

August 7th, 2016
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Acts Men
Sermon #11 Title: Christian Disobedience
Sermon #11 Text: (Acts 5:27-32)

A.W. Tozer said once, "To be right with God has often meant being trouble with men."

This is how the early church leaders responded when Civil Authorities put themselves in the place of God's authority!

- When the civil authorities forbid the leaders of the Lord's church from obeying the Lord.
- The context of the passage is the point of conflict between God's direct instructions for life, and men's demanded obedience to their law!

This event in the early church is a microcosm of the ever present state of War between heaven and earth. The battle for belief, the War of Words – God's or Men's.

I. The Enduring War of the Ages.

- The enduring battle of the ages is the persistent insistence of men to have the authority that belongs only to God.

Since the first chapter of Genesis, Satan has done everything he can to deny God's person, God's position, and God's power; and he has led men to do the very same!

- This war between the Word of God and the Will of Men has always existed, and until the hellions are in hell, and the saints

are in glory, it will continue to not only exist, but to get worse as time goes on!

Man by nature is an enemy of God –

Romans 5:10 – "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Romans 8:7 – tells us that the "carnal mind" is at "enmity with God."

James 4:4 – tells us that to be a "friend of the world" is to be at "enmity with God."

- Men are by nature on the opposing side of God – we could go on and on with scriptures painting us men as "haters of God" and "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God", and disobedient, deceived, -and all the other things that the Bible has diagnosed for us.

- We by birth and nature are enemies of God, and the battlefield men fight God on is the battlefield of Truth, Righteousness, Holiness, and the Authority over such.

- Men in essence demand to have the power of God, and the position of God, to design truth, define truth, and defend their standing to do so. – It is that issue that backs up all the way to the center of the conflict in the early church.

- The Apostles have been arrested, and court has been convened, and they are standing before their judges, and are readying to answer their charges.

- It is in their charges that we are shown in a moment, the spirit that permeates all of time.

A. The Blind Fury of the Lost

David asked the question in Psalm 2 – “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing . . .”

- There is a furious rage that is smoldering in the heart of every culture that burns indignant toward the Lord and the things of the Lord – and it shows up here.

- **Notice their interrogation** – “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” – vs 28

- This one verse is a summary of all they passionately hated about the work of the early church.

1.) They hate the Name of Jesus – “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not speak in this name?”

a.) Jesus is both the Most comforting Name and the most Condemning name in all of existence.

- He will break the pride of those who fall on Him, or He will crush the life out of those who won’t.

b.) The Pharisees and the Scribes hated Jesus because He condemns sin, and He converts sinners.

- On many occasions Jesus condemned the sins of the people, and then converted the people who sinned, and when that happened, the Pharisees and Scribes – 1.) Lost their crowd, and 2.) Showed their colors.

- Jesus did, what their religion could not do, and would not do – which was to bring their sin to light.

The Biblical Jesus is the most avoided name among polite society today.

- They welcome a history channel version of Jesus
- They welcome a university version of Jesus
- But the War of the ages, like the Pharisees is against the Biblical Jesus.

2.) They hate the Doctrine of Jesus

a.) “You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine...”

(to teach and preach the doctrine of Jesus is essentially the proclamation of the 4 R’s.

(1.) Doctrine of Righteousness

(2.) Doctrine of Redemption

(3.) Doctrine of Resurrection

(4.) Doctrine of Return

Men often hate the message that they need to be Redeemed! – Men often say, “there is nothing wrong with me” – The Bible teaches, there is nothing RIGHT about you, and it is only Jesus Christ that can do anything about it

3.) They hate the Indictment of Sin

a.) “you...intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.”

b.) Of course this was the council that ordered the assassination of Jesus – the council knew it, and the apostles knew it, and the council knew the apostles knew it.

There is almost categorically nothing more painful than the truth of sin and guilt.

- There was nothing but FURY that came from heart, because of truth that came to the mind.

(Sin – whatever it is – is a twofold charge. It insists on two primary things.

#1 – You Do Not have the given RIGHT to do or not do what you did. *You are not who and what you think you are!* –

#2 – You MUST have a RIGHT Given to you in order to do or not do. *You have to have permission for your decision!*

- In other words it is the statement that says – You are not the highest authority in your life, and you are subject a higher person, a higher law, a higher standard!

- Like Satan's fury, man does not have power that belongs only to God, and since his mind has no justification to stand on, his emotions explode with rage.

