

Acts 14:18

And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

Has the church gotten into people worship instead of God worship?

I ask that because when you read in today's verse, that in a sense is what was was happening, where the people were worshipping the messengers of God, and not God Himself. If you read the rest of the story in Acts Chapter 14, you see that God used Paul and Barnabas to heal a man.

† **Acts 14:8-11** *And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked. Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"*

And the people started to worship them (Paul and Barnabas) like they were gods themselves. Therefore Paul had to tell them that it was not them and tried to point them to God Who had healed this man. Yet even though Paul gave God the glory, today's verse still says that: ***"they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them."*** Referring to worshipping Paul and Barnabas. So, it's wasn't Paul or Barnabas' fault that the people tried to worship them, because they pointed the people to God. No, it was the heart of the people themselves that caused them to sin like this.

Yet I read that and wonder how could the people do such a thing? But then I look around today and see the same type of thing going on today, and it's even in the church as well as outside of the church, because the church has gotten into people/idol worship within the church.

- How many talk more about their church then about God?
- How many talk more about the stories the pastor told then the word of God that was spoken?
- How many invite others to church because they say their pastor is such a good teacher instead of inviting them to meet with Jesus in the church?
- How many will "Like" a scripture on Social Media, because a pastor or a well know Christian posts it, but will ignore it when regular people like you or I post it?
- How many in the church can not say the name of, "Jesus" or "God", but instead call Him the Man upstairs, or the Big Guy, anything but God or Jesus, yet they are so quick to say the name of their pastor or favorite Christian music group/person?
- Listen to Christian radio, Christian radio is just like... Let me repeat that, they are "just like" secular radio, because they have this handful of "Christian Artists" that they play over, and over, and over. Same songs, same group or person, just like secular radio does,

when there are thousands of awesome Christians groups and artist out there who simply want to bring people before the Throne of God with their music, but the media prevents them, because it won't make them the bucks, or they think the ratings will go down, because it doesn't fit their "Style" of music, because they want everyone to like the same music they do. They even have award ceremonies that are very much like the Grammy's, why, because they want to worship man instead of the God they are singing too.

- How many have turned the church into a bunch of events to draw the people to church, rather than focusing on teaching the bible and equipping the saint to go out and share the gospel? That is man worship when you try to draw others to anything other than Jesus.

I could go on and on, and there may be many who do not like this, and sad to say the reason is that the church, with all its fanfare and events and everything else is raising a generation of wimpy Christians. Think about it, today you may hear, or even say, "*He or she is such a strong Christian*" but my reply is, "*No, they are a regular Christian like the bible speaks about.*" So when people say that, I think that the issue is not that they are a strong Christian, but those who say it are a weak, wimpy Christian.

I know this is not a make you feel good, mushy type of devotional, but if you know me, my teachings are not that way anyway. But it is a wakeup call to the church (I include myself in that statement) to stop the idol, man worship of those who are delivering the message, just like they did with Paul and Barnabas, and get back to worshipping the Lord God Almighty, and Him and Him alone!!!

- † **Exodus 34:14 (KJV)** *For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*
- † **Jeremiah 25:5-7** *They said, 'Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.' Yet you have not listened to Me," says the LORD, "that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.*
- † **Malachi 3:7a** *Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," Says the LORD of hosts.*
- † **Isaiah 44:22 (NLT2)** *I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free.*