

Dangers, Toils, and Snares

Acts 14:19-28

Introduction: Ministry (life) is hard . . .

- I. **Paul's Encouragement** (14:21-23): For those who follow Christ, the road from here to heaven will include “_____.”
- A. Paul and Barnabas were encouraging _____ believers to remain true to the faith.
 - B. The phrase “kingdom of God” in this case refers to “the _____ realm to be established by God into which men may enter by death or be living until the second coming of Jesus” (2 Tim. 4:18).
 - C. The inescapable experience of suffering in the lives of disciples of Jesus is given to believers as a _____ from God (Matthew 10:25; John 15:19-20; 16:33; 2 Tim. 3:10-12).
- II. **Paul's Example:** Hardship in discipleship is not only unavoidable; it is _____ (2 Corinthians)
- A. Necessary for the ministry of _____ to others (2 Cor. 1:3-11)
 - B. Necessary for effective _____ (2 Corinthians 4:3-12)
 - C. Necessary for spiritual _____ in the believer (2 Corinthians 11:23-12:10)
- III. **My Response:**
- A. Rather than investing all my energy in avoiding hardship and fretting/whining about it, I should give more attention to the potentially constructive purposes God may have for it in my life/ministry.
 - 1. What _____ is God possibly addressing through this difficulty?
 - 2. What _____ are affected by the manner in which I handle this difficulty?
 - 3. How am I being _____ to be a comfort or encouragement to others?
 - B. When I _____ for others who are facing hardship, I should incorporate these three revealed purposes of God in my intercession.