



#31

THE HOPELESS ENEMIES OF JESUS

4.26.15

ACTS 13:4-12

INTRODUCTION

- To study the book of Acts is to study the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ.
- We are picking up in the book of Acts where we left off last year. **ACTS 13:4-12.**
- **It's around AD 47** (14 years after the ascension of Jesus) and the gospel had spread to Antioch. The Church there had grown tremendously. After praying and fasting, they commissioned Barnabas and Saul to go forth as Missionaries, taking the gospel to unreached areas.

WE BEGIN BY SEEING THE GLOBAL MISSION OF JESUS

4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they (*Barnabas and Saul*) went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus (*map of Cyprus*). 5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews (*word of God = gospel*). And they had John to assist them. (*that's John Mark, the writer of The Gospel Account of Mark*).

- **Derek Thomas notes**, “The Church of Jesus is never meant to be idle, luxuriating in it’s achievement, basking in the glow of blessing already attained.”
 - The gospel is not meant to be simply preserved...it is to be spread!
 - We know the cure for the terrible epidemic that plagues the world & separates people from their Creator.
 - We can't just prize the gospel...we've got to proclaim it! We've got a job to do.
 - **That's exactly what the Early Church did**—they intentionally spread the gospel message far and wide at great earthly cost to themselves.
- Q.** Why does the gospel—the good news of what Jesus has done—need to be spread throughout the entire world?
- A.** Because the gospel is the only way enemies of Jesus can be *RECONCILED* to Him.

1. ENEMIES OF JESUS

6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos (*eastern side of the Island*), they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus (*demonic influence*). 7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence (*highest ranking official for the Roman gov. in all of Cyprus*), who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name (*Elymas = Sorcerer*)) *opposed* them, seeking to *turn* the proconsul away from the faith.

Elymas is not simply indifferent to Jesus, he's opposed to Him! Jesus threatens his way of life.

- **There are many today** who *SEEK* to do the same thing as Elymas.
- **There were many in the days of the Early Church** as well. They weren't naive then...

We see clearly... Jesus. Has. Enemies.

APPLY Q. What does this mean for us? **A.** At least 3 things.

1. JESUS KNOWS HE HAS ENEMIES, AND HE LAUGHS IN THEIR FACE

PSALM 2:1-6 1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, 3 “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.” 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision (*mockery*). 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 6 “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

11 Now therefore... Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

- **Jesus laughs in the face of those** who ceaselessly try to convince Christians that to believe the Bible is true and Jesus is the King is regressive and ignorant.
- **Jesus laughs in the face of ISIS and their vain attempts** to purge the world of infidels.
- **Jesus laughs in the face of sinners who say**, “There is no God! I can do whatever I want.”

2. WE ARE ALL ENEMIES OF JESUS THROUGH OUR SIN

- **Really, when it comes to our standing with God we are all in the same category as Elymas.** No, it may not be as obvious but it is just as much reality.

This is one of the hardest truths for we in the Western world to grasp:

Humankind is *NOT* inherently good. (Don't take my word for it, take God's)

ROMANS 3:10-12 “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

- Q.** How can God say that? **Q.** Yeah, we all mess up from time to time, but doesn't he see all the good?

ROMANS 14:23 “For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”

- Q.** How did things get so messed up? Didn't God create the world inherently good? **A.** Yes! But...

3. WE ARE ALL BORN ENEMIES OF JESUS

- **Our first father**, Adam is our covenant head (*representative*). His failure in the garden is imputed to us.
- **We are not passive in our sinfulness either**—we actively choose to rebel against the loving rule of God.

ROMANS 5: “Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned...by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners.

ILLUSTRATE

- **Adam was born in the presence of God.** There was one door out of that presence and he walked through it. We are ALL now born on the dark side of the door. We are enemies of the Light. We love the Dark.

So, Jesus laughs at His enemies because He's going to defeat them and we are *ALL* enemies.

Q. Jesus is going to defeat His enemies. But how, exactly?

That's what we see beginning in v.9...

2. HOW JESUS DEFEATS HIS ENEMIES

9 But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?”

- The words “crooked” in v.13 and “turn” in v.8 are the same words in the original language. Elymas was attempting to *turn* the proconsul away from the gospel by urging him to walk a *crooked* path.
- The apostles are seeking to do the very opposite—they are proclaiming the gospel and urging this Roman Proconsul to turn from the crooked path and believe the straight path found in Jesus’ work.

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.

APPLY

- **Wow! Q.** What do we do with this? **A.** We see the TWO different ways Jesus defeats His enemies. Way #1 is pretty dang clear. Way #2 is a little bit in the background.

1. JESUS DEFEATS HIS ENEMIES THROUGH JUSTICE—HE JUDGES THEM FOR THEIR SIN

- Elymas gets exactly what an enemy of the King deserves—judgement. Just a foretaste of the eternal...

One of the ways Jesus defeats His enemies is by taking them out! You’re standing in opposition to the way of the Lord? BOOM—blind!

ILLUSTRATE

- **Q.** Have you ever heard people say things like, “If you would just allow the Lord to...” That’s wrong!

Jesus doesn’t ask permission to accomplish his plan anymore than a lion asks permission to eat a zebra. He’s not a carpenter! (I WANT YOU TO HAVE A BIG VIEW OF JESUS...BECAUSE HE’S INFINITELY MASSIVE!)

“He’s the King of kings and the Lord of lords, the Blessed and only Sovereign.” (1 Tim. 6:15)

- **Q.** But Did you notice who was predicting this judgement over Elymas? Paul. Remember his story?

2. JESUS DEFEATS HIS ENEMIES THROUGH JUSTIFICATION—HE HIMSELF WAS JUDGED IN THEIR PLACE FOR THEIR SIN

- Elymas got exactly what he deserved: **judgement**. Paul got exactly what he DIDN’T deserve: **justification**.

No sin will ever go unpunished—either it will be paid for in hell forever or it was already paid for on the cross by Jesus! God will uphold justice!

- **The Cross** = Jesus paying our debt. **The Resurrection** = the receipt for that purchase.

END: THE GLOBAL MISSION OF JESUS WON’T STOP

12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

- The resurrected Christ will have His prize. Nothing will stay His hand or thwart His plan.
- Jesus has enemies, yes. But do you see how hopeless they are? Jesus will win. Either through judging sin—as we all deserve—or justifying sinners who put their faith in His work!
- Here’s the crazy part: His plan is to work through us—the church—to do it!