

As The Years Go By **Acts 15:32-36**

The First Churches of Asia

Background regarding who and what their situation was when Paul first met them with Gospel
People of Iconium were divided regarding the message of Christ - **Acts 14:1-4**

Many from all walks of life believed, some were turned against Paul's teaching by his enemies

Beginning of Paul's trouble with Judaizing teachers - Followed him everywhere he taught

Lystra looked to Paul and Barnabas as gods - **Acts 14:8-11**

Though Paul & Barnabas were able to restrain them from worship, they were easily swayed by the
angry Jews from other cities. This led to Paul being stoned and left for dead. - **Acts 14:19-20**

Despite difficulties Paul & Barnabas were successful in convincing some of salvation in Christ

These disciples were devoted to the Gospel even though many in their city would not believe

Success was had in Derbe as well with many disciples - **Acts 14:21-23**

Paul and Barnabas took time to make certain these disciples and those in the nearby cities had
what was needed for them to continue in Christ. They strengthened and encouraged

Paul returning to each of these cities had a strengthening affect on the brethren

Paul and Barnabas also set men in place to shepherd the flock of God.

I imagine Paul spoke similarly to these as he did to Ephesian elders a few years later. - **Acts 20:32**

The leadership left in place in each of these congregations would be necessary to help them deal
with the problems they would face

What did Paul find when he returned? - **Acts 16:1-5**

Lois, Eunice & Timothy

One who would follow his steps in Christ - **2Timothy 1:5**

Godly parents teaching their children in Godly homes. Timothy's faith was not just from the elders
or Bible class teachers

3 young men from Tanner St are now preachers of the Gospel

Christians eager for instruction

Listened to the message from Jerusalem and received strength - **1Peter 2:2-3; Hebrews 5:11-14**

Failing to do leads brings judgement - **John 12:47-48**

Are we eager for Word? Or dull of hearing? Are we developing our homes? Does this congregation
have the leadership and support needed to keep the faith and teach others?

A Quick Look At Tanner St

Consider your own beginnings in the Gospel - Individual stories?

This congregation began from doctrinal division.

Some believed and remained true to the Word as God delivered, Others followed their own or
other men's ideas or the path of convenience

In a way all congregations start same as those Paul and Barnabas established in these three cities.

Parable of sower - Some listen, some ignore, some follow on the surface, some are truly devoted.

Where are we now, is a good question to ask ourselves; Not to brag - **2Corinthians 13:5**

How are we?

Directories – Attendance

(Local congregation specific information presented)

Number watching may not show the real picture

Large membership doesn't mean great work

Forward For The Lord?

Ask ourselves if we fit the goal Paul sets forth for the Corinthians - **1Corinthians 15:58**

Are we working for the Lord? - **Colossians 3:17**

Do we show desire to learn and grow? - **Philippians 2:14-16**

Paul expected continued faithfulness and growth - **Acts 18:22-23**

His third journey began with these areas once again strengthening the brethren

No matter where we are now we have an obligation to God to continue in His Word

We have a responsibility to strengthen even those who have been saints for years.

During this third journey magic arts denounced in Ephesus. - **Acts 19:18-20**

Letter to Galatian brethren was written after this third trip through the region and was needed to get them back on track.

Let us continually move forward

Hebrews 6:1-2; Hebrews 12:1-2

Does the Lord see us/me as growing As the years go by?

DLH