

A Showdown: Where The Gospel Wins

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[0 : 00] Thank you for tuning into this message preached at Karis Church. The word of God is to be lived. May you receive direction from this message that will be a lamp to your feet.

We are still in the book of Acts and Acts chapter 13. Last week God gave us the privilege to hear about their assistance in the ministry of helps. And today God is moving us on to an interesting one. I've called it a showdown. Where the gospel wins. Today I feel like I need to pull my sleeves up. Because there is about to go down an enemy of the gospel.

It is going to be a showdown and the gospel will win. Amen. It will be the same in your life. The word of God will win in your life. The word of God will win in your life.

Amen. So today's focus will be from verse 6 all the way to verse 12. And verse 6 it says that, okay, so Barnabas and Saul have sailed from Antioch.

[0 : 56] Antioch and they've chosen Cyprus to go to Cyprus. One may ask why have they chosen Cyprus? It is believed that Barnabas came from Cyprus. So he felt like for our first journey, let's go to where I know.

I know those grounds. I know a few people there. We can do the work of God that the ground needs us. And so they sailed from Seleucia and made their way to Cyprus. And at Cyprus they landed at Salamis.

This is on the southeast of the island of Cyprus. And so that's where they landed and the scripture says that they went all the way and then they got to Parfus. Parfus which is in the northwest.

So complete opposite. They crossed. They walked across the land from the southeast of Cyprus which is Parfus. And Salamis is known to be the big city where there was trade and all of that.

And then they walked all the way through the island and got to Parfus. Parfus is the capital city. This is where the Roman government, the seat of the Roman government. And Parfus is believed to be a place of the city for the worship of the goddess Venice.

[1 : 54] And that meant that, you know, Venice is the goddess of love. And so there was a lot of sexual activities in that city. So there's a certain power that is at play in that city.

But that's where the seat of government was. So the apostles knew that, yes, we have landed in Salamis. But we're not going to stay there. We're going to go to the city. Hallelujah.

So they made their way to the city. And it's of course, it will be obvious that from Salamis as they are walking across the land, they'll be preaching the gospel to get to Parfus.

And when they get to Parfus, it's interesting. The scripture says that in verse 6. And when they had gone through the island of Parfus, there they found a certain man. So when they got to the capital city, they found a man, a certain man, a certain sorcerer, a false prophet.

So this is the first character. So the showdown is happening in Parfus, the capital city. The first character in this showdown is a sorcerer. You can imagine what is about to go down.

[2 : 55] So the Bible talks about a sorcerer, meaning somebody who practices magic, evil, sorcery, witchcraft. So really, this person is not going to be working with the apostles.

And so his name is Bar-Jesus. It's an interesting name. So the Bible says that a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, his name is a Jew whose name is Bar-Jesus.

So this is the qualification of this first character. Further on, the scripture talks about another name, which is Elymas. I believe that is more his title, you know, because he said, Elymas the sorcerer.

So he's like, this is when I'm about to function. This is my title, Elymas the sorcerer. But the Bible gives us a description of this man. And first of all, he's a sorcerer, but he's also a Jew, which is a strange thing.

It is not supposed to happen. That God had completely told his people, don't engage in these things. Deuteronomy chapter 18, verse 9. So this is what the Lord told his people when he was

taking them, when he had taken them to the promised land.

[3 : 51] And he said, when you come into the land, which the Lord your God has given you, you shall not learn to follow the abomination of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes a son or daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft or soothsaying, or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer.

So God told him clearly that don't do this, or one who conjures spells or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord.

And because of these things, the Lord your God will drive them out from before you. So they are being driven. These people are being driven out. The people God has given the allowance to his people are being driven out because of these abominations.

And so God said, when you go and you enter the land, don't start practicing these abominations.

God said, you cannot combine evil with good, light with darkness.

One has to take control. And so he told his people, when you get to the land that I'm giving you, do not engage in the evil practices that I call an abomination. That day, day for which I'm driving them out of their land.

[5 : 06] And so it is a strange thing for Bar Jesus to know that this is what God says concerning being a Jew and his busy practicing. Sorcery has been in existence from time immemorial.

We see that when Moses went in to deliver to the court of Pharaoh, to deliver the message God had given him that his people need to be delivered from bondage. We saw God had given Moses a rod and God instructed him, put it on the ground.

He did. And then of course, Moses said, this thing is this thing we haven't seen before. Magicians. Come. So the magicians came. It was a mini showdown. No, power beats power.

Okay. But that one was even small. So when Moses threw his rod, he became a snake. Then he brought the same sorceress in Egypt. So they had been seeing these things.

