

Road Trip (Part 4)

Stoned but Not Stopped – Persevering Through Hardship

Acts 20:24 (NKJV) — *“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy...”*

Acts 14:1–28

Introduction: Hardships will come, but faithful people keep going. Resilience is part of the Christian road trip. Our job today is to identify where you've been discouraged and re-engage with renewed faith. Paul and Barnabas continued their missionary journey despite repeated opposition. Max Lucado – “God never said the journey would be easy, but He did say the arrival would be worthwhile.” Jesus promised hardship: John 16:33 – “In this world you will have tribulation...” The road of faith includes potholes. What matters most is how we walk through them—with God.

I. Hardship in Iconium – expect opposition on the road: Acts 14:1–7

A. Bold preaching is met with divided response Paul and Barnabas speak boldly despite growing opposition.

1. God confirms the message with signs and wonders (v.3).
2. A divided city: belief vs. hostility (v.4).
3. A plot to stone them forces a strategic retreat (v.5–7).

B. Paul and Barnabas wisely flee to a new town – They didn't quit the journey, they persevered in a new place.

Even miraculous ministry may provoke rejection. (2 Tim 3:12)

John MacArthur – “Opposition is not always a sign you're doing something wrong—it may be proof you're doing something right.”

Expect resistance. Don't let it paralyze your purpose. Keep sowing gospel seeds.

II. Hardship in Lystra – misunderstanding, miracles and perseverance: Acts 14:8–20

A. A miracle -A crippled man is healed (v.8–10)

B. A mistaken identity – the people mistake Paul and Barnabas for Greek gods, prompting idol worship toward Paul and Barnabas (v.11–13). Paul redirects glory to the living God (v.14–18).

C. A mob turns on Paul- Paul is stoned and left for dead (v.19).

1. But Paul gets up and reenters the city (v.20)! Ministry success can be quickly followed by pain and betrayal.

Warren Wiersbe – “A servant is not just one who ministers, but one who accepts suffering in the course of service.”

2. Possible observer: Young Timothy, from Lystra, likely saw Paul's suffering and was impacted for life (cf. Acts 16:1–2).
God may use your perseverance in suffering to inspire others. Who's watching you stay faithful?

III. Finishing the mission strong – faithful people keep going to the finish: Acts 14:21–28

A. Paul and Barnabas return through the same cities where they were persecuted to strengthen and disciple the new believers.(v.22–23).
“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

B. They report back to the church in Antioch (v.27), giving God glory.

Eugene Peterson – “A long obedience in the same direction.(Gal. 6:9; Phil. 1:6)

Finish well. Don't just survive trials—grow through them and help others walk through theirs.

Conclusion: If you've stalled in faith or ministry—re-engage. If you've never begun the journey with Jesus—today is the day.

Gospel Reminder:

- Jesus suffered and rose for you (Acts 13:30–39).
- Salvation is a gift to be received by faith (Ephesians 2:8–9).
- He walks with you through every hardship (Hebrews 13:5).

Christian martyr Jim Elliot – “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Rev. 2:10 – *“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”*

Your turn:

Where have you been discouraged or tempted to quit?

- Name it.
- Bring it to the Lord.
- Make a specific plan to re-engage with renewed faith.