

Acts #31

“Persecution Can’t Stop the Gospel” Acts 4:7-22; 1st Corinthians 1:20-31

The brief honeymoon is over for the early Church of Peter and John’s day and it’s now time to be tested

for spiritual growth, so persecution is arising.

The Sadducees did not believe in angels or resurrection, so they’re incensed when they hear of Peter teaching that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead.

The family of Annas the high priest is one of the wealthiest, most successful organized crime families of all time and they’re holding a meeting because for the first time in their history, there’s a real threat to their operation which has come in the form of Peter and John’s preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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The mob controls the Sanhedrin through certain people who were their go-to men and any gangster group always tries to control as much local law enforcement as possible because after all, they must fulfill their functions in a legal manner!

Remember: This trial is controlled by a gangster mob and they will not let anyone operate in the temple unless they’re connected with them.

Therefore, they’re trying to find out who gave Peter and John the authority to stand up and speak so boldly because they weren’t part of the mob.

We can never stop any kind of a social evil by cutting off the social evil.

There’s only one way to meet social problems and that’s the divine solution through the Gospel of Jesus Christ; never through human solutions such as social programs funded from unfair taxation.

People are changed by regeneration; not by

reformation which has no permanence or stability. Peter’s not the least bit afraid of the power before him; he simply sees an opportunity to witness for his Lord by making Gospel information as clear as possible to a most difficult audience; these highly religious people of the Sanhedrin.

Jesus didn’t say critical things like this to everyone He met; only to the arrogant, hypocritical religious leaders who claimed to be the great interpreters of the Word of God and Jesus won’t put up with their antics because they’ve got the most important aspects of life completely wrong.

Israel had been overlooked by the builders of empires and had been captured and deported but God constantly restored them to fulfill His purpose.

The people who listened to Jesus understood that He was the Messiah and there are far too many for Him at this point, so the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees had to go back to the drawing board and plan some more.

What’s the difference between Peter and John and the highly educated Jewish leaders?

Bible truth learned, understood, believed and applied which is worth all of the academic training that has ever existed in the history of the human race.

The scribes, the great theologians of Peter’s day, learned something from Peter and John and this is the purpose

in witnessing: to communicate biblical knowledge or accurate Gospel information.

In contrast to the day of the crucifixion, Peter, John and the other apostles now demonstrate tremendous courage due to a maximum amount of biblical truth in their souls plus the filling of the Holy Spirit.

and we now have a conflict between the law of man sanctioned by God and the law of God.

Because Peter and John now have the Holy Spirit and the Word of God in them, there's a completely new viewpoint in their lives; they have courage and confidence where before they were weak and they fell apart, ran away, were frightened, insecure and not oriented to the plan of God.

Courage is a mental attitude confidence in the Lord that knows no matter what happens, everything is in His hands.

Even though Jesus did not reach His disciples with deep biblical truths during the three years He was on earth; after His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, He sent the Holy Spirit, so now they are able to recall what they heard but did not previously learn.

The healing of the lame man indicated that Peter and John spoke with God's authority, while the Sanhedrin had neither God's authorization nor even His recognition.

The authorization of the Sanhedrin was obviously lacking and now they make sure that it's completely defuncted by rejecting the message of Peter and John.

The Sanhedrin will release Peter and John because they can find no excuse for detaining them but they will continue to reject Jesus Christ as Savior.

The Sanhedrin recognized something even a lot of believers do not recognize today: that in order to fulfil our responsibility in witnessing, we actually must fully understand and teach the Gospel.

Here's the issue; Peter and John have been ordered by the supreme court of the land to not mention the Name of Jesus, period.

The supreme court represents the law of the land

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Peter and John were respectful throughout their hearing as they stood before the supreme court of the land and declared their policy and in doing so, they put their lives in the hands of the Lord, recognizing like king David; 'The battle is the Lord's' and therefore, the Lord will have to take care of this because it is going to a higher court than the Sanhedrin.

Either directly or indirectly, the people have an influence on the institutions of government in a land.

But Peter and John are not depending upon the people even though the people are the source of pressure on the Sanhedrin, they are depending on the filling of the Holy Spirit and biblical truth which comes from God.

People change but the Word of God doesn't.

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