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**A0905 – February 2, 2009 – Acts 13:42-52 – The Response At
Pisidian Antioch**

Alright, with a new administration we've already seen a tremendous blow to our freedom, as if the previous administration hadn't done enough already. But now with your federal income tax dollars on the verge of being sent to fund abortion both here and beyond in foreign nations once again the issue of civil disobedience arises. The government has forced the issue so let's review briefly our doctrine of civil disobedience.

There are two issues in the Scripture which mandate civil disobedience. The first is worship. When the government tells you how to worship or who to worship you have the responsibility to rebel against the state. An example of this is the Book of Daniel; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are told to fall down and worship the golden statue of Nebuchadnezzar. They rightly refuse to worship the state. The state has no right to take over the function of God. The state does not supply all your needs. God supplies you're your needs. So if worship is mandated your responsibility is to commit civil disobedience.

The second issue has to do with genocide, euthanasia and abortion, the taking of innocent life. This is modeled by the two midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, in Exodus 1:15. The Pharaoh instructed them to murder the baby boys. "But the midwives feared God...and let the boys live." For this they were prospered by God. And if the state comes in and authorizes the destruction of innocent human life and that you must take part in these actions then you have a legitimate reason to say, "No, I'm sorry but I cannot do that." Those are the only two legitimate reasons I can find in the word of God where the believer has the responsibility to refuse the state.

So the issues are narrowly defined. One issue concerns worship and the other concerns the sacredness of human life. The question that remains is “How do you carry out the rebellion? How do you treat the state? There are tactics to this, and the first thing to remember is always show respect to authority. Daniel does this, Peter and John do this, they do not defy the office; they are not against the office, they are simply saying “You’ve asked me to do something I cannot honestly do before my God and I’m not going to do it, and that’s it.” There is respect for the office held by the individual under the fourth divine institution.

A second point about the tactics of implementing this is that while you’re doing this you’re praying 1 Timothy 2 type prayers, praying for those in authority, praying “Lord, let us live in peace and tranquility.” You’re not trying to create a war here between church and state because boy, once you’ve made the state mad you’re going to have a bloody conflict on your hands because neither side can compromise. The state requires participation and the Scriptures require non-participation. When things get in that shape you’re going to see the horrors of war, because the state sees the only solution as total destruction of the other side. But that’s the horror of a church/state conflict, it rips apart families and countries like they’ve never been ripped apart before. It’s a horrible thing and so you pray 1 Timothy 2 prayers, “Lord, let this not happen.”

And finally, be prepared to take the consequences of your choice. Acts 4, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are ready to be thrown in a fiery furnace, Daniel was prepared to be thrown in the lion’s den, but they refuse to participate in these violent acts of the state and the Lord honors that. So be ready to accept the consequences remembering what Paul said, that the sufferings we endure cannot compare with the glories to follow. And Jesus Christ said, “Do not fear those who kill the body but fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.” And so you must prepare spiritually for the battles that are coming.

The battles are already here on the university campus every single day, Christians are being persecuted, not because of poor academics, it’s just that they won’t go along with the humanist agenda, they insist on the absolute truth of the word of God which is absolutely hated by the average professor, so they won’t give you grants, suddenly your fellowship dries up, the

committee won't approve your dissertation and all the rest of it. Intellectual persecution. When ever you have this it's only a matter of time before the persecution gets physical. Some of you aren't listening. Christian blood, perhaps the blood of your own children or grandchildren is going to be shed in this country and maybe then you'll wake up. And today we see more persecution in the Book of Acts.

