

“Don’t Let the World Stop The Word”

Acts 13:1-12

05/31/11

Introduction: When a train travels through a small town, it is not uncommon to see dogs barking as the train goes by. Although the dogs’ barks are loud, it will not stop the moving train. The conductor sees the dogs, but stays focused on his destination. He is not distracted by his surroundings. Likewise, as Christians we must not allow the world to stop God’s Word (**Matthew 28:19**). The Lord has commissioned us to be Christian conductors and we cannot be stopped by distractions along the way. In our lesson, we will see how Paul and Barnabas did not let anything stop them from sharing the Word of God.

Verses 1-5

The Opportunity

These verses show us that Paul and Barnabas had an opportunity to share the Word of God. Verse 2 says the Holy Ghost was the one that sent them on this **assignment**. They had a special call to go out and preach the Word (**Romans 8:14-15**). They were not going because of a feeling or because they had chosen this as their profession. The source of their call and mission was the Holy Ghost. (**John 14:16-17**). We see that those who were present at that time fasted and prayed for them. Their **strength** came from God and not man. When we go out into the world as witnesses for Christ, we must have the Spirit of Christ in us (**Philippians 2:5**) (**Zechariah 4:6**). They departed unto Seleucia and sailed to Cyprus. Paul and Barnabas chose to begin their missionary outreach at Cyprus because it was the native home of **Barnabas**, which was only a two day journey from Antioch and had a large Jewish population. We see in verse 5 that they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. Paul established the custom of preaching to the Jews first whenever he entered a new city because he was a Jew and had an open door to them (**Acts 14:42**). Also, if he had preached to the Gentiles first the Jews would have never listened to him. We should never miss an opportunity to use the relationship that we have with others in order to share with them the relationship we have with the Lord. In other words, use our relationship with Him to share with others who may not know Him. We have to reach people on their **level** to be able to share the Word of God with them (**1 Corinthians 9:22**). The Lord has given us everything we need to build His kingdom. Are we using the opportunities that God has given us to build His kingdom?

Verses 6-11

The Opposition

These verses show us the opposition Paul and Barnabas experienced. They were **confronted** by a false prophet (**Matthew 7:15**) (**2 Peter 2:1**). This sorcerer had power, but the problem was his power came from an evil source (devil). Today's sorcerers use astrology, magic and dark arts to influence people. People are still **consulting** their horoscope, going to palm readers and practicing all sorts of sorcery. Sorcery is not of God, but of Satan. Satan has some power, but it is limited to this earth and he is not like the Lord who is the source of all power in Heaven and on Earth (**Exodus 7:9-12**). Notice this Sorcerer whose name was Bar-Jesus, which is translated the son of Jesus. He was a Hebrew by birth, but a son of **Satan** in the spirit. Many thought he was a prophet because of the miracles he performed. This false prophet was with Sergius Paulus (the deputy of the country) when he (Sergius Paulus) called Paul and Barnabas over because he desired to hear the Word of God. Sergius was a powerful, intelligent and rich man, but he did not have Jesus (**Mark 8:36**). He was also a Roman, but he was seeking the truth. Verse 8 tells us that Elymas, the sorcerer, withstood them (Paul and Barnabas) and tried to turn the deputy away from the faith. Bar-Jesus and Elymas is the same person. This sorcerer had been living off of the deputy and he didn't want anyone coming in and messing up his little con game. To work against God is a **dangerous** thing to do and this sorcerer soon found out. Paul called him the son of the devil and spoke divine judgment on this false prophet. The false prophet became blind and had to be led away because he could not see. The words that came from Paul's mouth were not his words, but the words of the Holy Ghost. The false prophet had to be reminded that he was not opposing Paul, but rather the Almighty God (**Matthew 6:23**).

Verse 12

The Openness

This verse shows us the openness of the **deputy**. He believed in the Word of God. The false prophet tried to keep him from believing, but when the great power of God was **manifest** (made real) against this sorcerer the deputy knew beyond a shadow of a doubt who God was. The doctrine of the Lord was different from everything he had been taught and this miracle with the sorcerer **erased** any doubt he might have had. This man was changed based on what he believed (**Romans 10:9-10**). We see that the ultimate requirement for salvation is to believe. The world (false prophet) tried to stop God's Word, but God's power prevailed. This should motivate us to be an active participant in soul winning (**Luke 10:2**). Whether the task is easy or challenging, we must be willing to present the Word of God and the Word will do the work for us. We can make an excuse or we can **execute** God's plan that He has already put in place (**2 Peter 3:9**).

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