The people of God had been seeing these things. That's why God had to give them a clear instruction. That do not engage because it's an abomination to me. The other thing as well about this man is the Bible says he's a false prophet, meaning he presents himself as a prophet of good, but rather he's using the prestige of his race, of being a Jew, because people knew them to be people of God.

[6 : 19] And so he presented himself as a prophet. But of course, he wasn't a true prophet of God. The Bible says he was a false prophet. And he was using that for his own game.

The other thing about him as well is he's called Bar-Jesus. It doesn't make sense why his name should be Bar-Jesus, meaning son of Jesus, son of Joshua, son of salvation. You are given a name like this and you choose to pervert the name that you have.

So he's not living according to his name. He's supposed to be a channel of salvation, but he has now become a channel of diversion away. He's become a false prophet. And then he had a position.

The Bible says that he was an advisor. So he has traded on his race, trade and use sorcery to become an advisor to the proconsul. So who is the main guy, the Roman representative in Cyprus? So he is the ruler of Cyprus. And he has used all these things to secure a position in these high quarters and using demonic powers to control.

[7 : 26] Of course, his name is Elemas. His title is Elemas the sorcerer, meaning that the sorcerer means somebody who engages in magic. The roots, similar to the same word that is used, which is magos, is the same word that is translated magi.

But people later down the line, they were wise men. They were into astronomy. But over time, some people had perverted that. And now they had gotten into sorcery and the use of evil magic.

And today that's what we call New Age, isn't it? So some people are in the deep occult. Whilst the devil has interesting array, various assortments of how he presents himself.

In some parts of the world, witchcraft is the big thing. In some parts of the world, the occult, dealing with evil spirits, but not necessarily lookit, is what reigns.

So in various territories, various wickedness and powers reign. But we, the people of God, we know who we are. Yes, we know who we are. And I'm praying that by the time we finish this message, you will have this boldness.

[8 : 29] Boldness. Because you are a child of God. And you have got the Holy Spirit. And so you are not subject to any sorcery, any false prophets, any evil advisor.

No evil prophets, no false prophets can work against you. In Jesus' name. And so at their first step, they encounter satanic resistance.

The devil has a way where he starts blocking the work of God anytime he enters a new space. When God was teaching the book of Acts, we saw that when they went to Samaria, they met by Jesus.

So it was, he came, he was a resistance. Simon the sorcerer, sorry. He was a resistance to the work of God. In Acts chapter 16, further when we get there, we'll see when the devil used a young child, a young girl who was following the apostles and telling them that this is the men, these are the men of God.

They carry the word of God. But she wasn't speaking of the Lord. She was speaking with the voice of the enemy. And so when they went to Samaria, they saw Simon the sorcerer in Macedonia. They saw the slave girl.

[9 : 28] So it's nothing new. So when we go to new places, we know that the enemy will come. Like, it's his thing. He has to resist just in case. He's like a roaring lion seeking who may devour. He's not a lion.

He's like. So he will try. If you don't know who you are, then you will give him. So that's, that's how he works. He works by deception. He's false. He's evil. He's a liar. The Bible calls him a liar.

So he tried it. So, you know, yes. Okay. I'm going to use this sorcerer by Jesus. I'm going to use him to see if these people actually know what they are about.

As we go into our Jesus campaign season, I pray you have this awareness that anybody you talk to know that you have superior power. Know that you have superior power. They could, it doesn't matter their incantations.

It doesn't matter what they look like. It doesn't matter their clothing. It doesn't matter the things they say. You have superior power over them in Jesus name. It is normal. And so we have seen by Jesus.

[10 : 22] The second one, the Bible says in verse seven, who was the proconsul of Cyprus? He is Sages Palace, an intelligent man. Okay. So the next person we are looking at is Sages Palace.

He is the governor of Cyprus, as I said earlier on. And he ruled under the leadership of the Senate of Rome, not necessarily under Caesar, because it wasn't a military conquest.

And the Bible says that he's also an intelligent man. It's interesting. A man of intelligence has a sorcerer on his right hand. It's an interesting thing. Sometimes you think that when people have intelligence, they have intelligence about spiritual matters.

They don't. It is not automatic. Everybody needs Jesus. Everybody needs Jesus. And so the Bible says he's an intelligent man. I can imagine maybe it's how, as they walk through the island, it's how the island looks like.

It's like somebody who is governing this place has a level of intelligence, has a plan. Things look well. And so, you know, in some places when you go, you can see that the government are not thinking streets.

[11 : 25] It's like, what's going on here? I mean, it goes all the way. Some schools you go, you can know that the leadership of this school are serious. Some other schools, you can tell that they don't know what they're doing. You can go to some hospitals. You can go to some what?