One of the sidelights in Luke's Acts is to show us that the persecution didn't come so much from the Roman government as it came from the Jewish people. The people to whom Jesus came are the same people who rejected Him and persecuted Him and those who followed Him. So turn to Acts 13. Last week we saw Paul's first recorded sermon and it's a fantastic example of the historical framework methodology. What he does by following this procedure is protect himself from the counterattacks, he protects his flank so he can't get outmaneuvered. He never at one place allows the enemy a place of attack. This protects the gospel. You cannot, as Dr Van Til so ably proclaimed, present the gospel as a piece of disconnected truth. If you do that you will be counterattacked and it's usually at this point that the average Christian gets stuck and doesn't know what to do. They think the opponent has rejected the gospel. That's probably not the case; the case is probably they never understood it. A person has to understand the gospel before they can believe it or reject it. What you've done is allowed him an escape before you ever got to the gospel. So the gospel must be presented just as a military goes to war, you have the F-16's carry out the initial bombing, this destroys the infrastructure so you can follow that up with the ground artillery, starting with the tanks and the infantry that cover the tanks, it's interesting because the tanks are supposed to protect the infantry but often the infantry have to protect the tanks. They work as a team as they penetrate the defenses and then the smaller special ops teams go in and do their dirty work; cut the lines of communication, take over the logistics of the enemy and then the army takes control the region. Now, if any one of those fails then the whole thing is shot. That is why in Operation Cast lead just a few weeks ago the IDF only had 13 casualties. How did they do that on foreign turf? How did they do that when every other home in Gaza was booby-trapped? They did that because they worked as a unit. Everybody did their job and that provided mutual support and so it must be with the presentation of the Christian gospel. You must present it as a unit and not simply as a piece. This is the way Peter thought, this is the way Stephen thought and this is the

way Paul thought. All the great saints of Scripture thought this way. And so all we're doing is training in how to present the gospel. I know there are a hundred different ways people have suggested we do this. I'm trying to cut through all of that and say, "Hey, can't we glean something from these great saints of Scripture? We've got their sermons recorded right here under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Why do we need to go over here and invent a new procedure?" If you haven't noticed by now I'm not a strategist. I don't sit in my office and think of new ways to do something. I sit in my office and exegete. What's the strategy of the Holy Spirit and then I borrow that. And His strategy as far as I can tell is the historical framework strategy. It's His method of doing apologetics, presenting the truth of the gospel.

Whenever Christianity is presented, whenever some fact of history is presented, it must always be presented in coordination and linkage with every other fact, otherwise you make yourself vulnerable to the unbeliever slicing away at your position. If you try to show that Jesus Christ rose from the dead but you disconnect it from the doctrine of creation the unbeliever will simply say send it in to *Ripley's Believe it or Not*. The unbeliever can always re-interpret every fact that you throw his way if you feed him the facts piecemeal. But when you present the entire Christian system and say the resurrection of Christ represents the culmination of a plan of history dating back to creation, that God made the universe in a certain way, He made man to live forever and He's going to re-create the universe such that man does live forever then the resurrection makes sense. Jesus Christ's resurrection body is the first piece of that new creation.

So Paul in his sermon presents Christ *in* the framework of OT history. Jesus is the logical conclusion. To do this in v 17 he starts with the Call of Abraham and moves to the Exodus, verse 19, he turns to the Conquest and Settlement of the land, in verse 22, the Election and Reign of King David and finally Christ. The sequence of OT events. And each of those events carries doctrinal baggage, divine baggage, history is a divine pedagogy, which is precisely why these events are attacked by the world system. They don't like the divine baggage carried by the history so they re-write history. So these are just loaded with information, the Call of Abraham contains the doctrines of election, justification and faith, the Exodus centers on the blood over the door, substitutionary blood atonement and so forth, the very elements Paul uses in His sermon when he presents the Savior, Jesus Christ. And we

