

Acts 13:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Analysis

Paul confronted Elymas: 'O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?' Paul's severe rebuke exposed Elymas's character - full of deceit and wickedness, a spiritual son of Satan opposing God's purposes. The phrase 'child of the devil' contrasts with God's children, showing spiritual paternity through resemblance of character. Reformed theology recognizes spiritual warfare against those who oppose the gospel through deception. Paul's boldness in confronting evil demonstrates the Spirit's empowerment to expose and oppose darkness.

Historical Context

Elymas (Bar-Jesus) was a Jewish false prophet and sorcerer in the court of Sergius Paulus, Cyprus's proconsul. His opposition to Paul and Barnabas circa AD 47-48 represents Satan's resistance to the gospel reaching Gentile authorities. Paul's confrontation won the proconsul to faith (v.12).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we identify 'children of the devil' by their fruits and opposition to truth?
2. What does perverting 'the right ways of the Lord' mean, and how do false teachers do this?
3. When is bold confrontation of deception appropriate in ministry?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν Ὡ πλήρης πάσης δόλου καὶ πάσης ῥᾳδιουργίας
And said O full all subtlety and all mischief
G2036 G5599 G4134 G3956 G1388 G2532 G3956 G4468

νιè διαβόλου ἐχθρè πάσης δικαιοσύνης ού παύσῃ
thou child of the devil thou enemy all righteousness not cease
G5207 G1228 G2190 G3956 G1343 G3756 G3973

διαστρέφων τὰς ὁδοὺς κυρίου τὰς εὐθείας
to pervert ways of the Lord the right
G1294 G3588 G3598 G2962 G3588 G2117

Additional Cross-References

John 8:44 (Evil): Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Matthew 13:38 (Evil): The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

Hosea 14:9 (Righteousness): Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

2 Corinthians 11:3 (Parallel theme): But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Luke 11:52 (Parallel theme): Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

1 John 3:8 (Evil): He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Galatians 1:7 (Parallel theme): Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Matthew 3:7 (Parallel theme): But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Matthew 23:13 (Parallel theme): But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.