

PLOT TWIST

When God Surprises His People

Part 8: Sects in the Cities

Paul is an urban missionary. According to Acts, the church's mission is primarily concentrated in important cities. Why? A wide range of people from different cultures and with diverse backgrounds concentrated in cities because of their religious, financial, and political resources. Simply put, Paul evangelized cities because that is where concentrations of people were.

~ Robert W. Wall, *The New Interpreter's Bible*

The address in Acts 14 stands out as the first specific example of how the beliefs and practices of Greco-Roman religion were encountered. The message here is not about God fulfilling his promises to Israel and sending the Saviour. For the first time in Acts, Paul and Barnabas encounter outright heathenism and adapt their preaching accordingly.

~ David G. Peterson,
The Pillar New Testament Commentary

The fruit that Paul received for his evangelism in Acts 14 was a hail of stones. There are both joys and trials in the ministry of the word. The triumphant gospel involves suffering too, and every servant of the Lord must be prepared for both eventualities.

~ Paul Mumo Kisau, *Africa Bible Commentary*

If we follow this pattern, we will see people come to Christ and rejoice in the freedom of His forgiveness. And yes, we will see rising opposition and persecution from those whose power is threatened by the gospel. One thing is for sure – the gospel is not a bland or innocuous message.

~ Ray C. Stedman, *God's Unfinished Book*

Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

~ Jesus, *Matthew 10:34 (TNIV)*