observed another thing, the main point of the sermon is the sovereignty of God. Just observe the subject and verb combinations, starting in v 17, God chose Israel, v 17 God made them great, more in v 17, God led them out with an uplifted arm. V 19, God destroyed seven nations and God distributed the land. V 22, God raised up David. What is all this saying? That God controls history. Man doesn't control history, man wants to control history, it's the story of the Tower of Babel time and time again, man will make himself a name, man will determine meaning, man will decide history. But Paul insists no it's not that way at all, God does all that because He's sovereign over history. And after presenting all the sovereign facts of OT history he inserts Jesus Christ inside that framework of history. And he goes into His life and His baptism and His death and resurrection, all in the framework of prior history. He doesn't just present them as pieces. And finally in v 41 he gives them the invitation. How do you respond to God's plan for history fulfilled in Jesus Christ? And it's a threat type of invitation. Jesus Christ when He returns is going to come as a Judge. And you better have your stuff together because when He walks into the court there's going to be a very strict line of division. It's going to be like the sheep and the goats, the believers on one side the rebels on the other. You can rebel against what He's done in history, you can reject what He's doing in your life, but just know you're going to lose and lose big, so big that by rejecting Him you're going to fulfill His plan for history. God will get the glory. It's a lose/lose situation for man and a win/win situation for God. The deck is stacked against man. No one can thwart the plan of God. And so today we're going to see the lines of judgment being marked out. So today in verse 42 we turn to the response at the synagogue.

Let's read a bit, As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. ⁴³Now 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.

Now here's the picture, Paul and Barnabas had been called up to the lectern, the lectern was a central location in the synagogue where the speakers stood and they'd open the scroll and read the Law and open another scroll and read the Prophets and then the sermon would be given. And Paul presented the sermon we worked with last week from that lectern. When he was finished the NASB says they were going out but the original means he was "going

away,” he was walking away from the lectern, he’d finished his piece and he’s just walking down the aisle to get back to his seat and while he and Barnabas are walking the people started in, “Hey Paul, can you talk about this again next week?” Yeah Paul, I want to hear more about my faith?” The imperfect shows this went on and on and so Paul’s sermon had a tremendous impact. And having heard the word of God put together in this way they wanted to hear more of it. They’re no different than most Christians today who go to church week after week their whole life and they never hear the word of God taught. They think they’ve heard the word of God, “Oh yes, we have a pastor. He preaches.” So, who cares? Have you ever heard the word of God taught from the original languages, someone who honestly puts in 15 hours for a single hour of teaching? Or are you getting some stories and some verses. Most Christians have never heard anyone who actually studied the word of God and communicated the sense of the word of God. And until you do you’ve never really heard it. And when these people were hearing for the first time the word of God put together, and they were begging to hear more of it because finally they’d tasted the good word of God.

Now verse 43, when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, which shows all the discussion of v 42 happened inside the synagogue, now we’re heading outside. And probably the synagogue rulers split things up pretty fast, they were not friendly to the message and thought it best just to split the whole thing up and many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas. Notice the verb followed, that’s the second movement verb in this passage, everything is moving, that’s the emphasis here, God the Holy Spirit is at work, things are on the move. Just look at the verbs starting in verse 42, Paul and Barnabas were *going away*, verse 43, the Jews and God-fearing proselytes *followed* Paul and Barnabas. Verse 44, the whole city *assembled*, verse 49, the word of the Lord was *being spread*, verse 50 they *drove them out* of their district, verse 51, they shook the dust, it’s all movement. People are moving all over the place. Why? Because the word of God was stirring things up, everywhere the word of God goes, people line up on one side against Paul and people line upon the other side with Paul; one side with the gospel and the other side against the gospel; one side with Jesus Christ and the other against Jesus Christ. The word of God creates these divisions.

