

Jesus' Mission through Adversity—Acts 11:19–15:41  
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When difficult or traumatic things happen to us in ministry, we are tempted to think that they are a hindrance to the advancement of the gospel. But what we learn from Paul's ministry in Acts is that the Lord continually *uses* adversity to advance his mission. In fact, we would not see Jesus' mission through Paul unfolding in the same way apart from the hardships and challenges Paul faced. This understanding of how the Lord works through adversity is essential for us as his witnesses.

1. Persecution in Jerusalem (11:19): The Antioch church is born (11:20–26).
  
2. Famine in the world (11:27–28): Paul, Barnabas, and John-Mark are sent out from Antioch (11:29–30; 12:25–13:5).
  
3. The Opposition of Elymas (13:6–8): Sergius Paulus believes (13:9–12).
  
4. John-Mark Abandons the Mission (13:13): The Antioch church's missionary efforts are doubled (15:36ff).
  
5. The opposition of the Jews (13:44–45): The Gentile mission is born (13:46–49).
  
6. Persecution in Antioch (13:50; cf. 14:2): The gospel comes to Iconium (13:51–14:3).
  
7. Persecution in Iconium (14:4–5): The gospel comes to Lystra (14:6–7).
  
8. Paul Stoned in Lystra (14:19): The gospel comes to Derbe and the churches are strengthened (14:20–23).