All manner of places where there's authority. That is why, as a church, we have to fight for our excellence. We have to fight for order. We have to be determined to make sure that things are done right. It's a statement of who we are.

It is a statement. So when you come and you are fresh and you do understand a few things, just follow the instructions. We know what we are doing. We know what we are about. We know we have to be a certain way.

Because how we govern determines the kind of wisdom we are operating by. And so, Sages Palace is said to be an intelligent man. And, of course, he is appointed a sorcerer to be his right-hand man, advising him on matters of government.

He's a special assistant. He's an envoy. He's an advisor. He's a right-hand man. Maybe he also is in the cabinet and making decisions. So you just never know who is speaking, who has the ears of people of authority.

[12 : 27] You never know. That's why when you're going for an interview, don't just prepare. You know that you have all your facts. I'm ready. And then you go and sit in front of somebody. You don't know which evil spirits have been whispering to them. You don't know. But people of authority

are also under authority.

They can be under the control of anybody. So we have to have the awareness as the believer. But this one thing I noticed about Sages Palace is that he's the one who invited Barnabas and Saul to come and share whatever they had.

And so he tells us that he's very open. As much as he's an intelligent man, as much as he has a sorcerer on his right hand, he was still open to no more. I believe that there was a sensing in him that this is not it.

Even though I'm tolerating you by Jesus, but I know there's something else. This is not it. I believe what you're saying, but I don't fully believe what you're saying. That is why we can't give up on anybody. You can't give up on anybody.

You just never know what God is doing in somebody's heart. They may present as people who are anti-God, anti-the gospel. But you just never know the work the Holy Spirit is doing in their lives.

[13 : 28] So everybody deserves to hear the gospel. Everybody deserves to experience the goodness of God. Everybody deserves to enjoy the mercy of God. Everybody does. Don't deny people just because you think they don't deserve it.

You think they are not open. Just cast your bread upon the waters. Just like the sower. Just cast the seed. Only God knows which ground is good. Only God knows. And so again, let me take advantage and remind us.

As we enter the season of Jesus campaign. You know we have a thing of you look at the person and you size the person. And is it of my kind? Would they receive? Would they not receive? Before you approach people, God is telling us in this Jesus campaign is supernatural.

It will be based on who the Holy Spirit has prepared. So don't look on the outward. Just let the word. God speaks. So Satan knows how to control the right people. We see here, Satan is very intentional and very strategic as to who he's controlling.

Because if he's controlling Seger's palace, he's controlling Cyprus. That's why we have to pray for our governments. Because if the devil has the hand of the government, he has the hand of the nation.

[14 : 33] If the devil has the heart of the government, he has the heart of the nation. Could it possibly be that that's the reason why some things persist in some nations? It's because the government, the deceit has been captured by some spirits.

We are not making excuses for governance, bad governance. But the Lord is helping us to see behind the scenes what actually happens. That evil spirits control people in authority.

People of influence. They like doing that. Because they know that they know the effects that can have. That if I have the head, I've got everything. It matters. That is why he went for Jesus.

When Jesus came, he went for him straight. The Holy Spirit drove Jesus to go into the wilderness. And he said, I'm not going for the small boy singles. I'm going for the kill. Let me just check it out. In case.

He doesn't know what he's about. If I get him, I've got this. That's what he went for. The first man, Adam, fell. Because he went for it. He knows that if Adam gets it right, he can't do anything. We have to pray for our pastors.

[15 : 33] We have to pray for people in leadership. It matters who is in their ears. And for those of us who have the ears of people in authority, be careful what you say.

Be careful what you say. I've realized that people who have the ears of leaders can end up being the leaders and not the leader themselves. Yeah. The people you are listening to all the time.

Telling you, hey.

And I saw this person rolling on the floor. And I saw this person jumping up here. I said, I said, I said, you can't help it. They are controlling you. They are in charge. Yeah. So as a leader, you have a responsibility.

But also, as those of us who have the privilege, who have the ears of leaders, we have a greater responsibility. To know what you say. To know what you say. Because you could actually be an influence.

And let's pray. We will be judged on it. Be an influence that the Lord is using. Not the devil is using. Not the devil is using. And so, it matters.

[16 : 29] In the book of Daniel, we see in Daniel chapter 10 verse 13, we see that there was a prince of Persia. There's a prince who is in charge of the nation. And that he is controlling even the

prayers that are coming through the nation.

Can you believe this? Thank God for the Holy Ghost. That he dwells in us. That when we whisper, he hears. Because back in the day, a demon can't stop your prayers. My God. So it tells us that powers are in operation.