So you have many of the Jews and God-fearing proselytes, they were full proselytes to Judaism which means they were Gentiles who'd voluntarily undergone the rights of circumcision and had full membership privileges in Judaism. So they're flocking after Paul and Barnabas and then Paul and Barnabas turned to them, and apparently throughout that week, kept on urging them to continue in the grace of God. Now if you stop for a moment and think of that last part of verse 43, that's a strange statement, continue in the grace of God. If you're going to continue in something you evidently started in it. So from this we gather that these people were believing the message. And evidently the gospel message was undercutting two things absolutely essential to Judaism. For one, verse 39, it was undercutting the Law of Moses. Paul says the Law of Moses could not justify, only faith alone in Christ alone could justify. And so they evidently rejected the Law of Moses as a means of being justified before God and accepted the doctrine of justification by faith alone in Christ alone. The second thing they undercut was the necessity of circumcision to be saved. All these men had been circumcised yet the truth of the matter was that did not contribute to their salvation, that was a work of the Law of Moses and as the Law of Moses could not justify therefore circumcision could not enter into justification either. By Acts 15 these two issues are just going to explode in the early church to the point they call the first Jerusalem Council to resolve it. But it will continue to be a problem in the early church, even here in this region where the Book of Galatians will be sent, the whole issue of what is the gospel continues, does a Gentile have to be circumcised, what's the role of the Law of Moses and so forth. And so problems will arise in this territory over the issue and Paul and Barnabas are already trying to cut through that issue, forget circumcision, that's a work of the Mosaic Law, that can't justify you, all that can justify you is faith in Jesus Christ. Now continue in the grace of God.

Verse 44, The next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. So six days have passed and obviously something has happened. Obviously Paul and Barnabas sat down with those believers and they prayed and they worked out doctrine and the word of God went out. Who took it out? It wasn't Paul and Barnabas, it was the people of the community. The Jews and Gentile Proselytes who believed went out, they went out into the market, they went to work, they went in their homes and the word spread throughout the whole city. You can see how the word spread in the first century by means of the growing congregation. It was the congregation and not the

pastor who went out with the gospel. It's not the pastors job to go out and stand on the corner and witness to every Tom, Dick and Harry. It's your job, you live out there, you work out there, you run your business out there, you know the people, you do the witnessing, don't call me out on Saturday night to do your witnessing for you. Call me if you need answers from the word. But the Lord gives me opportunities to witness and those are my opportunities not yours, my responsibility not yours. And the Lord will give you opportunities, to, those are your responsibilities, not mine. And when the Lord was giving these people opportunity they naturally began to talk. It just overflows and so that's what was happening all week. And the next Sabbath came around, Friday night or Saturday, we don't know which, but here comes almost the whole town. Can you imagine this? The whole town of Fredericksburg lining up in the streets to try to get in the doors. Now why are they so interested in what Paul has to say? Because these people, think who they are, we already know they're Gentiles. But what Empire do they live under? The Roman Empire, they're a part of the fourth kingdom Daniel spoken of in the OT. And the defining characteristic of Rome is military might, Rome was the empire defined in history as a beast of iron. And under the rigors of military might Roman would expand by military victory and it would unite under the idea of Rome, the goal of which was to create a stable society. Freedom from chaos, the plea of the legalist. If ever there was a kingdom of man that was legalistic, Rome was it. But in trying to free men from chaos by military might they were making a statement about man. And that statement was that man was a machine and he could operate under force of oppression. And under the force of oppression we'll create freedom. Man will be great. But man was not great in the Roman Empire. Man was less even than the idea of Rome. So man was oppressed and the idea of Roman government became ultimate. Rome will create freedom, Rome will create meaning. And now here comes Paul with a very different message. Rome is not ultimate, God is ultimate. Remember the sermon, God did this, God did that, God supplied this, God supplied that? God controls history, God has a plan for history. History is personal and man has a high place in God's plan, so important that God sent forth His Son into the world, Jesus Christ to die for man and to be resurrected unto life. So for the first time in their lives they were hearing something different, something other than Rome, Rome, Rome, now there was a man who really believed in God and that God controlled history so they're coming out to hear this message.

