

Faith shows on Face (Acts 14:1-10)

We should be alert and awake; else, will lose everything when we are not. Prayer awakens life in itself. Falling asleep means not praying. Because Satan is always waiting for a time when we are asleep - evil cannot invade or attack us when we are awake (praying). Material life, reputation/pride, and success makes us forget and asleep (spiritual state) to take away all of our joy, hope and health **“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8)** Most of us believe in the power of prayer but not many of us do pray. There is power in prayer. Apostles of the first church ministry was aided by this power. That is why Apostle Paul says to pray continually.

Everything of Life: Jesus Christ **“At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed (Acts 14:1)** They testified to them only message of Gospel: Jesus is God, our savior who died for our sins; defeated death and revived. Apostle Paul had a clear goal to testify the Cross and Jesus Christ in his whole life and never boast except Jesus on the cross- considered all other things garbage. Keeping the faith is not easy but we could win regardless of difficulty, suffering when we remember the grace of God. **“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18)** It is not right if there is a more important thing other than Jesus. He could not be part of our life but everything of life. We should focus on Jesus and live in him. When Paul and Barnabas spoke about Jesus, response of people was not the same. It depended on how they received the message/Good News/Gospel. **“But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. (Acts 14:2)**

Response to Message/Gospel: Obedience Two different response at same message of Gospel. One received Grace of God, accepted it but the others not and refused. “Jews who refused” showed negative response, they were filled by spirit against God - disobedience. They could not listen because of the spirit of disobedience from deep in one’s own sin, against authority of God, insisting on own stubborn thoughts. Our distorted spirit(condemnation) is more serious sin than a bad behavior (e.g. adultery or theft) We should get rid of spirit of disobedience, twisting and complaining and rather open the door of mind and spiritual attitude toward the Truth **“The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. (Acts 14:4)** It is power of Jesus which will change our life where there is no hope and full of despair. Paul says in the bible that **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here (2 Corinthians 5:17)** **“Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked (Acts 14:8)**

Directness and Truth: Faith Paul looked directly at lame man. **“He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed (Acts 14:9)** We should pay attention Jesus and receive word of God in faith then we will experience miracle of God. **Paul saw faith in the lame man’s face.** When speaking the message, Paul saw that lame man had faith. No matter how long and many we listen, there is no faith if we shed message without the assurance of faith. It will be shown when the message is seeded, and rooted deeply in our heart. There will be shown power when our faith grows. Faith makes possible from impossible, something from nothing. This lame man’s faith began to grow when he listened to the Paul’s speech about Jesus. **“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)** Word of God is alive not dead and it is the power of God not knowledge, it has life in it. When we have in our heart, evil spirit leave, gets rid of our worries, anxieties and we will have peace and it will be shown in the face. When someone refuse it, it is shown in their face. Thus, we should show our faith in the face. **“He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed (Acts 14:9)** What is the faith to be saved? It is the faith formed in the heart which is shown in the face. **“and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. (Acts 14:10)** When Paul looked- faith in lame man - Paul called out him to stand up on his feet - showed miracle. Paul could do in faith., who experienced power of Holy Spirit. Faith to faith made miracle.

Faith and seed. / Focus on Jesus Christ We should respond in faith when message of faith is proclaimed and connect with it. **“For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed (Hebrews 4:2)** **“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith. (Romans 1:1)** We should grow faith with starting point from faith. Core ministry of Church is testifying and planting faith. **“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ (Romans 10:17)** There will be work of Faith when we proclaim words of God. Faith is the resolution and assurance. Where faith comes from? Apostle Peter, Paul could do this powerful work after receiving Holy Spirit. It is power of Christian and we have too. **“Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome It (Mark 16:17-18)** We still could experience this miracle when we focus on Jesus. We go on fighting to live this world in faith: Following Words of God vs own knowledge and rational thoughts.