



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Dangerous Procrastination vs. Joyful Proclamation

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Acts 13:42-52 *“And as Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. 43) Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God. 44) And the next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the Word of God. 45) But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy, and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. 46) And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the Word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. 47) For thus the Lord has commanded us, **“I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU SHOULD BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.”** 48) And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the Word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. 49) And the Word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region. 50) But the Jews aroused the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. 51) But they shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. 52) And the disciples were continually filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.”* (NASB)

“JESUS THEREFORE SAID TO THEM, ‘FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER THE LIGHT IS AMONG YOU. WALK WHILE YOU HAVE THE LIGHT, THAT DARKNESS MAY NOT OVERTAKE YOU; HE WHO WALKS IN THE DARKNESS DOES NOT KNOW WHERE HE GOES. WHILE YOU HAVE THE LIGHT, BELIEVE IN THE LIGHT, IN ORDER THAT YOU MAY BECOME SONS OF LIGHT.’”
JOHN 12:35-36

How had Paul specifically warned these Jews in his sermon? Did these unbelieving Jews fall into the very trap that Paul had so powerfully warned them against on the next Sabbath? What happened to the Jews who procrastinated turning to Christ for their salvation? How did these prove themselves unworthy of eternal life? Were these Gentiles immediate in their reception of the truth? Who had determined from eternity past that they would believe? Did the political leaders of this city succumb to manipulation and what will be their final judgment?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JANUARY 26: ACTS 14:1-7 **A CAPITAL DIVIDED: FROM MIRACLES TO MURDER**
- FEBRUARY 2: ACTS 14:8-18 **THE LAME HEALED AND THE BARBARIC RESPONSE**

After offering complete forgiveness of their sin through Jesus Christ, Paul could not have given a stronger warning at the climax of his first recorded sermon:(13:41) *“Behold, you scoffers, and marvel and perish* (be utterly destroyed). *For I am accomplishing a work in your days, a work which,”* literally, *“ye will not possibly believe even if someone may constantly describe it in detail to you.”* He warned that rejection of truth would cause unbelief forever!

“BEHOLD, NOW IS ‘THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,’ BEHOLD, NOW IS ‘THE DAY OF SALVATION.’” 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30 AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 3RD FLOOR EAST CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3RD FLOOR EAST CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

Dangerous Procrastination vs. Joyful Proclamation

I. PROCRASTINATION HARDENS YOUR HEART V.42-45

Initially there was nothing but a positive response to the powerful preaching. *“As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath.”* There were even those who responded immediately to the truth and followed the missionaries and were persuaded *“to continue in the grace of God.”* But the procrastinators had an unexpected scene the next Sabbath as the Gentiles had taken their seats in the synagogue and it was standing room only inside and outside around the windows with *“nearly the whole city assembled to hear the Word of God.”* Their heart was already hardened in their rejection of the truth by procrastination and they become trapped in the ultimate passive! *“When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy.”* Their prior rejection of Christ left their hearts open to the act of Satan in filling their hearts with jealousy. They then actively *“continually contradict”* Paul’s message and *“constantly blaspheme”* against Christ and His messengers.

“THE GOOD MAN OUT OF THE GOOD TREASURE OF HIS HEART BRINGS FORTH THAT WHICH IS GOOD; AND THE EVIL MAN OUT OF THE EVIL TREASURE BRINGS FORTH WHAT IS EVIL; FOR HIS MOUTH SPEAKS FROM THAT WHICH FILLS HIS HEART.”
LUKE 6:45

II. REJECTION SEALS YOUR FATE ACTS 13:46-47

In response to their constant contradictions and blasphemy against the truth Paul and Barnabas become even bolder than their adversaries. These men of God acknowledge that they have fulfilled their responsibility of giving the Jews the Word of God first as outlined in Acts 1:8, but since they have literally *“thrust it away”* from themselves, their condemnation gets personal: *“you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life.”* In their rejection of Christ they have condemned themselves. Their actions have rendered the verdict: *“unworthy of eternal life”* and the offer of salvation is withdrawn and given to the Gentiles.

III. PROCRASTINATION EXPLOITS YOUR LEADERSHIP

ACTS 13:50-51

These Jews then manipulate the Gentile women who have been worshipping with them in the Synagogue and have even heard the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, but have not yet believed the Gospel and given their lives to Jesus Christ. These *“honorable”* women, most likely the wives of the *“leading men of the city,”* are stirred up by the Jews to convince their husbands with them to *“instigate persecution against Paul and Barnabas.”* When they legally *“drove them out of their district,”* Paul and Barnabas, in obedience to Christ, *“shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them,”* and went to the next capital, Iconium. Little do they know that they have invited greater judgment than the only cities God buried with fire and brimstone!

“AND WHOEVER DOES NOT RECEIVE YOU, NOR HEED YOUR WORDS, AS YOU GO OUT OF THAT HOUSE OR THAT CITY, SHAKE OFF THE DUST OF YOUR FEET. TRULY I SAY TO YOU, IT WILL BE MORE TOLERABLE FOR THE LAND OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THAN FOR THAT CITY.” MATTHEW 10:14-15

IV. JOYFUL PROCLAMATION EXALTS GOD V. 48-49, 52

When the Gentiles hear that they are given equal, and then greater opportunity to be saved as the blaspheming Jews, God’s chosen people were rejected and they were accepted even according to prophecy (Is. 49:6), they are ecstatic with rejoicing. Most importantly, they are *“glorifying the Word of the Lord”* or the Scriptures, repeated four times in this passage. This group of new believers is only limited by God’s electing grace—*“as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”* In a little more than a week a vibrant church is birthed in the capital and the Gospel spread to the whole region with Spirit filled joy!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Have you known the truth of the Gospel but continued to open your heart to Satan through procrastination?
- 2) Do you realize the great danger of your soul as you reject Christ and thereby judge yourself unworthy of eternal life?
- 3) Is your leadership open to exploitation or are you proclaiming the rich truth of the Gospel to others with Spirit filled joy?