Now verse 45, the antagonism begins But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. Now the Jews here are steeped in the legalism of first century Judaism. They're very much like the body of men we met in Jerusalem called the Sanhedrin, they're all a part of the same legalistic system of do's and don'ts and we're going to generate our own righteousness and so forth. Now they don't like what Paul is doing, Paul is bypassing the Law of Moses, he's bypassing circumcision and here comes a whole crowd of Gentiles to get a free ticket into the kingdom of God. "I don't think so, they have to go through our rules and regulations and once they're approved then we'll let them in the synagogue." This is the legalistic crowd. And whenever you have someone steeped in legalism, which is the idea that it's all law and there's no grace involved in this thing, you just have to work it up. And of course they're legalistic because they can't live up to God's standard so they take God's standard and bring it down to manageable proportions. The law says don't commit adultery so I don't commit adultery but in my heart I can lust after the woman, that's not a problem. This is how the legalist operates. It's a game of reductions. Take the standard from up here and lower it down here so I can keep it in my flesh, that way I don't have to rely on God. And of course every legalist has his pet sins which are the one's that he can keep and when he sees his neighbor violating one of his pets he makes sure to point that out, "Oh, you're in trouble with God." And it's all a big sham because if we were to open up his heart and see all the deceit and vindictiveness and hate we'd all get sick. Every one of us has this, if we were to pour our depraved little hearts out on the table here it would be a mess like you can't even imagine. And one of the sins deep down in their heart is the mental attitude sin of jealousy, envy, and with a big crowd coming to hear Paul this mental attitude sin kicks in, and so they *began* contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. There were two things going on here, first they contradicted Paul's teaching, so this is something of a debate, they've been thinking all week, how can we undo the framework Paul built? And they pull a few things out of their hat which apparently don't amount to a hill of beans, Paul easily answered them, so then they resort to blaspheming, which means they were losing and since they didn't have any objective arguments left, they do what any person desperate to maintain their stance but having nothing to stand on does, attack the opponent. And so they start to slander Paul himself. This is the *ad hominem* approach for those of you who took a logic class or two; and it's a revelation of the mental attitude sin of jealousy inside these people. Once you've started down the

path of a mental attitude sin it's just a matter of time before it shows its ugly face. At which point, verse 46, Paul and Barnabas aren't going to waste any more time with these kind of people. "If you don't want to have an objective discussion with us, there's no use arguing." And that's very true. If someone can't sit there and discuss things rationally, don't waste your time. So they make a quick end to the whole thing, Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, notice they repudiated the word of God which means in the original they pushed it away, the exact reverse of receiving it, they by an act of their own volition rejected the word of God. And two they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life and therefore by an act of their own choice they set themselves up for the judgment to come.

Now why was it necessary that the word of God be spoken to the Jews first? The answer is in the OT quotation of verse 47. Why was the nation of Israel chosen by God in the first place? Was it so God could form a little hot box of religion over in the land of Israel? Was it so the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could have the corner on truth and enjoy it all by themselves over in a corner? No, geography alone tells you that can't possibly be. The nation Israel, if you look at a map is smack dab in the center of the world. Now if that's the case, and you've got three continents crossing paths at this point, every major trade route passing right through the land of Israel such that every African, Asian and European businessman had to pass through the land of Israel, do you see the strategy in that? God the Holy Spirit elected that people and placed them at the center of the world to serve the nations. Not to serve them breakfast, to serve them the word of God, to serve them salvation, we'd say they were God's elect world-wide missionaries. So Paul quotes from Isa 49:7 says, one of the servant songs, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU [ISRAEL] AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.' " And therefore Paul says we had to come to you first because God gave you the honor Israel to serve as a light for the Gentiles, but since you reject the honor God has so graciously bestowed upon you, you leave us no other option, Henceforth in Pisidian Antioch we bring salvation to the Gentiles, we bring salvation to the ends of the earth, because that is where the sovereign plan of God is going.

Now here's one of the strange things about Biblical sovereignty. Biblical sovereignty is not fatalism; fatalism is the belief, *que sera sera*, whatever will be will be, there's nothing we can do about so we might as well just sit back, relax and see what happens. That's fatalism. Fatalism fails to take into consideration the means by which things take place. Take the fact that people are going to be won to Christ...yes they are, but how's it going to happen? Because someone gets off their tail and goes out to witness; that's how it happens. In other words, God's sovereign election occurs by means of human action. Biblical sovereignty utilizes human action, in fact it's an incentive to get off your tail and witness because you know there's people out there, it's just a matter of giving people the word and watching God save people. So if the Jews reject, fine, I'll go to the Gentiles, some of them will believe unto salvation because God has an elective program.

