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Congratulations Class of 2021!

La Jolla Christian Fellowship

Paul's First Journey // Episode 3: Blind As A Bat

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Acts 13:6-12

⁶They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, ⁷who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. ⁹Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ¹⁰“You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? ¹¹Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.” Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. ¹²When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

1 John 1:5-7

*This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you:
God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we claim to have fellowship with Him
and yet walk in the **darkness**, we lie and do not live out the **truth**.
⁷But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.*

1. **Walk in truth/light-** The totality of scripture places a major connective emphasis between truth and light.
 - a. **Blindness-** We see examples of blindness in the stories of Eli the priest (1 Samuel 3:2), Samson (Judges 16:21), Paul (Acts 9), Jesus heals the blind (John 9), and Bar-Jesus in this passage.
2. **Commit to truth and light-** Understanding the truth is only half of the believer's journey. The true test of faith is having the courage to walk in it.

Walking in the truth- Satan's goal is to use any means or reasoning necessary to separate you from the truth.

“Truth never needs to be rationalized”

Vs. 6b-7a *There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus.*

- Bar-Jesus is probably a court astrologer with demonic powers (Haenchen 1971:397; contrast Krodel [1986:229], who calls him part of the world of "religious con-artists who practiced quackery and interpreted dreams"). As a *false prophet*, Bar-Jesus—also called Elymas—claims wrongly to be a medium of divine revelation (Bruce 1988:249). **As a sorcerer he claims to know magic formulas by which he can break the bonds of fate and give the governor control over the future.**
 - Witchcraft is always about personal control; faith is always about personal submission of control to God.

Bar-Jesus counsel was in opposition to the word of God - Vs. 7b *The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God.*

- **A rule of faith** - The word of God is the primary filter of God's direction in our life and the Holy Spirit's leading will never violate the word of God.
 - **1 Timothy 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

Walking in the truth —

Paul calls out deception and untruth - Vs. 9-11 *Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ¹⁰"You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? ¹¹Now the hand of the Lord is against you."*

- When Paul spoke out, it was under the prompting of the Holy Spirit.
- Paul spoke courageously.
- Understanding the hand of the Lord.

Small Group Questions:

1. Was there a time in your life when you were walking in deception? How did you get out of it?
2. How do you personally determine what is right and wrong?
3. How do you allow God's word to influence your life? What is your regular reading plan?
4. How courageous are you when it comes to sharing God's word?
5. Where is darkness deceiving our culture? How are you working to combat it with the truth?