

Intro.

- A. It is always exciting to study about those people in 1<sup>st</sup> Cent. that heard the gospel & were converted.
- B. Have you ever taken time to look & learn from the record of those who would not be change by truth?
  - 1. It is sad that any one would hear the Gospel Message, & turn away without obeying.
  - 2. We can gain valuable insight by studying those non-conversions.
- C. What might we learn? What should we look for?
  - 1. Look & listen to the sermons preached. Are they different to those preached when sinners obeyed?
  - 2. Notice the people who reject God's calling. Look at their attitude & character.
- D. This study should accomplish at least 3 things:
  - 1. It will make us examine ourselves, our attitudes & motivation.
  - 2. It should help us to better deal with rejection.
  - 3. Hopefully, it will help us to help others learn from these negative examples, so that they might not make the same kinds of mistakes.

Discuss.**I. THE GROUP TO WHOM STEPHEN PREACHED, Acts 7:54-66**

- A. These were "**RESISTERS**" – they resisted the Holy Spirit, **Acts 7:51**
- B. Watch their reaction to the truth preached.
  - 1. Being *cut to the heart*, they gnashed on him with their teeth.
  - 2. **vs. 57** tells us how they *cried out...stopped their ears... & ran upon him*.
  - 3. They cast him out of the city & stoned him to death!
- C. They would offer resistance to truth to death, not their own, but to God's faithful servants.

**II. THE UNBELIEVING JEWS AT ANTIOCH IN PISIDIO. Acts 13:43**

- A. Paul & Barnabas first preached in the synagoge (**Acts 13:43**)
  - 1. The Gentiles asked that the word be preached the next Sabbath (**vs. 42**)
  - 2. Many Jews & proselytes followed, (**vs. 43**)
  - 3. The next Sabbath, most in the city were present to hear the presentation of God's Word.
- B. Jews were **ENVOIOUS**; spoke against things Paul said, **contridicting & blaspheming (vs. 44-45)**
  - 1. Stirred up **DEVOUT & HONORABLE** men & women, & chief men of the city
  - 2. These were the ones who were excited to persecute Paul run him out of town.

**III. THE "STONE THROWERS" AT LYSTRE. Ac. 14:8-21**

- A. Here Paul & Barnabas healed an impotent man, crippled f/ birth – the people thought P & B = gods.
- B. There were Jews who came f/ Antioch & Iconium to convinced the people to stone Paul!
  - 1. These people could be agitated to destroy a good person.
  - 2. We have to be careful about who we allow to influence us, & to what extent!

**IV. UNBELIEVERS IN THESSALONICA, Ac. 17:16-34**

- A. Thessalonica was a city where many devout Greeks & women believed.
- B. Yet, unbelieving Jews used **LEWD** fellows (derelict, evil, vicious) who were vulgar
  - 1. These together excited the towns-people into a riot.
  - 2. The assaulted the house of Jason, making them post bond because they had received Paul & companion
  - 3. Believers sent Paul & Silas to Berea.

**V. IN ATHENS, GREECE - PAUL WAS MET, AGAIN, WITH A MIXED RECEPTION. Acts 17:16-34**

- A. There were some who believed the truth Paul preached! **Vs. 34**
- B. Others **MOCKED** idea of the resurrection. **Vs. 32**
  - 1. *Mocked* = shoot out the lip, sneer, or yawn.
  - 2. These folks were always anxious to hear *some new thing*, finding familiar things to monotonous.

**VI. AT CORINTH, Paul WAS MET WITH OPPOSITION, Acts 18:1-6**

- A. Aquila & Priscilla were in Corinth f/ Rome, Italy. They were of same trade.
  - 1. Each Saturday, Paul taught at the synagogue.
  - 2. The Jews “*opposed themselves & blasphemed*” verbally denying the truth of Gospel message!
- B. Paul’s reaction: He *shook out his clothes* (as a protest) & said, *Your blood be upon your own heads.*

**VII. FELIX & DRUSILLA, Acts 24:24-27**

- A. Paul reasoned (i.e., *taught thoroughly*) about righteous, self-control & judgment to come.
  - 1. Felix was afraid, realizing the essence of Paul’s message about sin & punishment w/o obedience.
  - 2. Felix was a **procrastinator**, & he delayed indefinitely!
- B. Felix & Drusilla were living in **fornication**, & they were not willing to repent!!!
  - 1. Josephus identifies Drusilla = lawful wife of King Azizus of Emesa.
  - 2. A *convenient season* never came for these fornicators:
    - a. Felix was dismissed in disgrace f/ his office as procurator.
    - b. Drusilla & a son died in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius which destroyed Pompeii & Herculaneum.

**VIII. FESTUS (Acts 26:24-26) REPRESENTS THOSE WHO FIND FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS CRAZY.**

- A. He thought Paul was *mad* from his studies—a raving maniac!!!
- B. Paul pointed out that he spoke the truth in soberness. (We just do what the Bible teaches.)

**IX. THOSE ALMOST PERSUADED ARE REPRESENTED BY KING AGRIPPA, Acts 26:27-32**

- A. Agrippa came close to deciding to obey the Gospel.
- B. Paul was sorely disappointed at the King’s indecision to follow the Lord.

Concl.

- A. Regardless of the reasons for not obey God, people are lost in sin.
- B. It is the job of every Christian to teach others & work to become a soul-winner for Jesus.
- C. If we teach them the truth, & show others the way by our example, then their blood is not on our hands.
- D. However, if we fail to tell & to show them the way, we will be held accountable.
  - 1. **Acts 18:6** *And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said to them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*
  - 2. **Acts 20:26** *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*