Now verse 48, the verse that makes everybody think we're robots When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; And of course they did, now the plan of God was open to them. And look where their interest lies. With the word of God. These people are positive to the word. and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. Uh oh, what's that all about? And you can't fudge it because the participle "appointed" there is a military word which means a command or it means something written on a scroll, the idea here breached is that some Gentile names had been written in the book of life. You can't get around the idea of election here because the participle appointed, *tasso*, is in the perfect tense and the main verb believed is in an aorist tense. Whenever you have that structure it means the participial action occurs *before* the main verb which means they were appointed before they believed. So what are we going to do about this? Some people try to lessen the force of this by contrasting this with verse 46, I tried this for awhile, wrote a whole article about it. The argument there is that in v 46 the Jews judged themselves unworthy of eternal life and the Gentiles contrast with that in that they arranged themselves to eternal life. In other words the argument is that it all boils down to human choice. Now the problem with that is that there is a reflexive pronoun in verse 46 but there's not in verse 48. Another problem is the fact that there's not the one issue of human choice involved here but two issues, God's appointment and man's belief. And as we already said, grammatically God's appointment occurred first, they were already appointed to eternal life, then they believed.

Now how do we understand this such that man is not a robot? Now the first thing you must do is solidify the Creator-creature distinction. The first thing we do is draw God in the open box, He's infinite, and He's got attributes; He's sovereign, righteous, just, love, omniscient and so forth. Down here we have man, he's locked in this box and he has attributes that correspond to God's but are not identical so we have choice, conscience, love, knowledge and so on. The problem comes when we look down here from our finite peanut and try to figure out this big problem of sovereignty and choice. And God comes along and says, I elected so and so. What's that mean? The thing we have to avoid is taking the cause-effect we experience within the created order and applying that to the Creator. In other words you go out in the created order and you observe certain cause-effect phenomena, rain comes down, plants come up, wind blows, things fly around, you go into the chemistry laboratory and add certain chemicals together, add your enzyme and boom you get your product, cause-effect, cause-effect, cause-effect and we build up this massive data set of created cause-effect. Then one day you start in your pea brain to try to understand the sovereignty of God and since you observed cause-effect within the created order *ad nauseum* you assume God's sovereignty must work the same way, and that's where you made the mistake.

How He acts on the creation we'll never know but there are some things that we can think about that might help us a little bit. Now we're ultimately never going to get all the facts together because we're dealing with an infinite Person. But there are some things we can do to relieve some of the pressure. Let's back off from the issue of salvation and ask very simple questions. Maybe after we've asked a few of the simple questions the idea will catch on, we're familiar with it, then we can come back to the verse. Why can we only see the visible light spectrum? Why can't I see the rest of the spectrum? You say, well that's a stupid question, that's the way my eye is? Yeah, but why isn't your eye another way? Well, I don't know, it's just that way. Why? Because God chose to make it that way, didn't He? God chose at some point in the past to make our eyes that way. Why did God put only one sun in our solar system? Why not three or four, it'd be interesting, one could be farther away, one could be larger, one could be closer, they could be side by side? It might be interesting. Why isn't it that way? He only made one and we don't know why, we just know that, in fact, the planet earth only has one sun. And we can only therefore say that this is the way God made it.

