Acts 14 • Missions, Misery and Miracles

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Acts chapter 14, that's where we are. Let's pray as we get into it.

Father, thank You so much for Your love for us. Thank You for Your Word. Thank You for Your Spirit who makes the Word to come alive. Thank You for Your grace to hear and respond. Thank You for the courage to take the Word and embrace it.

Thank You for the life that is ours in Jesus Christ. Be with us we pray, strengthen our hearts, fill us with Your Spirit. We ask it in Jesus name and all God's people said, amen.

This chapter begins with the words, *"Now at Iconium…"* You'll remember, those of you that were here for our last study that the previous chapter ended with Paul and Barnabas reaching a good number of Gentiles in the city of Antioch, Pisidia.

And now they've moved on here as we open up chapter 14 to the city of Iconium. Let me put that on the screen for you. You can see where they were in Antioch up at the top of the screen.

Notice there's 2 Antioch's there, but they were at the one on the left and they made their way that short distance where you see the circle to the city of Iconium.



Again, in verse 1, it says, *"Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed." (ESV)*

And by Greeks, Luke is referring to Gentiles in the Jewish synagogue who had come to faith through Judaism. All right. And so these people are believing the good news message that Paul Barnabas brought to them.

But it says, verse 2, and there's always a but here somewhere. *"But the unbelieving Jews* (take note of that) *stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers."*

In other words, what that means is, they were slandering Paul and Barnabas by saying all kinds of nasty things, trying to tarnish their reputation, and the things that they were saying.

Have you ever been slandered by anybody? Have you ever had somebody say things about you that were untrue, and not just rude, but downright hurtful, and wrong, and so on, and so forth. How did you respond? Not asking you to speak

out obviously, but think about how you responded. Now think about how they responded.

Look at verse 3. *"So they remained for a long time,…"* I just think that's amazing. It says, so here they are, they're hanging out there in Iconium and they got slandered, and so they stuck around.

What sounds odd to you about that? It just doesn't sound right. It says, *"…they remained for a long time,* (in fact) *speaking boldly* (Luke writes) *for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands."* There's even, there's miracles going on.

But the reason I point out the fact that they stuck around in the midst of all of this slander that was happening is because, when we're being slandered, when we're being lied about, really, that's the last thing that we think about doing is sticking around. We usually want to get away in order to, I don't know, rescue our damaged reputation or something like that.

And one of the reasons that we want to leave or get away from people at least who are slandering us, is because it's all too easy for those who hear slander to believe it. It's just a common element of our humanity.

When we hear something negative about someone, we're just, we're very likely to believe it, whether we know the facts or not. Whether we we're around or not when the supposed incidents took place, or were said, or whatever. Doesn't really matter. We just hear something negative about someone and we're like, yeah, I can believe that. Yeah, I'm sure that's probably true.

But I love how Paul and Barnabas just stuck it out and they just continue to be faithful. And that's the point. They continued to be faithful and tell about the good news of Jesus on the cross.

You'll notice at the end of verse 3 again, says, the Lord, *"bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done…"*

The Lord allowed Paul and Barnabas, not just to stay there, not just to press through, but He also confirmed their faithfulness, and their faithful message, with signs and wonders.

And there's such wisdom in just putting your head down and carrying on. That's something the Lord taught me. You can imagine in 33 years of pastoring this church, there've been times when things didn't go so well. And then people start

talking as they typically do, and there's things being said, and so forth. And I remember going through a time like that, it was a number of years ago, and asking the Lord, what would you have me to do? And the Lord made it very clear to me, and it was before I really had understood the full brunt of this passage and what Paul and Barnabas were doing.

But the Lord said to me, He said, Paul, I want you to put your head down and I want you to plow. I've given you a plow, I want you to plow the land. Just put your head down and be faithful and do not listen to what is being said. And whatever you do, do not respond. And He made it very clear that I was not to defend myself in any sort of words of slander.

And thankfully that's exactly what I did. And I'm so grateful to the leading of the Lord. Let me show you a couple of Proverbs that just punctuate this. First from Proverbs chapter 21. It says,

Proverbs 21:23 (ESV)

Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

In a more common language, we'd say whoever keeps his mouth shut keeps trouble far away, right? And then from Proverbs chapter 20, it says,

Proverbs 20: 3 (NIV84)

It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

It is to a man's (actually) *honor to avoid strife, but* (you what? He says,) *every fool is quick to quarrel.*

And I've tried to always remember that. That you know what it takes for a quarrel to take place? Two fools. That's all. All you need is two fools in the room and you got a recipe for a good solid quarrel. But if there is one fool, and one wise person, you know what? That quarrel's never going to get off the ground.

