

How the Church Can Face Today's Challenges

Acts 14:21-28

To face the challenges in today's church, we need to **FOCUS**:

F - First Things First (Engage in Evangelism) (14:21)

*"After they had **evangelized** that town and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch,"* (Acts 14:21, HCSB)

Preaching the Gospel must be of paramount importance in a growing church. Without it, the church dies.

O - Overcome Difficulties (Develop endurance) (14:22)

"strengthening the disciples by encouraging them to continue in the faith and by telling them, "It is necessary to pass through many troubles on our way into the kingdom of God."" (Acts 14:22, HCSB)

C - Commit New Leaders (14:23)

"When they had appointed elders in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed." (Acts 14:23, HCSB)

1 Timothy 3:1-7 Titus 1:5-14 1 Peter 5:1-2

"I exhort the elders [presbyteros] among you: Shepherd [poimaino - pastor] God's flock among you, not overseeing [episkopeo] out of compulsion but freely, according to God's will; not for the money but eagerly," (1 Peter 5:2, HCSB)

"elders"	presbyteros	Presbyterian
"shepherds"	poimaino	Pastor
"overseers"	episkopos	Episcopalian

U - Use More People (14:26)

"From there they sailed back to Antioch where they had been entrusted to the grace of God for the work they had now completed." (Acts 14:26, HCSB)

When some people finish, other people need to step up.

S - Search for New Opportunities and Open Doors (14:27)

"After they arrived and gathered the church together, they reported everything God had done with them and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles."
(Acts 14:27, HCSB)

THOUGHT: Facing the challenges of today's church requires FOCUS.