Now bringing it a little closer to our subject. God made history a certain way; this history goes on in time, it will come to a certain culmination. Did God know where history would go when He created the universe? Yes, He must have, He's omniscient. Didn't He, therefore, make a history that would have a hell in it? Now you can fuss about it, you can argue about it from a hundred different angles but you will always have the problem—why did God design history the way history is? Why did God make Satan when He knew what Satan would do? Can't we then accuse God of sin? For the reason that God created Satan and Satan sinned. No, you can't unless you can show that it's wrong to create a being who will freely choose to sin. And there's no way you can say that so you can never say that God is the author of sin. All sin in history has come about as a product of a man or creature's choice. That choice is responsibility; God has made history with responsibility inside it. And one way history manifests that responsibility is that the human race gradually divides itself, some go to hell and some go to heaven. That's not an accident; God didn't set the wheels in motion and say oops, I really fudged that one. God chose to make history the way it is. Therefore, He chose to divide the human race over certain issues. You say well couldn't God have made history so that all men would be saved? Sure He could have but He didn't. Why? I have no idea. He could have divided the human race over eye color, all blue eyes go to heaven all non-blue eyes go to hell. He could have made history another way, everybody who lives to the age of 20 goes to heaven, everyone who dies under 20 goes to hell. He didn't choose to do it that way; He chose to make the boundary belief or rejection of Jesus Christ.

And when we come to a verse like this, in Acts 13:48, as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed, it means that God had in mind from all eternity past certain men in Antioch who when they heard the gospel they were going to believe. It's not saying they are robots; they made a real decision, a real responsible choice. But why the word appointed is in the text is to show you this had always been on God's mind. When they believed is when eternal life was granted, it's the moment the appointed were created in time. They did not exist before that. In other words you can never look at this and conclude therefore that there are elect unbelievers running around. There are no elect unbelievers. That's a category completely foreign to Scripture. Now there are people who are in God's mind who are the elect but hey, that's no different from God having the Flood of Noah in His mind before it happened. All kinds of things are in God's mind but they're not in history

until they occur in history. So when these men believed Paul and Barnabas found out what had been on God's mind with respect to those men.

Now there are other verses like this one, let's just take one, Luke 22:20. Here's the Lord Jesus Christ at the Last Supper, his betrayal is at hand. "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" Do you see both sovereignty and responsibility in that verse? The Son of man must be crucified; it has been determined from eternity that I die; it has been ordained from eternity that Judas be the one, Judas had been picked out for all eternity as the Christ betrayer, as the man who would cause the murder of Jesus Christ and yet Jesus doesn't say therefore Judas is excused because he was chosen to turn Me over to the authorities. He says it was predetermined that he do this, but woe to him. Judas of a free choice is held responsible and yet still it was predetermined.

Alright, let's finish out the verses, starting in verse 49, And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region. And what did we say about missions strategy? The apostles went to the major population centers, it was the urban approach. They didn't mess with the small surrounding villages, they struck at the heart of the region and moved on. They didn't chase all the rabbit trails. They left believers behind who could fan out into the rural areas and take the gospel down those trails, which is exactly what they did.

Verse 50, But the Jews and here comes more sin rearing its ugly head, But the Jews incited 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. An interesting point is that all over the ancient world women in that day flocked to Judaism. Now if the Bible is so repressive against women's rights, isn't it a strange thing that in the ancient world when you had Roman paganism readily available the women didn't like it. They liked Judaism. Do you know why they liked Judaism? Because in Judaism the family and the marriage were protected and the woman wants protection. A woman wants freedom but she wants protection and she got both in Judaism. And apparently the rabbis went to the women and said "Hey, your husband's the mayor of the city, can you get him to get Paul and Barnabas out of our hair." And they said, "Sure." And so they turned the women against Paul and Barnabas, they drove them out.

Verse 51, But they shook off the dust of their feet *in protest* against them and went to Iconium. That's a procedure Jesus taught in Matt 10, when you get rejected as my apostolic representatives, you interpret that as a rejection of the word of God and you go out and shake the dust off your feet which to the Jewish mind meant, "We consider you to be heathen." ⁵²And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. Now how would you feel if Paul got kicked out of town, you're a brand new believer and here you are left with an angry mob? But the disciples were able to smile at their enemies because they had been freed from the law, they'd been freed from Roman oppression, they'd found freedom in Christ. And so have all who have placed their trust in Him.

[Back To The Top](#)

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