

### III. You share Christ by enduring the difficulties

...strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said. Acts 14:22

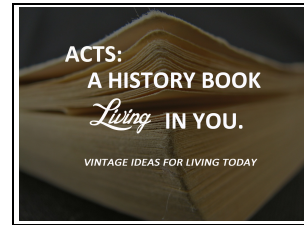
- Means we grow through sufferings
- The world is watching us to see if our hope is real.

### IV. You share Christ by fulfilling our deepest longings of the human heart.

When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!”  
12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. Acts 14:11,12

#### J.R.R.Tolkien says in his essay, “On Fairy Tales”

1. Human beings want to escape time and death.
2. We’re utterly fascinated by communicating with non human beings.
3. That once we get a love that heals everything that we’ll never ever have to lose it.
4. We want to see the complete triumph of good over evil.



Sierra Community Church May 18th, 2014  
Dan Wilvers

### Part 17: Acts 14:8-17,22 Sharing Jesus in a Pluralistic Society

#### The Message

8 In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked. 9 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed 10 and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

11 When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!”  
12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. 13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: 15 “Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. 16 In the past, he let all nations go their own way. 17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.”

22 (Paul and Barnabas)...strengthening the disciples (in Derbe) and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,”

### **I. Paul shares Christ in both Word and action**

Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. Acts 14:9,10

### **A picture of Word and Action ministry early on in the Book of Acts:**

Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 *They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.* 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:43-47

### **II. Paul shares Christ by showing them that their belief system isn't working for them.**

We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. 16 In the past, he let all nations go their own way. 17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.” Acts 14:15-17

### **Notice the difference of Paul's Message in Pisidian Antioch where he spoke to people who believed in the Old Testament.**

“Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses. Acts 13:38,39

### **How do you show people they need Christ, if they don't believe in God, the Ten Commandments or they don't believe in a heaven and hell?**

*In vs. 15-17 Paul isn't saying, “You're sinners, who need forgiveness.” What he is actually saying is you are enslaved by your idols and you need a new master.*

In a “polytheistic society” there was no one supreme God; rather practitioners would sacrifice and worship to the god of their liking or to the god of their livelihood.

### **Their devotion to a god was another way of saying this is my hope and meaning in life. But Paul says:**

turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. vs.15

*Paul says, and only my God, the true God, the living God, He's the only one that if you serve Him will liberate you.*

**but if you fail Him, He will forgive you.**

### **Key point: Paul always starts where people are at in their lives.**

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

1 Corinthians 9:20-22