

The Name Above All Names

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everyone. My name is James Wagner. I want to say thank you to Emma and Angie and Kiera and Marlena for helping us out with that story today and one of the big points of it.

Boys and girls, now it's your opportunity to respond to this story today and how the name of Jesus, like no other name, changes the way that we live. You'll need some art supplies if you're on the children's emailing list. The parents and you're seen from will some downloads and so there's one of three ways that you can respond. The first way that you can do that is to take the map and you can kind of fill in and around that map Paul and Barnabas's journey. The second way that you can do and respond this morning is take the comic strips. There's four tiles there and you can fill in some of the themes of the story in those tiles and then finally if you'd like to just take a piece of paper, you can draw on that and the picture I suggest you draw is that of a doorway with the name of Jesus above it and on one side Paul and Barnabas and on the other side people waiting for them. We'll look forward to your creations and crafts in the breakout rooms after the service. Now if you're a teen, I hope you stay with us this morning. I think that this sermon is suited well for you and we're going to learn about some qualities that I think that you exemplify in a number of ways. So today begin with Paul and Barnabas on their first of three missionary loops. We travel with them to Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, having started from Antioch and

Pisidia. Now before we put our hiking shoes on though, I want us to read the last verse of chapter 13 which says this, and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. That comes right before we launch into chapter 14 verse 1. And now today we'll see what happens when the church is filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. We'll see what happens as churches become zealous, jealous, and tenacious for the name of Jesus. That's right. Jesus and his name generates jealousy, zeal, and tenacity because he fills us with joy and the Holy Spirit. So let's go to Iconium. The key word in the first seven verses of this text is bold in verse 3. And in the past the translators have translated this word with zeal, but now it's bold or brave or courageous. There was a lot of zeal in the Roman Empire, but now it's become different. Something is stirring, something is going on in the days of Paul and

Barnabas. Iconium wasn't lacking in zeal. There were people who were called zealots, and there's a lot of zeal in our days as well. I'm not sure what we call those kind of people, but Paul and Barnabas were zealous. They were bold. And now it's not enough to be zealous for anything. Paul was zealous for the law previously, and as he did this, this resulted in his own murder and martyrdom of some of Jesus' disciples. He took the law into his own hand and even people's lives. But now instead of zeal for the law, Paul is zealous for the gospel of the kingdom of God. In other words, Paul is zealous for the name of Jesus. Luke tells us this about Paul and Barnabas in these words, so they remain for a long time speaking boldly for the Lord. Boldness or zeal is the opposite of apathy or indifference. Certain ages can be described in those terms as apathetic or indifferent, but now is not one of those ages, and neither was it for Paul and Barnabas in this time of the acts of the Holy Spirit. Extreme thoughts and behaviors were as common then as they are now, even divisive as we see in verse 4. Well, Paul and Barnabas are not extreme in their thoughts and behaviors, but they are zealous, courageous, bold. And when the Lord fills us with his Holy Spirit, we become zealous for the name of the Lord. You see, when the Holy Spirit grips our lives, converts our wills, as we saw last week, then the zeal for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ becomes not just a priority for us, but preeminent. In the book, *Knowing God*, the late J.I. Packer says that we all have kind of one of five qualities when we know our Lord, and so he says that people who know their Lord have great boldness for him. Well, as J.I. Packer continued on, he said in comparison or a kind of illustration that Daniel and his companions had both boldness and zeal, which meant they stuck their necks out for the Lord. Well, that was Paul and Barnabas, and that's what the church does in the name of the

Lord or for the name of the Lord when we're filled with the Holy Spirit and with joy. Well, Paul and Barnabas are not just zealous, they are also jealous when they teach at Lystra, the next place that they go to. Now, no doubt when you hear that word, you say to me, wait a minute, James, ever since I was young, I was told that I couldn't be jealous, that jealousy is bad.

