

# Lystra

## To the Ends of the Earth - Paul's first missionary journey

### Foundation

#### Bible passage : Acts 14:8-23

After leaving Pisidian Antioch Paul and Barnabas went east to Iconium. (Acts 14.1-7) Here at first their message found a good response from both Jews and Greeks, but they also found strong opposition to such an extent that people attempted to stone them and so they fled and went South West to Lystra. See the map in unit 9.

In Lystra Paul healed a man who had been crippled from birth. This had a great effect on the people of the town who decided that Paul and Barnabas must be gods such as they worshipped in their temples. Although most of the people there would have spoken Greek it was not their native tongue so at first Paul and Barnabas did not understand what was going on. However, once they realised what the people thought the two were horrified and tried to stop them.

Paul and Barnabas could have done well materially from this because the people were making offerings to them. Sadly we do sometimes see people who seem to see religion as a way of making money or becoming famous. Even those who don't start out thinking like that can fall in to such temptation. But Paul and Barnabas knew that would be wrong and just wanted people to find **the light of Christ** and to worship Him, not them. Although we know less about Barnabas we do know from Paul's letters that he continued to warn against such dangers and to deliberately avoid seeking financial reward as he went about preaching, though he did welcome voluntary

*Paul left for dead -  
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support from churches he had founded.

Eventually people arrived in Lystra from Iconium and Antioch, who again stirred up trouble. This time Paul was grabbed by the crowd and stoned. (Before coming to faith in Paul had approved of the stoning of Stephen (see unit 3).

The mob in Lystra intended to kill Paul and were satisfied that he was dead as they dragged his body out of the city to kill Paul and were satisfied that they had succeeded. But when they left Paul was miraculously able to get up and walk back in to the town. Despite this the two men decided it was time to move on to tell other about Jesus.

“in ...Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.” (2 Tim 3.11)

Following Jesus can be very costly because of opposition. God prevented Paul from being killed at this time, though he would later be put to death for his faith which in previously units we have seen how Stephen and James also died as they tried to spread **to spread the light of Christ**



**Sharing the light of Christ means resisting temptations for personal gain, and can mean facing persecution.**