Powers are in operation. Demonic influence of a government can easily be the reason why certain pervading problems exist in nations. And that is why in nations, in territories, in Mark chapter 5, we see a man, the madman of Gadara.

The madman of Gadara, the Bible says that he was terrorizing the people. Nobody, if you bound him, he would tear up the chains. So people knew that there were some places they couldn't go. Because the madman of Gadara had taken over.

That was an evil spirit at work. A territorial spirit at work. Terrorizing the people. Harassing them. In 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 1 and 2, the Bible says that therefore we should pray for those in authority.

[17:28] Pray for those in authority. Yes, as much as you're praying for personal needs. If you live within a nation, pray for those in authority in the nation. If you work in a company, pray for those in authority in the company.

Wherever you find yourself and you know that there's an authority over you, pray for them. So in this church, we have to pray for our pastor. Because of the possible influence of the enemy. All levels of authority have to be prayed for.

Control over them. God creates and the devil infiltrates. So in the Garden of Eden, God has created a beautiful garden. Created his man and put him in there. Then he brings him a beautiful wife.

Now you can increase and you can multiply. What is the devil doing here? God creates. The devil infiltrates. He has the tendency of finding himself in things that the Lord is doing.

So if God is working in your life, it's easy for the devil to also want to come and infiltrate. If God is working in this church, then it's easy for the devil to want to come and infiltrate in our ranks and in our church.

[18:26] Jesus goes to pray and the devil is there. He's fasting. Are you not shy? Are you not afraid? Is he not the son of God? The Lord not just said, behold, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased.

You heard this devil. At least just stop being rude. Let him finish his thing. Come down and then you can try. No, there and there. He said, I must go to the roots.

I must go there and then. And so this is just telling us the devil is not shy. He has no respect. He will try his luck on in any situation and every occasion.

And so when you think, oh no, the devil can't come here. He don't. You are joking. When you have just married and you think, oh, this is so beautiful. You think the devil's eye is not on anything God is doing. His eye is on everything God is doing.

You found this beautiful man, this beautiful woman. You think you believe you're going to have this beautiful marriage. Oh, the devil's eye is on there. God has given you this beautiful opportunity. You're about to step in.

[19:23] You know that now this is your new face. Great things are about to happen. Oh, the devil is very interested in that. If it is God, the devil is interested. Yeah. If God is at work, the devil is interested.

He has to work against the purposes of God in order to deny the glory that comes to the Lord. Beautiful church that has started. Acts chapter 5. We went through. God's one took us through it. Where is Ananias in Sapphire?

Where did they learn this from? Where did they learn this from? They're this nice church. We see miracles. God is doing great things. We have an amazing fellowship. We are hearing the word. We are in and out praising God, serving the Lord.

Where did this one come from? Oh, if it is God, the devil infiltrates. And it is all over scripture. The Galatian church. Galatians chapter 3. The apostle said, oh, ye foolish Galatians.

How is it that you started by faith and now you have to end up in works? That was an infiltration of the enemy. Because yes, it's about the judge shall live by faith. So when you start by faith, you don't finish and then graduate.

[20:20] Now, okay, now works will do it. Works will finish it. You know, he said you're foolish. That's infiltration of the enemy. He must have come through some teachings of somebody the

enemy used to come into the church and now start telling them a different gospel.

We see in the Corinthian church, the spirit of lust has now taken over. The Corinthian church. And division. Not just lust, but division. That's why Corinthians chapter 3 talks about how we should love one another.

Yeah, they were operating in gifts, but they didn't know how to love one another. It's an infiltration of the enemy. When we go to revelations, the Lord talks about the efficient church. He said you've lost your first love. Now, other things have become more important.

I'm no longer the main thing in the church. You've lost your first love. It can happen in any church. It can happen in the life of a believer. The enemy is infiltrating. The church in Pergamos had now following the doctrine of Balaam.

The church in Titeria have now enthroned a prophetess. Jezebel who calls himself a prophetess. Who teaches and seduces the servants of God. It's a church. The Bible says the church in Titeria. [21:19] It's a church. It's the people of God. But the enemy has found a way of infiltrating. It would be no different in this church. In this very church. The enemy will have to find a way to infiltrate anything God is doing.

So if we believe God gave us the revival mandates. Guess what? The enemy will want to infiltrate the revival mandates. If God has called us. Then indeed the enemy wants to infiltrate. So all of us must be on guard. All of us must be on guard.

All of us must be alert. That we are not used. But also if we see signs of infiltrate. We know how to deal with it. Ephesians chapter 6. It said for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

It said with Ephesians 6. It said we wrestle not against flesh and blood. 2 Corinthians 5. 2

Corinthians 10. The weapons of our warfare. They are not carnal. It said but they are mighty through God. So they are pulling down of strongholds.