Because one thing about quarrels is people don't like quarreling with themselves. They don't like just sitting listening to themselves quarrel. They'll, say something inflammatory and if you decide that you're not going to respond. You're not going to respond with any sort of a quarrelsome response or retort,

the thing is just going to die out. Anyway, there you go. There's some very good practical wisdom from the Word of God today.

Let's keep reading here because we're going to find out that even though Paul and Barnabas didn't respond to this slander, there did come a point of time when they needed to leave, and it's in verse 4 following.

It says, *"But the people of the city were divided;* (and again, some of the people listened to the slander) *some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles.* *5* *When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers,* (in other words, some of the people who were in charge) *to mistreat them and to stone them,* *6* *they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country,* *7* *and there they continued to preach the gospel."*

Luke tells us that it got to the point where they simply had to move on in order to… And I really believe that part of this was not just for Paul and Barnabas to say, let's protect ourselves from this foolishness. But I think that there was also a sense where they needed to let things settle down for the new believers too.

Because, they got a town full of people who have just come to faith in Jesus and for them to stick around and just allow this turmoil to continue, that's going to be counterproductive.

These people need to grow in their faith so it's like, you know what, let's just, let's move on to the next town. Let's let things settle out for these new believers so that they can grow in their faith.

Let me put, again, a map up. You can see where they went. I've circled the cities of Lystra and Derbe that you can see them.



And by the way, when you think about Lystra, if you remember that Lystra was the hometown of a young man by the name of Timothy, then you get an A, you can go to the front of the class. Although Paul's not going to really connect with him until the next time he comes in his second missionary journey. And that'll be in chapter 16. But that is where Timothy was raised and so forth.

But anyway, during this visit now to these towns, it says in verse 8, look with me there. *"Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. [9] He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and* (check this out) *seeing that he had faith to be made well, [10] said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking.*

[11] And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, (in other words, in the Lycaonian language) *"The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!""*

They're beginning to yell, loudly, that Paul and Barnabas are gods. Now, we assume that Paul and Barnabas didn't speak Lycaonian, and so they're oblivious at this point. They know there's just people are getting all lathered up and

yelling and talking, but I don't think they have any idea what they're saying at this particular point.

And look what it goes on to say, verse 12, *"Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. [13] And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds."*

Because of this miracle that the Lord did here. Oh, that was interesting, speaking of miracles. Because of this miracle, they begin to assume that they're gods and they're going to sacrifice to them.

And it says, *"[14] But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, [15] "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them."*

And obviously Paul and Barnabas shared a common language with the people as they begin to exhort them. They're probably speaking to them in Greek, I'm assuming since this, this is all Roman territory.

And, and so they go on and they say, *"[16] In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways."* Which is a way of saying, God bore with paganism for a while.

But it says in verse 17, this is interesting. *"Yet he did not leave himself* (even then) *without* (a) *witness,..."* When Paul talks about a witness that the Lord left, he's talking about the witness of nature, right? The witness of creation.

Do you know that creation is a witness of God's existence? Paul talks about this in Romans chapter 1, if you want to take time and read it. And Paul outlines in Romans 1 that God has always been speaking. In fact, he says in that chapter, that there's no language on earth where the voice of creation has not spoken clearly of the existence of God.

And he said, some men have, people have chosen to hear that voice and some have denied it. Or rejected that voice and said, well, there's no such thing as creation because there's no such thing as a Creator, and so we don't believe in creation. And of course, now we hear a lot of talk about evolution, that things evolve. There is no, designer to all of creation, even though things look designed.

Do you know that's what evolutionists literally say? They say, oh yeah, we know that things look designed, but you have to keep telling yourself there's no designer. There's no designer. There's no designer. You have to keep saying that because I know that things look designed. What does that look like to you? That looks like just rebellion and denial to me, doesn't it? Well, anyway, that's the way things go.

God says, He's always had a witness. And he even talks about the results of that witness here in the end of verse 17. *"...for he did good* (he says) *by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."* You think all those things came just because of evolution? No, they were gifts from God, he says.

And then Luke says, look at verse 18, *"Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them."* You can see that even after doing their best to try to convince these people that they were not gods, they went on to exhort them to turn from their foolish belief in pagan deities, and to embrace the one true creator God who provides for all of their needs.

