THE DEVIL’S INTERFERENCE

ACTS 14

Isn’t it strange how the devil can get in the way of so much good intended ministry? In reading this chapter I was taken back how often we see Satan’s handiwork in efforts to stop the work of God. The first place we see this is in chapter fourteen is verse two. **2** But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. Acts 14:1-2 (KJV). Satan used his disciples, the unbelievers, to pollute the minds of potential believers. The writer of Acts says that they made their minds evil. We experience much of the same pollution today. Taking what is bad and making it sound and appear good and accepted by society. On the other hand they take what is good and moral and try to make it appear to be evil and wrong. I think we see it today in many nations where they do not care what is wrong or right as long as they can get the people stirred up to join their side. It has happened in Iran, Egypt, and in Ukraine. It appears to happen in the United States when our government leaders are doing more campaigning than governing, again just stirring folks up to draw them to their side or opinion.

Something else the devil uses is self-conceit. He wants us to be more focused on ourselves than on our God and his gospel. “The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. **12** And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.” Acts 14:11-12 (KJV). The apostles give us the correct response to this form of Satan’s attack in their reference to themselves “we are men of like passions with you.” Their reference to God was correct also, “God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:” Acts 14:15 (KJV). In this they saw themselves in proper respect to God. It is so easy for us to get caught up in self-praise that comes from those around us when all the time the real glory is all owed to God our Father.

**19** And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Acts 14:19 (KJV). Sometimes Satan is absolutely brutal in his attacks. In this case, Paul was stoned and left for dead. God picked him up for he was not finished with him yet. Satan loves to see us knocked down, for when we are down we are not serving The Lord. He also hopes that we will not get back up. Again we see the correct response from Paul. The next day he and Barnabas travel to Derbe and preach the gospel there.

The devil can and does get in the way of ministry but with our faith in God, he will not stop our ministry. He wants to get in our minds but when we have taken the mind of Christ, Satan will never succeed. When he has knocked us down he wants us to stay down but we serve the God who raises us up and moves us down the road to more ministry. We live in this world and as long as we continue to we will have to deal with the old deceiver, but we have a home prepared where the saints abide just over in the glory land and in that land there is no place for the devil! Praise The Living God!!! Yours in Christ, Brother Randy Burtram