So even if they infiltrate. We can pull them down. We can pull them down. And it shows us how we do it. It's not by carnal means.

[22:17] It said our weapons are not carnal. But they are mighty through God. And pulls down every stronghold. So the believer must be well aware. Awareness.

Have their alertness. Spiritually. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood. But against principalities. Against powers. These are evil spirits. Evil people. Spirits that the enemy uses. To destroy the work and the agenda of God. And so. We have seen one character. By Jesus. Sergius Pallas. Who has been heavily. Heavily used.

Heavily used by the enemy. But you can tell it's not his will or his desire. He's just a man of his circumstance. And then of course. We have our apostles. We have Barnabas.

We have Saul. Of course. They have their helper. But they have a greater helper. Who is the Holy Spirit. So it's very exciting. Because their gospel has finally received their freedom.

[23:14] They've been in Jerusalem for a while. They've now come to Antioch. And now. The thing that the Lord spoke concerning Paul's life. At his conversion. It's almost like it feels like it's about to burst forth. Now we've moved from the places we know where.

Now we are going to new grounds. The gospel is going to new grounds. So they've arrived in Cyprus. I can imagine. They are on fire. They are so ready. Their spirit man is so alive.

And so excited. About what God is about to do. And then they don't find themselves in any mere space. But right in the middle of government. Wow. There's a showdown about to go down. It is about to go down.

We cannot lose this one. We can't. And so. What people don't know. What Sejus Paulus doesn't know. What about Jesus doesn't know. That as much as they stand as three men. There's more to them.

Than just the three of them. They are coming. Under the instruction of the Holy Spirit. They have been sent. By the Holy Spirit. Because the Bible says in. Chapter 13 verse 4 said. When the apostles.

[24:10] They prayed and fasted. They laid hands on them. And sent them away. Verse 4 says. So being sent out by the Holy Spirit. So yes. The physical ordination happened. So we.

Human beings only ordained. It's only the Holy Spirit. Who truly sins. Okay. Okay. So. The team. Have sent them forth. But then we see the next one. Which is very crucial.

For what they are about to do. As much as they have been prayed for. And fasted. It's a good thing. But it doesn't guarantee the success of the ministry. If you don't have the backing of the Holy Spirit.

In verse 4. So it mattered. That. So being sent out by the Holy Spirit.

They continued. They went their way. So the Holy Spirit is the secret weapon. That they have. When you go out to preach. The Holy Spirit is your secret weapon. It doesn't matter your eloquence.

It doesn't matter how many scriptures you have learned. On how to preach the gospel. You can quote all of it. But if it doesn't have the backing of the Holy Spirit. You haven't engaged the Holy Spirit. You're not guaranteed anything.

[25 : 06] You're not guaranteed anything. So they have. The Holy Spirit with them. In Acts chapter 19. We'll get there. I'm sure it will be a very exciting message. Seven sons of Sceva. They have seen the moves.

Of the apostle Paul. And they think. Yes. We're sons of a priest. If you can do it. I can do it. And there's seven of us. There's one of him. Him and Silas. Only two. I mean we can deal with him. There are seven of us. So they caught a man filled with the devil. And they said. We'll deliver you today. Unfortunately. Their shoulder was a washout. It wasn't a shoulder.

It was a washout. It didn't happen. They got beaten. Because they didn't have the Holy Spirit. They thought. It was just by speaking. It was just by positioning yourself a certain way.

It was just by grabbing somebody. And say some things to them. And things will happen. No. No. No. No. No. Completely oblivious. About the secret weapon. The role of the Holy Spirit. In the life of a believer. In the life of the church.

[26 : 02] And so they had power on their side. In some songs they'll say they've got backing. They had the backing. Of the Holy Ghost. So hey. Now. They are in the courts of authority. In the courts of Sages Palace.

He has invited these apostles to come. So that he can hear the word of God. In verse 8. So all our characters are in position now. Verse 8. It said. But Elymas the sorcerer.

For so his name is translated. Withstood. He withstood them. Seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. So his intentions are very clear. It wasn't like he didn't know what he was doing.

You know sometimes we make all kinds of excuses. For evil things. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. The devil is well aware what he's doing. Oh yes. The devil is very well aware what he's doing. And so he withstood.

He opposed them. He was an adversary. He was resisting them. From declaring the word of God. But that is what they had brought. That's all they had. The word of God.

[26 : 59] This is why they've moved from Jerusalem to Antioch. And now they are in Cyprus. This is their main mission. And the devil is withholding them. The devil is resisting them. He has become an adversary.