And by the way, this isn't the last time Paul is going to be mistaken for a God. I would think that would be a fairly heady thing for somebody to think. I mean, it's one thing for somebody to go, you're really cool, or even, can I have your autograph, or something like that?

But for somebody to go, you're a God, that raises it just a little bit on the level of appreciation and adoration. And I would think at times there might even be a temptation, however small it may be, to just go with the flow on that one. Well, maybe you're right, sort of a thing. Hey, other men have done it. Anyway, but we're going to see how quickly the tables can turn from adulation to murder.

Verse 19, *"But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium,..."* These are the cities where Paul and Barnabas had been. They traveled from those places all the way here to Lystra, where they now are. And it says, *"...and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead."* Pause there please for just a moment with me.

What that means in other words is, they left him for dead. They stoned him and they left him for dead. And they probably had good reason to suppose that he was dead. Because stoning was a fairly effective way of executing an individual. It wasn't that long ago that we read an earlier chapter, and we found out that Stephen had rocks and stones thrown at him, and they killed him quite effectively. You see, this was, this was a common way of killing people.

And so the fact that they left him for dead believing, supposing that he was dead, it was a good guess on their part. And they may have even been right. We don't really even know for sure because they knew how to do that kind of stuff, I dare say, which makes the next verse that much more incredible.

In verse 20, it says, *"But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe."* And I want you to stop and just really consider that verse for just a moment, if you would, verse 20.

Because I think it's one of the most incredible verses in the Bible for the sheer fact that it just doesn't fit with our natural understanding of how cause and effect takes place as it relates… And I don't know if you've ever witnessed anyone being stoned. I certainly, I doubt it. At least not the stone that comes from rocks and stones.

But I mean, you don't just get dragged out of a city, have rocks and stones thrown at you to the point where the mob thinks you're dead. And then you just get up and go back in the city. It just doesn't happen. That's not the cause and effect that we're accustomed to.

Right away, we're struck with the very strong suggestion in this passage, that we're dealing with a supernatural intervention of the Lord as it relates to the life of the apostle Paul. And I believe it. I believe it. Because all we're told is that the believers gathered around him.

Typically what would happen, if this was all on a natural level, not a supernatural, but a natural level, you would say the believers gathered around him, prayed, picked him up, took him to the nearest emergency room where he was on life support for the next week and a half, or something like that, or using more modern language.

You don't just hear, well, the believers gathered around him, and he got up, brushed himself off and said, phew, what a drag, let's go back in the city. That's not the cause and effect that we're accustomed to. This is really a very amazing passage.

And I got to be honest with you, I wouldn't experience stoning like that, and then get up and go, I'm going to go back into that city. That's another thing I wouldn't do, but that's exactly what they said. But then they later went on, it says here, to Derby. And that was the other city that we showed you on the map, just west of Lystra.

And we're told, look at verse 21 with me in your Bible. *"When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples,* (look at this) *they returned to Lystra* (that's where the stoning happened) *and* (then they went on) *to Iconium and to Antioch,"* where the people who came to stir up the people in Lystra came from.

In other words, this is a fearlessness and a courageous attitude that comes from the Lord. This is a boldness that comes through the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer to literally go back to the fire and to deal with it on a personal level, without fear. It is truly just amazing.

And here's what they did, and I want you to pay attention to verses 22 and 23, because we're going to land on these for just a minute. It says, *"strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. [23] And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed."*

All right, stop there, please for just a moment, because there are 4 things that I want to bring out from these 2 verses that I think we need to stop. We need to pause, and we need to talk about for just a moment. I'm going to put these on the screen.

1. strengthening…the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.

And the first one is that they were **strengthening the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.**

And the reason that I think this is an important thing to pause and talk about is because this is what churches should be always doing. This is what should happen when you go to church. Now, remember we are the church, but I should say, when the church gathers.

People will write to me from time to time and say, pastor Paul, I don't know if I'm in the right church. I don't know if I'm going to the right fellowship. Can you help me figure out if I'm in the right fellowship? I'm like, well, when you get done and go out and get in your car, let me ask you this. Are you encouraged, strengthened, and built up? Or do you feel like you've had the air let out of your tires? Well… This is a good way to figure it out.

Do you walk away in courage, strengthened and built up when you've gathered as the body of Christ? Because again, this is what every church should be doing

every time we get together, it's what we all need. But, one of the other things I hear from people is what happens or the natural result of them not being in fellowship on a regular basis.

