

Acts 16:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

Analysis

Which was well reported of by the brethren—Timothy (μαρτυρέω, martyreō, 'to bear witness/testify') had earned a sterling reputation among multiple congregations. The imperfect tense suggests ongoing, consistent testimony to his character. This public commendation was critical for Paul's apostolic team; unlike the contentious separation from Barnabas over John Mark (15:37-39), here Paul seeks a proven disciple.

At Lystra and Iconium—Notably the very cities where Paul was stoned and left for dead (14:19). That Timothy's witness extended across both communities—about 18 miles apart—demonstrates maturity beyond his youth. The multi-church recommendation establishes the biblical pattern of requiring external validation for ministry leadership, not merely self-appointment or single-congregation approval (cf. 1 Tim 3:7, 'good testimony from outsiders').

Historical Context

Timothy likely became a believer during Paul's first missionary journey (AD 47-48), when Paul preached in Lystra despite violent persecution. By Paul's return (AD 50-51), Timothy was approximately 15-20 years old but already recognized for faithful discipleship. His mixed heritage (Jewish mother, Greek father, 16:1) positioned him uniquely for cross-cultural ministry in both synagogue and Gentile contexts.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What kind of 'report' are the believers in your community giving about your character and faithfulness?
2. How does Timothy's multi-church commendation challenge modern practices of hasty ordination or self-appointed ministry?

Interlinear Text

ὃς	ἐμαρτυρεῖτο	ὑπὸ	τῶν	ἐν	Λύστροις	καὶ
Which	was well reported	of by	<small>G3588</small>	that were at	Lystra	and
<small>G3739</small>	<small>G3140</small>	<small>G5259</small>		<small>G1722</small>	<small>G3082</small>	<small>G2532</small>
Ἰκονίῳ	ἀδελφῶν					
Iconium	the brethren					
<small>G2430</small>	<small>G80</small>					

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