

Persistent Problems

If you see water dripping from the ceiling after a rainstorm, do you leave it or get it looked at? What are the chances that somehow the leak will just solve itself? Probably not very likely, since minor problems usually turn into bigger ones. With that thought in mind, when we venture out into the world to spread the good news about Jesus, don't be surprised if sometimes initial roadblocks become much bigger later.

To illustrate, let's look at our readings from Acts 14, and compare what we find to the book of Galatians.

Big Idea: Sometimes small problems grow into much larger ones if left unchecked.

Confusion

- Confusion — The crowds quickly devolved into pagan worship, as they honored Paul and Barnabas like gods (Acts 14:11-14). Despite their compassionate approach to help a man unable to walk, the crowds still didn't understand what they were trying to accomplish.
- The Problem Persists — But the believing Galatians would continue to struggle with confusion about their service to Jesus, wondering if they should adopt the practices of the Law to remain pleasing to the Lord (Gal. 4:8-11).

Rejection

- Rejected — This was their first time teaching outside of the synagogues at Lystra (Acts 14:8), bringing a message they could easily understand (Acts 14:15-17). But despite all that, the crowds eventually stone Paul near death (Acts 14:19).
- The Problem Persists — Later on — not too long after — these same people would reject Paul's message again (Gal. 1:6-8).

Persecution

- Persecution — Paul and Barnabas continued teaching despite their confusion. They pressed on to show them who the only True and Living God really is (Acts 14:15-18). But the Jews caught up with them at Lystra and incited the crowds to stone Paul. But as bad as it was, Paul got back up, entered the city, and returned on their way home (Acts 14:19-23)!
- The Problem Persists — Issues with the Jewish persecution wasn't over, as some Jewish Christians — possibly those Pharisees mentioned in Acts 15:5 — were pressuring the Gentile believers in Galatia to be circumcised (Gal. 5:1-3).

Conclusion

What small roadblocks to receiving the gospel do you need to get over? Is there anything in your life that could grow into a much larger issue later on?