

Make Room for God's Glory

Recently I read through the book of Acts and noticed something kind of profound, something that's still happening today.

In chapter 14 we read about Paul and Barnabas in Iconium, preaching at the Jewish synagogue. Paul and Barnabas spoke with power and influence and the Lord our God was with them. Clearly, they loved God more than their personal safety. There was nothing self-serving about their ministry. Christ in them, was their hope of glory.

And as a result, Christ could trust them with His glory.

God moved powerfully in and through Paul and Barnabas. And what was the result?

Humble, reverent earnest-God-seekers, responded to this movement of God in their midst. These sincere seekers were healed, encouraged, and saved.

Rigid, pharisaical leaders stiffened up, got territorial and jealous, and viewed things from an earthbound perspective. These prideful unbelieving people stirred up trouble and tried to find fault with their supposed opponents. In fact, they wanted Paul and Barnabas dead. Ouch.

Read this passage from Acts 14: 1-3

As Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed. But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against their brothers. So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of His grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

Even now, within the Kingdom of God, we have plenty of people

building their own kingdoms. Maybe it's a kingdom of comfort, or association, or reputation. Maybe it's a kingdom of celebrity, or mega-status, or political correctness.

But the Kingdom of God is always about Christ's saving work in our lives – moving and advancing to reach others with that same saving message.

The fact is, the Kingdom of God is ever moving, always flowing, and He is not interested in our fossilized methods, especially if they serve as obstacles to His presence. He wants us. He wants a living-breathing, freely-flowing relationship with us. He wants to move in us and through us and He reserves the right to disrupt our plans, our methods, and even our ideals in order to accomplish His other-worldly plans upon this earth.

Jesus didn't have a one-method way of doing things either! He healed people in a whole plethora of ways. He is not at all bound by the 'way we've always done it.'

If Christ wants to move in our church or in our business or in our family in a new and fresh way, may we be the first to get out of the way and let Him have His way!

And what happens when we do such a thing? Fruit happens! Life happens! Power happens!

And how will people respond?

The sincere-earnest-Christ followers and seekers will be drawn to the fresh stream flowing from our lives, churches, and businesses. They will be nourished, healed, saved, and encouraged. Yes, Lord.

And the rigid-unbending pharisee? Well, they'll hate everything about it. They'll stiffen up; they'll find fault; they'll become territorial, and they'll turn into the sin police and watch for the slightest deviation from what they

know to be right and true.

Now granted, we never want to deviate from the TRUTH. But in following Christ – who is the truth – we must know that He will lead us in ways we have not known before. He loves to do that and invites us to willingly trust Him, even if it disrupts our affection for appearing civilized and packaged at all times.

When God moves, may we move with Him. May we resist the urge to control our zone and to manage our methods. Let's put it all on the table and give God room to work.

Move powerfully in and through us, Lord!

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