

No Lost Causes

Paul and Barnabas faced challenges in bringing the gospel into a potentially hostile world. In the same way, believers today answer the call to leave their comfort zones and to share the gospel in places that many would write off as a lost cause.

Choose one of the following case studies. Consider: 1) what makes each situation difficult, 2) what Paul and Barnabas might suggest based on our Scripture study, and 3) ways other believers can pray for such bold followers of Christ.

Case 1—Graduation Situation

Chris is the valedictorian of the graduating class of Richton High. As such, Chris is assigned to speak at graduation. The assigned title of the speech is “The Influences that Led Me Here and That Give Me Hope for the Future.” As a follower of Jesus, Chris believes that faith in Christ and a supportive church community played a major role. When submitting drafts of the graduation speech to the school administration for approval, Chris is told that no mention of Jesus or church will be allowed.

Case 2—Closed Doors, Open Hearts

Ramon and Rita Astor have a comfortable life. But recently, they have been praying that the Lord lead them in doing more for the cause of Christ. Ramon’s employer is an international corporation with offices all over the world. An opportunity has arisen for him to take a position in a country whose government is openly hostile to religion. Nevertheless, the Astors have been told that the people of that country are very open to the gospel despite the official government stance. Ramon and Rita know that there will be no churches and few believers near them should they move.

Case 3—To Tour or Not to Tour

Tom and Marie have many close Christian friends, but have also purposely cultivated friendships with their neighbors, who are unbelievers. Their hope is to continue to have opportunities to share the gospel with them, even though they have not been receptive to this point. Their friends have told them that they have won an all-expenses-paid European tour for four and want Tom and Marie to join them. Tom and Marie have always wanted to take such a trip, and the opportunity to have two weeks in the company of their friends seems like something too good to be true. As they plan their trip, however, the neighbors tell them that they are particularly excited about visiting one city in particular that features a tour of its infamous “red light district.”