



# Links Players

---

## Gospel Resistance

*But Elymas, the sorcerer (for that is what his name means), opposed them and tried to turn the governor from the faith. (Acts 13:8)*

In our social media age, messaging matters. What people believe dictates what they do and what people do, impacts the bottom line. Look no further than the PGA / LIV conflict and the ever-shifting narratives to realize that propaganda matters because money and power matter.

To change minds with the good news of the Gospel is to change hearts. And to change hearts is to change loyalties. And loyalty to Jesus means competing ideologies, institutions, and world views must be abandoned.

In Acts 13, Barnabas and Saul (Paul) are led by the Holy Spirit to take the good news of Jesus to the Island of Cypress. While there, they encounter a Jewish false prophet named Elymas, who also practiced sorcery. “Elymas the Sorcerer” was a man of the culture—a product of his diverse surroundings. He lived in an international port city at the intersection of the religious Middle East and the philosophical West (Greece and Rome).

Elymas strategically synchronized popular ideas, belief systems, and religious practices to appeal to and influence the ruling class. Elymas was an early Social Influencer.

While on the island of Cypress, Barnabas, and Saul (Paul) catch the attention of the local Governor. The story follows in Acts 13:6-11:

The Governor, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. But Elymas, the sorcerer, opposed them and tried to turn the Governor from the faith. Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, “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? Now 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....when the Governor saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.” (Acts 13: NIV)

The Gospel message was a threat to Elymas. A shift in allegiance by the governor would diminish his role in the governor’s administration. In response, Elymas tried to deceive the Governor and turn him away from the gospel to preserve his status. He then suffered a serious rebuke from Paul.

Influencing people for Jesus has implications, and responses can be hostile. To change minds with the good news of the Gospel is to change hearts. And to change hearts leads to a change in loyalties. And loyalty to Jesus means that all competing ideologies, institutions, and world views must be abandoned.

Be very clear. We are in a spiritual battle that originates with ideas, divides the Truth from lies, and impacts social structures on multiple levels.

Paul would go on to say to the early church: "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God...(2 Corinthian 10:5)...For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (Ephesians 6:12)

Resistance is guaranteed when the Spirit-filled believer takes the Truth about Jesus to the lost and deceived—our weapons: Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the scripture. We should move forward with courage and confidence, remembering what Jesus has told us: In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

**Prayer: Lord, we are like sheep among wolves. Help us to be shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves. (Matthew 10:16)**

—

Boo Arnold

Copyright 2023 Links Players International

The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at [linksplayers.com](https://linksplayers.com).