They haven't been getting encouraged, strengthened and built up, and so often people will contact me in a state of sheer panic because they've been deprived of what we're seeing right there on the screen.

They've deprived themselves because they've ignored the simple admonition of the Word of God, do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, which is the habit of some. (Hebrews 10:25) That's in the Book of Hebrews. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together. It says it right there in the Bible,

But you know what? Christians read it and they do it anyway. They forsake the assembling of themselves together, and what happens? They deprive themselves of the encouragement, strengthening, building up that should be happening in the body of Christ. And then when something devastating, or difficult, or challenging, or traumatic in their life happens, they fall apart because they're in a very weakened spiritual state.

And I have to tell you, that's a very common thing for me to hear because people have not been in the Word as they should. They have not been in regular fellowship. They have not been spending time in prayer, and they haven't been built up.

Guys, you got to consider going to church like going to the gym. You all know what that's all about. I don't know how many of you actually do it. And I'm not suggesting you should because that's, well, I won't…, forget it. But I mean, there is something good about going to the gym. There is something important about exercise, even though it hurts sometimes and sends pains down your leg, all the way down to your ankle.

But we need spiritual exercise. We need to be spiritually built up. We need to be spiritually encouraged, and that's what should be happening every time we gather. Otherwise it's just a flat out recipe for defeat. And there are a lot of defeated Christians walking around. Can I just tell you that? There's a lot of defeated Christians and I'm sure you guys run into them from time to time.

You may have even been one. And you're at work or at the store or whatever, and somebody just cuts loose on you and they start telling you about life and all the challenges. And you know that they're falling apart at the seams.

And instead of…, and it's hard to know what to do, isn't it? When someone's… Just know in your heart, well, this person needs to be built up, they need to be strengthened, they need to be encouraged, so you can encourage them accordingly.

But I think it's very important to also note the second thing that Paul and Barnabas did with the churches there, check out on the screen.

1. strengthening…the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.
2. through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

Number 2 is, they said, **through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.**

And the word tribulations means troubles, hardships, losses. That's the definition of tribulations. What is Paul saying? We got to go through lots of those. Our life is marked by lots of those things. That's what they were saying.

But my observation is that modern day Christians, particularly here in the United States of America, don't believe this. In fact, they reject it. And they believe that if they're going through tribulation, troubles, hardships, or losses, that it is something contrary to their Christianity.

That's what I find that Christians will often convey to me. In other words, they reject the idea of a reality in Christ that includes suffering. They reject that idea. And they do so despite what the Word of God has to say. Up on the screen, 1 Peter chapter 4.

1 Peter 4:12 (ESV)

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

1 Peter chapter 4, verse 1.

1 Peter 4:1 (ESV)

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

Romans chapter 8, verse 18.

Romans 8:18 (ESV)

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

John 16:33, the words of your Savior.

John 16:33 (ESV)

"In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

"In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

See, this is what the Word says. This is what the Word says about suffering. But to me, what Christians say to me is, what's happening to me? What is this? What's going on? What did I do? What did I do to deserve this? Yeah, it came to Christ.

1. strengthening…the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.
2. through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
3. they…appointed elders for them in every church

Thirdly, what they were telling them is in verse 23, that they appointed elders for them in every church. You can see that on the screen, and we've made the point in the past that the title, elder is synonymous with, overseer and pastor, okay. So before Paul and Barnabas would leave the areas where they had raised up believers and a local fellowship, they would raise up leaders, raise up and ordain elders to lead the people, to guide them, and to teach them and so forth.

And later on in Paul's apostolic ministry, he actually had guys like Timothy and Titus who he would leave behind. He'd go to an area, preach the gospel, raise up believers, and then he would go, all right, I'm leaving Timmy with you. I'm

going on to the next town. He's going to stay. He's going to raise up leaders, elders, overseers, and then he's going to come, and join me and we're going to move on to the next place.

And it was a very cool system that he had going there, but it was very important. And by the way, when we go through the letters of Timothy and Titus, that's where Paul gives the most information about what it is to raise up leaders within the church. That was a very important part of the local church. And that's why home churching has its limitation.

A lot of people got into it during the pandemic. They decided that they were just going to do home churching. And I understand, when you couldn't go anywhere for a long time, or at least you were discouraged from going places. And now, you got used to it. You got used to going to church at home.

