

## **GROUNDING THE BRETHREN: FIRST CENTURY STYLE**

1. Text: Acts 14:21-23
2. Paul is here ending his first mission journey. In fact, he's doubling back over territory he covered earlier.
3. Actually the three places mentioned he had been run out of, but he feels he must return to work with the new converts in them.
4. What did he and his companions do? What were the needs of these new Christians? What they did we should do. They did four things:

### **I. They Confirmed Them.**

1. See verse 22. The NKJV says "strengthened." The Greek word literally is "to stand with" and means to strengthen, make firm, establish.
2. The word is used only here and three other times (15:32, 41; 18:23) in Acts with same point of strengthening and making churches and disciples strong.
3. Acts 15:41 describes Paul's second journey beginning and he goes back to do more of this. Beginning his third journey (18:23) he does it more.
4. Acts 15:36 "Let's go back and visit the brethren and see how they are doing."
5. I Thessalonians 2:4-12 is excellent summary of what Paul did in working with new converts.
6. Key to remember: fist

### **II. They Exhorted Them.**

1. Two-pronged word: First, to appeal, urge, exhort, plead, entreat. Second, to comfort, encourage, cheer. So exhort plus encourage: tough and tender. Like Jesus Christ.
2. Who is to do? II Timothy 4:2 has preachers. I Peter 5:1 has elders. Hebrews 3:13 has us doing one to another. Hebrews 10:25 We so this in our assemblies.
3. John the Baptist did this. (Luke 3:18) Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:40) In Acts 15:32 This is used again with "strengthening."
4. Key to remember: open hand

### **III. They Warned Them.**

1. Notice: "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."
2. Proverbs 13:15 does not mean saint's way easy.
3. John 16:33 In the world you shall have tribulation. II Timothy 3:12 all that will live godly shall suffer persecution. I Peter 1:7 Your faith will be tested by fire.
4. Why is this important? Prepares us, gives perspective, destroys false promises, no pleasure cruise.
5. Why does it happen? Faith versus world, wean us from world, reclaims from wandering. How to teach? Responsibly, realistically, reward in mind.
6. Key to remember: forefinger like warning to child.

### **IV. They Commended Them To The Lord.**

1. See verse 23. Means "to entrust someone or thing to the care or protection of another." Associated with prayer. They entrusted them to God.
2. Luke 23:46 Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. Acts 20:32 Brethren, I commend you to God and His grace.
3. Paul's constant care for churches; he had to do this.
4. Our prayers for people:
5. Key to remember: praying hands

Conclusion:

**A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings  
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