

Please listen to the audio lesson "The God of All Comfort" first. Then after finishing the audio lesson, have the Scriptures handy to best utilize the following questions to answer and consider thoughtfully for your further study.

The God of All Comfort:

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:10-12

- a. How much of an influence did Paul have on Timothy?
- b. Who has had that kind of influence on your soul?
- c. Paul had endured persecutions at Antioch, Iconium, & Lystra; what did Paul want Timothy to know about the outcome of persecutions?
- d. What should Timothy have expected, if he would live godly?
- e. What would be the expected outcome of Timothy's persecutions?

Thoughts to Consider: Paul does not encounter Timothy until Acts chapter 16. The stories of Antioch, Iconium, & Lystra are in Acts chapters 13 & 14, before Timothy was accompanying Paul. But Paul wanted to reassure Timothy of two things, if you are going to live a godly life, you should expect persecutions and expect the rescue also. And you should always have the comfort of knowing that the Lord always rescued Paul, and He will comfort & rescue us too, if we continue in the faith. Physical death can also be a rescue, may we never forget that.

2. Read Acts 13:14, 26-31

- a. In what city were Paul & his companions on the Sabbath day?
- b. Does Jesus understand persecution by experience?
- c. Does Jesus know what we need to overcome?
- d. What was God's response to His innocent Son's death?
- e. What was the comfort Jesus received on the first day of the week?
- f. Does the comfort outweigh the sufferings?

3. Read Acts 13:44-47

- a. Where do these events take place and who is there?
- b. What motivates the Jews to be contradictory & even blaspheme?
- c. Do wrong motives hinder Paul & Barnabas from teaching the gospel?
- d. What does the English word "repudiate" mean?
- e. Can evil motives judge men as being unworthy of eternal life?
- f. How heartbreaking would it be to Paul to hear his own Jewish brethren blaspheme and turn away from God?

- g. What if you had offered your only Son for them and they turned away?
- h. Paul & Barnabas' attention turns away from the Jews, but toward who?

4. Read Acts 13:48-52

- a. How are the hearts of the Gentiles here different than the Jews?
- b. Is there a suffering & a comfort offered for the faithful?
- c. Is there any comfort found for the Jews in verse 50?
- d. Would it be a comfort to be filled with joy & the Holy Spirit? Why?

Thoughts to Consider: Paul is here in Antioch. He preaches boldly to the Jews, but a week later they are filled with jealousy. It is heart-breaking when your own countrymen turn away from the Lord. But it is such a joy to see the Gentiles come to faith in Jesus. With each affliction, there is also a comfort. Better said this way, with abundant affliction comes abundant comfort. It is heart wrenching for your own family members to repudiate Christ and judge themselves unworthy of Eternal Life for now. Let's keep praying for their hearts to be softened enough to allow the Word to take root, and that they come to a saving obedient faith.

5. Read Acts 14:1-7

- a. Where is this synagogue located?
- b. What responses came from the hearts being taught?
- c. Did the embittered minds seek to destroy Paul & Barnabas?
- d. Did the Lord make sure Paul & Barnabas would be delivered/rescued?
- e. Did the persecutions bring about any change in the preaching?

6. Read Acts 14:8-23

- a. Where did these events take place?
- b. Who did the people think Paul & Barnabas were?
- c. When the Jews from Antioch & Iconium came, what did they do to Paul?
- d. Would you have returned to strengthen the brethren in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch? Would you have found comfort after persecution?

Final Thoughts: If we live godly lives, we can expect to be persecuted, but we can also expect God to give comfort. He is the God of all comfort! Even after being left for dead, Paul still told Timothy, I was rescued from all the persecutions in Antioch, Iconium, & Lystra. I want to leave you with the same encouragement Paul told them, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."