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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks  
Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## Faith to Persevere Acts 14:8-11, 19-23

### Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson teaches us to be aware of the dangers that accompanied the early disciples wherever they preached the gospel and to recognize the fellowship of the saints in supporting them as they displayed **Faith to Persevere**. The study's aim is to understand that serving the Lord consistently is often a lonely and tiring undertaking. The study's application is to urge the body of Christ to be understanding and aware of the needs of Christ's servants and always be ready to encourage and build up others.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### Lesson Introduction and Background

Have you ever heard the saying "What does not defeat us will make us stronger"? How about this one: "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"? Maybe you have had someone tell you to "fake it until you make it." All these clearly speak of enduring trials. In this week's lesson text, Paul and Barnabas were facing a very real, very intense situation. While in Lystra, Paul performed a miracle on a crippled man. He worked a life-changing healing in this man's life, to the astonishment of a pagan community. Now you would think that the townspeople would be elated, right? They were at first, until enemies convinced them to drag Paul to the outskirts of town after stoning him (Acts 14:19)! But Paul was not going to give up preaching; God had preserved his life, and his itinerant labors continued. It would have been pretty easy for Paul to just look up and say, "Hey, no one told me that I would get stoned for this!" He could have decided that he was finished following the calling he had to spread the gospel, It no doubt seemed his life would have been a lot easier. However, he was relentless about staying on the path chosen for him. He persevered and became one of God's greatest missionaries. Many of our brothers and sisters face such extreme circumstances daily. They are beaten, imprisoned, and even put to death for believing in Jesus. Yet as long as they are alive they continue to seek Him, whatever the cost. The majority of us, however, may never have to endure such intense persecution. This does not mean that we will have an easy life, however. In fact, we are promised the opposite. At some point, and no doubt more than once in our lives, we will face some sort of trial (cf. Luke 21:12). Christ promised us that. So what trial are you facing? For some of you, it could be contempt from unbelieving family members. For others, the trial might be in the workplace. Maybe you are struggling with finances. Each of us will have to cope with these trials, and our response will determine whether we will be victorious through them or not. How should we respond? First, we know that enduring trials will produce deeper character within us (cf. Rom. 5:4). This, in turn, will produce hope. Trials are meant to strengthen and purify us. They will do that if we allow God to teach us during them. When we face persecution or trials, it is easy to ask God why. Instead, why not ask God what lesson there is to learn. What is God trying to accomplish? What does God want from you at this time? These questions speak to the core of the situation. Remember, there will come a day when there is an end to all we face. Until then, we have to continue. We need an active commitment to a strong faith, whatever happens. It requires resolve on our parts, a steadfastness that proudly proclaims, "I will persist, come what may." Since "we are more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37), we know the battle is won. All we have to do is keep pressing forward in faith.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
God provides the power we need to persevere

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
I searched with all my heart to  
know If God was really there;  
He graciously revealed Himself,  
His mercy, love, and care. —  
Cetas

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful*  
(James 5:11 NKJV)  
*(from "Our Daily Bread", Dec 28, 2009)*

### **Series: Faith in Action**

**UNIT: The Early Church Proclaims  
Faith in Christ**

### NEXT WEEK

**NO CLASS - Christmas  
(12/24 or 12/31)**

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **Perseverance in Faith (Acts 14:8-11)**

#### *Faith to be healed (8-9)*

Healing accomplished because God is the only power that heals (Acts 4:7-10)

Healing accomplished, but it cannot be used by human will (Acts 19:13-16)

Healing accomplished through faith in Jesus (Acts 3:16)

Healing accomplished through God's Word (Ps 107:20)

Healing accomplished should result in praising God (Luke 17:15-18)

Healing accomplished should result in others praising God too (Luke 18:42-43)

#### *Faith in obedience (10)*

Obedience that is consistent with God's will (Isa 58:6-9)

Obedience that delights God (1 Sam 15:22)

Obedience that is from humble, praying, repentant people of God (2 Chron 7:14)

Obedience that is bold and steadfast (Dan 3:16-18)

Obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32)

Obedience through living in Jesus (1 John 3:24)

#### *Faith in worship (11)*

Worship of God only (Matt 4:10)

Worship in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24)

Worship to glorify God (Phil 3:3)

Worship with reverence and awe (Heb 12:28)

Worship that should never be lacking in zeal (Rom 12:11-13)

### **Perseverance During Suffering (Acts 14:19-20)**

#### *Suffering for Jesus' sake (19)*

Righteous suffering brings blessings from God (Matt 5:10-12)

Righteous suffering is rewarded by eternal life (Matt 19:29)

Righteous suffering strengthens (2 Cor 12:10)

Righteous suffering results in a crown of life (James 1:12)

Righteous suffering is commendable (1 Peter 2:19)

#### *Support during suffering from believers (20)*

Support of sufferers because of consideration of their works (Heb 13:7)

Support of sufferers because they deserve it (1 Cor 9:11-12)

Support of sufferers because it will be credited to their spiritual account (Phil 4:17-18)

Support of sufferers because there is a reward for doing so (Matt 10:41-42)

Support of sufferers because God will remember it (Heb 6:10)

### **Perseverance in Discipleship (Acts 14:21-23)**

#### *Discipleship through preaching and teaching (21)*

Preaching that is the word of truth (Eph 1:13)

Preaching that is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:23-24)

Preaching that results in Christ being known (Phil 1:15-18)

Teaching with wisdom (Col 3:16)

Teaching with ability from God (1 Tim 3:2)

Teaching sound doctrine (Titus 2:1)

#### *Discipleship to contend for the faith (22)*

Contend by proof through Scriptures (Acts 18:28)

Contend by living a life worthy of the gospel (Phil 1:27)

Contend through obedience (1 Tim 1:18-19)

Contend by fighting a good fight of the faith (1 Tim 6:12)

Contend by obeying sound doctrine (2 Tim 1:13)

#### *Discipleship through leadership (23)*

Leadership that is entrusted with God's work (Titus 1:7)

Leadership that is blameless so as to encourage godliness (1 Thess 2:10-12)

Leadership that is faithful because of being given a trust (1 Cor 4:2)

Leadership that has integrity (Titus 2:7-8)