He's stopping them. You have to be wild. Against anything that wants to stop the purposes of God in your life. We see Paul's response. The same thing happened when Moses in 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 8.

Talks about Janice and Jambres. The Bible says that now as Janice and Jambres resisted Moses. Moses is gone on his own accord. He went because God had sent him. He was busy doing his thing in the wilderness.

Then God appears to him. And says I'm going to have chosen you. And I'm going to send you to deliver my people. This is not his plan. To the point that he tells God. I can't even speak. This Pharaoh he said I should go and stand in front.

I don't know what I'm going to say. Actually I'm a stammer. Just in case you've forgotten. I cannot speak. And you have given me a speaking ministry. It doesn't make sense God. But that's how God works. He doesn't look on the outside. He looks on the inside.

[27 : 54] And when he looks on the inside. He also thinks about his own intentions. And what will bring him glory. And so don't look to yourself. Look to him. Don't be intimidated by what other people have. Look to him. He is the one who calls. And he is the one who backs.

Wherever he is calling you into. Whatever space he is calling you. If he has called you. He will back you. Don't be intimidated at all. Other people will do it differently. But just go with him. He will show up. So Moses is telling God.

I don't know why you are telling me these things. I cannot actually do what you are asking me to do. So God said okay. Just to you know make you feel okay. Is you into it. I will call your brother Aaron. To join you.

To go. But at the end of the day, Moses still delivered. On the assignment. God had given him. And when he went. These were the two people. The Bible names them. So these were the sorcerers. Who were throwing down their rods.

And their rods turning into snakes. But praise the Lord. The rod of Moses. Swallowed their rods. Now they had nothing to work their magic with. Dealt with them. Oh yes.

[28 : 50] It was. It was. It was a mini showdown. And it said Moses was resisted. At this stage. They were battling for the soul. Of the man in office. We were battling for the soul. Of St. John's palace. Elemas is trying to stop.

The declaration of the gospel. And Paul and Barnabas. Have to respond. So in verse 9. The Bible says then Saul. Who is also called Paul. So this is when the switch happens. Then Saul. Is really. His Jewish name. That is his name. But Paul. Is the Greek version. Of Saul. It makes sense. To be called Paul. Because now he stepped into. His actual ministry. The ministry to the Gentiles.

So it's only right. For him to be called Paul. But this is interesting. So he said. Then Saul. Filled. So the Holy Spirit. Didn't just send him. But at this point. He was filled.

With the Holy Spirit. This is the game changer. For the believer. Wherever you are. Whether at work. School. In business. Wherever. You must be filled.

[29 : 44] With the Holy Ghost. You don't just stand there. As an ordinary person. You stand as a man. And a woman. Filled with the Holy Spirit. Filled. Filled.

Filled. Filled. He didn't only send us. But he fills us. So anytime we show up. We show up with him. We show up with authority. We show up with power. And so.

Paul. Is filled with the Holy Spirit. And then he begins to take action. He begins to take action. At this time. He's not apologetic. He's not sympathetic. Because he knows what is at stake. He knows what is at stake.

Every soul matters. It matters to him. That we win this one. We win the next one. That is why you should understand. Why he says he can't go with John Mark. At a certain time. Because I don't know. Whether after this showdown.

John Mark said. It's okay with me. I'm going to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is clean. Jerusalem is sanitized. We don't have these kind of things. I'm in my mother's house. People come there. They pray. You know. Sometimes I can be in church. And it's like.

[30 : 39] Oh. Most. About. 99% of the people are Christians. Everything is clean. I always tell people. It's easier to preach here. Than to preach out there. Because most of the people here. Are quite clean. You know. Yes.

We have prayed. I mean. It's nice. The choir is even sang. I mean. The place is filled. I mean. It's ready. We have watched tonight. We've been tuned. We've been prepared. But you just don't know. Who you are facing. When you go out there. I call that the front line. Of the body. When you go out there. It's front line. It's hot. It's serious. It's intense. But we have the power to deal with it.

Hallelujah. Amen. So Paul. Filled with the Holy Spirit. Looks intently. He's not intimidated by this guy. Who has called himself. Sorcerer. Give himself. All man of titles.

False prophet. He's been with. Sergio's palace. All this. So. He's not intimidated at all. He stands in confidence. Because he knows who sent him. He knows that he's filled with the Holy Spirit. And so he looks at him.

[31 : 33] Squarely. Faces him. Squarely. And say. Okay. You see. You think you have power? I'll show you power. Now. You will face me. Let's deal. And let's see who comes out. On top. It's just like on the Mount of Carmel.