[5 : 38] Well, I think that we're actually all jealous, not either or, maybe more or less. So, let me suggest that you pick your jealousy. Christians are jealous not of, but for the name of the Lord, for the name of Jesus. So, Paul and Barnabas trek to Lystra, and unlike Iconium, they're now in a kind of a rural place, and while in Lystra, Paul speaks, a cripple listens, and for the purpose of confirming his faith, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, heals this disabled man. The crowds respond in a way that all polytheists and atheists do, which is to worship man. And the crowds treat Paul and Barnabas like they're the gods of the age, and so they name them Zeus and Hermes. Well, Paul and Barnabas will have none of this, and unlike some Christian preachers and pastors who just love the attention, as strange as the crowd's response may be, I think Paul and Barnabas' response seems even stranger.

So, Paul and Barnabas rip their vestments, they rush the crowd, and I was actually a little bit tempted to have our children give a little bit of a picture when they drew this of just what that might look like, but I think Jeremy's going to demonstrate this for us later. Ah, well, maybe not, but what or why do Paul and Barnabas do this? What's this about? Paul and Barnabas are jealous for the name of Jesus. So, they say this, They are jealous for the name of Jesus. And so, they'll have nothing to do with the praise that only Jesus deserves. They are jealous for the name of Jesus, who has Paul and Barnabas say, is the living God. And Paul is jealous for the name of Jesus because the Lord Jesus, that is, the Lord also is jealous for his own name. Sometime today, read Exodus 20 and see how God is so jealous for his name, that there is no other name under heaven and earth that man should worship, but only the name of the Lord. Well, when we're filled with the Holy Spirit and with joy, we become jealous for the name of Jesus. Paul and Barnabas, though, are not just zealous and jealous, they then become tenacious.

And okay, now that's probably a bit more acceptable to you. You're saying to yourself, yeah, tenacious, yes, but let us think a little bit about the jealousy and the zealous nature of the Christian and the church. So, why do I say tenacious? After Paul and Barnabas resist the idolatry of the crowds in Lystra, Jews from Antioch and Iconium are in hot pursuit, and now they are intent to murder Paul.

How the tables have turned, how the roles have been reversed. Paul, formerly Saul, is then stoned to death, or so it seems. Paul and the disciples, though, get a little Jesus shock. Paul's not dead, he's actually alive. And herein is the tenacity. And the church isn't deterred or disappointed, but they're determined, maybe that's it, determines a better name for tenacity. Or they're persistent, that's another name for tenacity. But it wasn't just that Paul was raised, preserved, or kept from death.

No, Paul and Barnabas' perspective conveys this kind of tenacity, this persistence. And so, let me ask you a question. If something like this happened to you, like, how would you see it? Or what would you do? I think if it were me, I would say, you know, this is just a little bit too close of a call. Maybe I should try another job with a bit more security and safety to it. But later on, this is how Paul and Barnabas see what happened when they were on this missionary loop. They said this, and when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them. It'd be nice, actually, if they maybe stopped right there. But then they go on to say this, how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

[10:17] Well, a door was opened for faith, according to these tenacious missionaries, even though there was resistance. And so, they were filled with Holy Spirit and joy faced tribulation. And in Luke's words, in this way said, when they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying that through many tribulations, we must enter the kingdom of God. Well, that's tenacity in the name of Jesus.

And only the name of Jesus makes us persistent in that way. Let me close this way. In 2014, on the day of Pentecost, J.I. Packer gave a teaching at Learner's Exchange on the Holy Spirit.

He said that churches give a lot of time to the coming of God in the flesh, but we don't give enough time to the coming of God in the Spirit. Instead of focusing on the Holy Spirit as the shy person of the Trinity or the floodlight for Christ, on that day, he taught the Holy Spirit is the great change agent. We live in a time of great change now. But greater than this time is the name of Jesus.

And his name, like no other name, no other name given in heaven, by the Holy Spirit changes his church by filling them with himself and joy so that we might be zealous, jealous and tenacious for his name alone.