



Sermon Notes

Topic: Building our Lives on the Faithfulness of God

Bible Passage: Overview of Acts Ch 11-14

Preacher: Ps Paul Curtis

Date:

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Spiritual Principles from these Chapters

- ***It's important to remember what God has done in the past (11:4-17, 13:16-32, 14:27)***

Stephen, Peter and Paul all presented their audiences with a history lesson of what God has done in the past. Why is the unchanging nature of God such an encouragement to us? Share a time from your past experiences where God's presence and power was particularly evident. What difference does that make to how you face the future? When we look back, we see that God always achieves his purposes. The future is unknown to all of us, but what God will be like is not a mystery.

- ***Because life brings with it a lot of challenges (11:1-3, 11:21 and 12:1-4, 12:24 and 13:6-12, 13:49-50)***

The early church was growing. People were coming to faith in great numbers. Yet, in the midst of all this blessing there was much opposition and persecution. What reality do we need to take hold of from these circumstances? Where does our hope come from? Do you think we have unrealistic expectations as Christians regarding hardship? What two things can we count on while we journey in faith?

- ***Humility in Prayer is the Key (12:5,13:2,14:23)***

Peter reminded Cornelius and his family, don't bow down to me, I'm just a man like you. We see the same thing again with Paul and Barnabas (14: 14-16). Humility creates in us a deep awareness that compared to God we are nothing. We don't fear man, but we fear or respect God. We only concern ourselves with what God thinks. Humility creates a passion for prayer. What attitude could we hold to that would weaken our prayer commitment? Prayer also focus's our heart on the nature and greatness of God – so prayer brings us great confidence and hope. What is our true motivation in praying? While the early church continued to grow, there was increased persecution and as a result there was much prayer. When has your prayer life been most passionate?

- ***Enabling us to call out the lies and replacing with truth (13:9-10, 44-46)***

The enemy is active is trying to stop the progress of the early church. Paul in particular calls out the lies and the deceit. This is a model that we must follow. Whenever we feel defeated or disappointed, maybe even depressed, we should ask ourselves what lies am I listening to, and what truth can I replace it with. Share in the group together the "lie" that you are most prone to accept – what truth or promise of God do you need to replace it with?

- ***All the time trusting God's timing (11:10-11,12:6)***

Right through these chapters we see how God is at work. Just as Peter is considering the meaning of the vision God brought to him, we read, right then the Gentiles turned up at the door. Herod was going to put Peter to trial and no doubt kill him like he did James. We read, the night before the trial, God's angels set him free. Do you sometimes try and force God's hand when it comes to the timing of his provision? Why is that? What do we need to learn? Have a look at each of the previous principles listed above. How do each of these impact our need to trust God's timing?