed the gospel and Paul came to Lystra?

5. How did the new disciples say believers enter the kingdom of God? How do believers enter the Kingdom of God today?

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Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly  
*International Bible Lesson.*

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