Well, guess what? There aren't leaders though, to exhort you there. And so you lose something. Home church is not the ideal. I mean, the churches in the first century met in homes, but they weren't home churching. The church that met in their home had leaders that were there elders; overseers, pastors, that sort of thing. All right.

1. strengthening…the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.
2. through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
3. they…appointed elders for them in every church
4. with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Finally, at the end of verse 23, it says, **with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.**

And that's because of course, Paul and Barnabas could only stay as long as they could stay. And when they had to leave, they had to leave. And so what they would do is they would have a time of prayer and fasting, and they would commit the believers to the Lord. And this was just a nice way of saying that they would entrust them to the Lord's care.

And anybody who's ever been a parent who has raised children to adulthood, knows what it is to entrust your children to the Lord, right? Because parenting is fun. Well, it's not always, but parenting is… When you have your kids in the home and you can, and you can parent them because they're children, parenting is much more straightforward. But there always comes a point in time, and it

has for Sue and myself, 4 times now, all 4 of our kids are grown, and adults, and out of the home, where your parenting has to change.

And I've said this many times, you parent differently when your kids leave home. You parent on your knees. You can't say the things to your adult kids that you used to say to them when they were children. You can't look at them and go, don't do that, and you certainly can't spank them.

What do you do? You pray for them. You get down on your knees and you pray for them. And you entrust them to the Lord, and you cry out to God, sometimes with all your worth, when they don't seem to be heading in the right direction. Right?

And that's really, that's exactly what Paul and Barnabas were doing for the church fellowships. These young, fledgling church fellowships that they were leaving behind. And Paul literally saw himself like a father figure. It was like dad leaving home and leaving the kids to fend for themselves. But he knew they weren't fending for themselves. He knew the Lord was with them, and so forth.

And so he prayed for them and we know how he prayed for them because in some of his letters, he included his prayers, which is beautiful. And even in some of the churches, he didn't even raise up on his own, like the church in Colossae. Do you know that Paul wrote to the church in Colossae, but he didn't actually raise up that church. It was raised up by Epaphroditus, and look at…, but he still prayed. Look at on the screen. Paul says,

Colossians 1:9-12 (ESV)

… so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

… so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

You know why I share that? Not only does it show you how Paul prayed for these early new churches, but it's a great pattern for you who are praying for your grown kids. Use this as a pattern. Sometimes you don't know how to pray for them, and so there's a pattern.

And the chapter ends with these words. *"Then they passed through Pisidia* (I'm in verse 24) *and came to Pamphylia. [25] And when they had spoken the word in Perga,* (which is where they were previously) *they went down to Attalia,"* Or Atilia, depending on how you see it. Here's a map showing you those last 2 places that they visited.



"[26] and from there they sailed (back) *to Antioch,* (that's Antioch on the right of the screen) *where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. [27] And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. [28] And they remained no little time with the disciples."*

And so as soon as they got back, they had a meeting and Paul and Barnabas shared their experiences with the body of Christ there at the church in Antioch. And can I just tell you that this Wednesday, we're going to do the same thing.

You've probably heard Aaron say that, but this Wednesday, we're going to have a few of the folks from our fellowship who went to Kenya and they're going to come and they're going to declare all that God did there. And they're going to tell you what happened.

And so we just really want to invite you to join us this Wednesday here in the main auditorium, 7 o'clock. Like Aaron said, we're not going to start with worship this time. We're going to get started right away at 7, so get here a little bit early.

And let me just warn you, by the way, 2 things I need to tell you. First of all, you can't stay home cause we're not going to live stream it. Okay. This is, something we feel that is important just for our family here.

But secondly, I want to warn you that when you get here on Wednesday, there's going to be construction going on in here. You're going to see some scaffolding and probably some drop cloths and things like that around here because we're going to be doing a little painting and stuff here in the auditorium.

But just, it'll be okay. I think the Lord will be here anyway. Yeah. Anyway, let's stand together. We'll close in prayer.

If you need prayer, come on up afterwards. We'll have some folks up here to pray with you.

Father, thank You for Your love, for Your Word, for the reminders, for the blessing of being the body of Christ. We thank You for nourishing us every time we come together. We thank You for filling us, for teaching us, for instructing us, and for encouraging us to walk with You faithfully.

As we go from this place, Lord, help us to put all that we've heard, all that we've received into action in our lives. Teach us throughout the week to apply Your Word.

We ask these things in the name of Jesus, our Savior, and all God's people said together, amen.

God bless. Have a good rest of your Sunday.