



FALL 2021 // WEEK 2

Life Group Questions

Acts: Daring To Be The Church // September 18-19, 2021

Obstacles and Opportunities // Acts 14:1-28

Introduction

This week's passage completed the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas. We see both acceptance of the message of the gospel and opposition to it. Yet even in the midst of opposition Paul and Barnabas refuse to be distracted and continue looking for opportunities to share Jesus with people.

To get the most out of your group time, we invite you to look over the questions below and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. What do you remember about your first day of school or your first teacher?

2. What are typical distractions in your life? What have you found are keys to responding to distraction that help you stay focused?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
 - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
 - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
 - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
 - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
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Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) **What aspect of the sermon this week stirred a response in you?**
- 2) Look over Acts 14:1-7. In his message over Acts 13, Pastor Bryan spoke of how we will need great courage and great skill/wisdom while relying on the Holy Spirit, to speak the message of the gospel. **How do you see Paul and Barnabas demonstrating those qualities in these verses?**

When have your opportunities to speak about Jesus required great skill and courage?

What are some things that God has used to help you grow in wisdom, courage and reliance upon the Holy Spirit throughout your life?

- 3) When Paul and Barnabas heal a man in Lystra (vv. 8-20), the crowds want to offer sacrifices to them as the Greek gods Zeus and Hermes. Paul and Barnabas use this opportunity to share the gospel with them. **How do their words in verses 15-17 encourage you as a follower of Jesus to look for opportunities to share with others about Jesus?**

As you look back over this last week, what opportunities were there to love people, encourage them and possibly share the good news of Jesus?

What are some things could do this week to help you be more attentive to the opportunities the Holy Spirit might be bringing before you?

- 4) The Greek word for “disciple” (*mathetes*, literally, “learner”) has now become the favorite term to refer to Christians, appearing four times in this chapter (vv. 20, 21, 22, 28). It appears twenty-eight times in Acts and over 250 times in the Gospels. A few weeks ago, Pastor Jeff gave us a good definition of a disciple – “one who is progressively becoming more like Jesus, so that they

live their life the way Jesus would live it if Jesus were in their place.” **What do you think of this definition?**

In verse 22 we’re told that Paul and Barnabas “strengthened the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.” **What is an area of your life where you need to have your soul strengthened to become more like Jesus?**

What would it look like in this area for you to take one step towards becoming more like Jesus?

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?

Keeping the above instructions in mind (as necessary for your group), as you move around the circle, encourage each person to start their prayer with gratitude by expressing what they are thankful for. Then each person can pray for the person on their right.

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Each week we’re suggesting a couple of spiritual exercises. These are not required, but they may help us to actually live our faith and grow as followers of Jesus. Feel free to practice one or both of them. If a certain exercise is very helpful for you, maybe you can figure out a way to incorporate it into your daily life. **Next week in your Life Group, take a few moments to share how either of these exercises may have changed your outlook on your daily life.**

(Practicing Gratitude) One sure way to begin to recognize the presence of God all around us is to practice gratitude for the way we see and experience Him in nature, those around us and every good thing. Every day this week, list 3 or more things you are thankful for, things that brought you happiness, things that might be gifts from the Lord. Write them down at the end of each day and share your list with your group next week. **How did this practice of gratitude affect your outlook on life and your recognition of God’s presence in your life?**

(Ask Simple Questions) When someone asked LBC's founding pastor, Curt Lehman how he looked for opportunities to share Jesus with others, he answered, "I look at a person and think to myself, I wonder what God is doing in their life. Then I just start asking them simple questions about their life to see what He might be up to." This week take time to ask simple questions of those around you and really listen to their answers. Take a few moments to pray for these people based on their answers. **How did this practice affect the way you see the people that God has put in your life?**