

046 - "Fruitful Seasons" - Acts 14:1-18 2012-11-18

Call to Worship: Revelation 7:12

Scripture Reading: Psalm 100

Sermon: "Fruitful Seasons" - Acts 14:1-18

Benediction: Colossians 3:15

I. We Are Thankful for Seasons When Our Gospel Witness Is Strong (1-3)

- A. Paul and Barnabas so spoke that a great multitude believed
- B. They stayed a long time speaking
 - 1. because there was opposition
 - 2. boldly
 - 3. with God's miraculous help

II. We Are Thankful for Seasons When God Spares Us from Harm (4-6)

- A. the city was divided
- B. again, those losing the religious debate resorted to government force
- C. God made them aware of the plot, and they fled

III. We Are Thankful for Seasons When the Grace of God Is Manifest (7-10)

- A. Paul and Barnabas went to the region of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe
- B. They preached the gospel there!
- C. God showed His grace by healing a lame man, just as in Jerusalem with Peter and John

IV. We Are Thankful for Seasons When the Sinfulness of Man Is Manifest (11-14)

- A. These people were idolaters, having a temple of Zeus right at their city
- B. When they heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and saw a miracle, they became more zealous in idolatry
- C. APPLICATION: Don't we see this all around us?

V. We Are Thankful for Seasons When We Can Speak of the Living God (15-18)

- A. Paul and Barnabas had opportunity to speak to pagans, polytheists about the living God
 - 1. that idols are useless
 - 2. that there is one Creator
 - 3. He has up until now left idolaters to their idolatry
 - 4. He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did us good
 - a. rain from heaven and fruitful seasons
 - b. which filled our hearts with food and gladness
- B. APPLICATION: What does this tell us about our approach to evangelism?
 - 1. haven't we run into pagans full willing to add Jesus to their pantheon?
 - 2. don't we need to start with this, w/ those who do not believe in one living God?

Every good and perfect gift . . .

JFB (as others):

In Lycaonia, where, as ancient writers attest, rain is peculiarly scarce, this allusion would have all the greater effect.

Henry:

besides the witness for God within them (the dictates of natural conscience), they had witnesses for God round about them - the bounty of common providence. Their having no scriptures did in part excuse them, and therefore God did not destroy them for their idolatry, as he did the Jewish nation. This however did not wholly excuse them, but that notwithstanding this they were highly criminal and deeply guilty before God; for there were other witnesses for God, sufficient to inform them that he and he only is to be worshipped, and that to him they owed all their services from whom they received all their comforts, and therefore that they were guilty of the highest injustice and ingratitude imaginable, in alienating them from him.

both that and this were designed to represent the impotency of all the children of men in spiritual things: they are lame from their birth, till the grace of God puts strength into them; for it was when we were yet without strength that Christ died for the ungodly,
Rom_5:6