Now. When Jezebel. And her so-called prophet. They've been terrorizing Israel. Denying the people. Of having a genuine freedom. In serving God. The prophet Elijah says. Let's have a showdown. You bring a bull.

Raise an altar. And call on your God. I will do the same. And whoever's God is God. Let him rain fire from heaven. It was a necessary showdown. And I am praying. That in moments of showdown.

In your life. May the power of God. May the power of God. Reign supreme in your life. In the name of Jesus. May you not succumb to evil spirit. In the name of Jesus. May they not have authority.

And influence over your life. But may God be God in your life. This is not anything we haven't seen before. It's in the scriptures. It's there.

[32 : 28] Some of you come from parts of the world. Where these things are common occurrence. There's a certain confidence the believer must have. You cannot be intimidated. By any witch. Any devil. When they send you messages from home.

And they tell you that they have heard this. And they have heard that. Resist. Submit yourself to the Lord. And resist the devil. And the devil will flee. So Paul is giving us an example. As to how to deal with opposition.

Of the oppositions to the gospel. And so he looks at him intently. And makes a few statements. He said. All full of deceit. Deceit. And all fraud. And so.

He was calling out who he was. You are full of deceit. You are a liar. Elemas. Whatever your title is. Bar Jesus. You are a liar. Deceit means that. You. It's like having the fish hook.

So it presents to have. A bait. A worm. Something nice to have. But it's when you put it in. You realize that you've been hooked. That's deceit. So it's a lie. That has been polished. He said.

[33 : 26] That's what Elemas was doing. That's why the Bible calls him a false prophet. Because he presents himself as a prophet. But it's actually false. He's not of God. So he calls him out for what he is. He said. You are full of deceit. Meaning all these things you've been doing all this while.

You are a liar. You are a liar. And full of fraud. You are full of trickery. You are here for your personal gain. You are not interested in the good of Cyprus. You are not interested in the good of Sajos Palace. You are not interested in anybody's good but yours.

You are a fraud. You are a liar. And a fraud. When he went to the garden. He employed the same thing. Deceit. Lies. Ask Eve. Did God say that he shouldn't eat of any fruit? I mean how? So why did God plant the whole garden?

He said he shouldn't eat of any fruit. That was deceit. Why? Why are you twisting things? It's not that if you don't pay attention. The devil might present something to you. That if you don't take a close look.

You might think it's of God. But it's of the devil. He's full of lies and trickery. When he met Jesus. The cheek. The very word himself. You are trying to twist the word. And present to the word of life.

[34 : 24] Thank God. Some people know what they are about. Then he says you are the son of the devil. He's supposed to be son of salvation. But he's son of the devil. In John chapter 8 verse 44.

Jesus calls the Pharisees sons of the devil. But these are supposedly religious men. Religious leaders. But Jesus said you are sons of the devil. Sons of the devil.

Why? Because they hindered his ministry. That's one key sign. People who hinder the progress of the work of God. This is the description. That's exactly what Jesus is doing. He's hindering Sajos Pallas from believing.

The Bible says he restook. So his main aim is I can't lose this one. His main aim is he shouldn't believe. So he's there mainly to hinder him from receiving the gospel. And that tells us that people have the tendency of hindering the progress of the work of God.

The Bible says you are son of the devil. You didn't know. That is another title that you can easily pick. When you are whispering into the ears of your brother. And hindering them from doing the will of God.

[35 : 22] Hindering them from continuing in service. You call them and say come let me tell you. Have you not heard? Have you not seen? This one it wasn't good news. You are saying. Ah. Why do you allow them to talk to you like that?

Resign from the department. Son of the devil. When you said. Why are you still in that church? Why don't you just leave? Is that the only church? Son of the devil.

When you said. God has put on your heart. Do something for that brother. And you said. Somebody called you and said. These people. They are always begging. They are always looking needy. And they are using the church. As a means where they collect things.

Don't do it. But you knew God put on your heart to give. Son of the devil. The one who is speaking. The son of the. Because if you hinder the progress of the work of God. The Bible says. I am not saying it.

So just start thinking. If I was you. I would start going back. Memory lane. Whether a son of the devil has been operating in my life. Or. The devil has been using me as his son. In somebody else's life.

[36 : 18] Just. If I was you. Just you know. Flashbacks. Quick. Quick. Quick. Quick. Quick. Go back. Go back. It's okay. We are waiting for you. Go and come back. Go and come back. Go and come. Go and come back. So. Let's be watchful.

Not to hinder. The work. Of the Lord. What God is doing. And it says. He is enemy of righteousness. Enemy of righteousness. He is an enemy to God. God himself is our righteousness. So if you are an enemy of righteousness. You are an enemy to God. So he is somebody who is not on the Lord side. At all. He is not on the Lord side. He is not for the Lord. He is an enemy of God. Because he is an enemy of righteousness. He doesn't want right things to happen. He doesn't want salvation to take place. He doesn't want justification to take place. He doesn't want sanctification to take place. He doesn't want people to be saved. He doesn't want the work of God to progress. Enemy of righteousness. And he said, will you not stop perverting the straight ways of the Lord? He had twisted the truth about God for satanic purposes and a direct challenge and opposition to the divine mission.

[37 : 14] And he was using trickery. He was using deceit. He was using fraud. And he was using evil spirit. And so verse 11, after he's been described for who he is, now he's about to execute judgment.

So if you are in this description, I encourage you, check out. Check out. A quick repentance in your hearts. Ask God for forgiveness. If you see signs of fool of deceit or fraud, signs of son of the devil, enemy of righteousness, the person who perverts the ways of the Lord, a quick repentance will be helpful.

Because judgment is about to be executed. It's a showdown. Okay. So he's been called out for what he is. And verse 11, it says, and now indeed the hand of the Lord is upon you. It is not upon him for good. It's upon him for judgment. The mighty hand of the Lord, when he rests upon you like this to deal with you, you're in trouble. How will you escape? How can you escape the judgment of God?

No pastor can pray for you. You got this. I'm about to execute. You better repent. You better ask for forgiveness. You better align.

[38 : 25] You better align yourself. So judgment, it said, the hand of the Lord is against you because you have opposed God. And it says, you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.

You shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time. This judgment tells me a lot about the heart of the apostle because he himself went blind at his conversion.

Yes. Yes. And nobody knows what happened within that season of blindness. But he came out, repented. So I believe that he's looking not for this judgment to be his condemnation, but it will be his redemption and his deliverance.

This is the heart of the apostle. He's not looking. Yes. You shall be blind. He didn't say blind permanently, but blind for a season because he's desiring that this evil man, full of deceits, enemy of God, will also experience the saving power of God just as he has experienced.

And so, yes, the hand of the Lord is upon you. But for in this season of blindness, may you receive what I received. May you encounter what I encountered. May you come out saved.

[39 : 35] May you come out delivered. May you come out redeemed. May you come out not condemned. No longer a sorcerer. No longer a false prophet. But a prophet for the Lord. For the Lord.

And so, it's easy for we believers to see people and decide their fate. Yeah. Sometimes you try to talk to somebody and they're so rude. They're just saying, go to hell. Hell is hot.

Oh, yes. Very hot. But Jesus wants us to have a heart of compassion. Because if we really know what it means not to have Christ, your heart will break for any person and every person who doesn't have God.

And we see this at play in the life of the apostle Paul. He didn't want the end result to be, yes, we've just yet dealt with him. We've had our way. We have preached the gospel. We've moved on. He didn't only want the soul of St. John's palace.

He also wanted the soul of the sorcerer. Everybody matters. The gospel is for all. God is not a respecter of persons. He desires that all men should come to his saving knowledge. And so, the Bible says that immediately a dark mist fell on him.

[40 : 36] And he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. This powerful man who has been leading a whole government. Now he's seeking for somebody to lead him by the hand.

But this is the beauty. Then the proconsul believed. Hallelujah. The gospel won. Hallelujah. The proconsul believed. And when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

This is a beautiful thing. It says that he believed. He saw what had happened. But he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord. At the teaching of Christ. Christ was preached. No stories. Yes, St. Josephus has seen what happened to Elmas. But that he didn't have saving power. That he didn't have the power to save. Only the preaching of the gospel has power to save. That is why when the word is preached, it is backed. So, that's not the main thing. It's just the accompaniment. It is backed. And so, all this showdown was to pave way that the word of God will be preached.

[41 : 37] That Christ will be preached. And they taught teaching the word of God. And so, when you come in the space of teaching, know that all things are possible. And the word of God, it has the power to break every chain.

It has the power to deliver. It has the power to rescue. It has the power to heal. When the word is coming, be ready. Because the power is in the word. So, this man, we are coming to the end of this beautiful showdown.

Sirius Pilate has believed. Hallelujah. Mission accomplished. Hallelujah. The devil has been put in his place. His deceit has been stopped. His fraud has been stopped.

His trickery has been stopped. And the sorcerer has been given an opportunity. The sorcerer has also been given an opportunity. And from there, they go their way. Having done what God asked them to do, we chose to teach the Lord.

Hallelujah. I pray that the Lord will do great things in our lives. In our church. Wherever we find ourselves.

[42 : 39] We are people who stand in authority. Who stand in the power of God. Available for the use of the Spirit. And the glory will be His. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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