B. They use the Brute Force of the Law

- the laws of men are often used as the weaponry of their warfare!

1.) verse 28 – “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?”

- Here is the civil and religious authority using their earthly power to assert themselves over these men, loyal to the Lord.

(There were several reasons for this:

- Rome –

Rome kept a tight ship, and had little patience for cultural skirmishes. – They ruled with an iron fist, and it was by

their permission that the Jews were even allowed to govern themselves.

- they knew that if this thing keeps causing conflicts, the Romans would come down hard on them.

- Pride – This Sanhedrin loved having governing power over the Jews, but despised a governed life under the Romans.

- they did not merely demand to have authority over how men “behaved” – they demanded to have authority over what men “believed.”

(Now – this is the frontline of the eternal war – it is man's grab to have power, not over the behaviors of men, but over the beliefs of men themselves, and men have historically made every attempt they can to use the Laws of men, to control men's behaviors, and men's beliefs.)

- Men have been trying to use the law to Silence the Word of the Lord, and the People of the Lord since the very beginning.

- Why do you think Cain killed Abel? – He was a living message for God and against Cain.

- Pharaoh used the force of law instructing the midwives of Egypt to commit infanticide.

- David sang in Psalm 94:21-22 – “Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.”

- Isaiah 10:1 – “Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;”

- All throughout history, men have demanded to have the authority of God over other men.

- They have passed laws Commanding Men to Disobey God.

- They have passed laws Forbidding Men from Obeying God.

- Which is their way of saying, “YOU OBEY US! – NOT HIM!”
“You believe us, not Him.”

(Now, know this . . . this is an issue all over the world . . . as we speak.

In the Islamic world – you have Shariah Law – laws used against people who believe the Bible.

In places like North Korea, and China, it is outright against the law to hand out Bibles, Preach the Gospel, or meet for Biblical Worship.

Communist and Socialist Countries all around the globe, while in different words, with the same spirit are “commanding people not to speak in this name.”

- Here in America – it is perfectly legal to speak in this name!
– “for now”

According to An Article written by Donna Rachel Edmunds, published on Breitbart in January of this year, in which she cites the global Christian Charity and Persecution Watchdog group Open Doors, she states –

“The highest levels of violence directed against Christians were in Nigeria, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Myanmar, Central African Republic, Egypt, Mexico, Sudan and India, illustrating the global nature of violent Christian persecution.

Lisa Pearce, CEO of Open Doors said: “The persecution of Christians is getting worse, in every region in which we work – and it’s getting worse fast. The trend is stark, as are the consequences for real people.”

The scale of that rapid rise can be seen in the points system used to compile the report. While the lowest ranking country in 2013 had 35 points, this year’s lowest ranking country had 53 points – an increase of more than 50 per cent.

(But while it is still legally acceptable, it is increasingly socially, and politically UNACCEPTABLE! – Just like all the ages gone by, the MOOD and MOVEMENT are still against us!)

- Now here is the shameful irony, and why it is imperative for us to know what it means to be men like the men of Acts!

- The People in those countries are Commanded Not To Speak in this Name, and Yet they still DO!

- They do not have the freedom we have, and they sacrifice their lives for the name of Jesus.

- Many in this country have freedom they don’t have, and don’t even sacrifice a faithful Sunday for the Lord.

Now when the Laws turn against the people of the Lord, the truth will be in about who is living under power from the Lord.

One more thought on this and we'll move on – Realize this – it will be by the force of the law that Satan's Sinister Minister of Destruction – the Antichrist – will draw the line between those who will do as he says, and those who will not.

Revelation 13:16-17 – “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

- The force of law and the law of force have always been the way of the world against the people who believe and practice the Bible.

C. They hate the Blunt Facts of Life - vs 30

“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.”

*Note – Now know this – these things are not matters of religious philosophy, imagined theology, or mystic ideology – these are matters of History!

- 1.) You slew Jesus – (that was a historical fact!)
- 2.) You hung Him on a tree!- (That was a historical fact) – repeated in Acts 10:39
- 3.) God raised Him up!

- Just as real and sure as He died, He as real and sure Rose again!

(Now those are not ideological, philosophical, or mystical events – that is the Historical Record!

- This is why we can trust Him – He is Alive!
- This is why we believe Him – He is Alive!

Now these blunt facts of life, serve as the fuel in the fire of the belly of the beast.

(Man cannot create truth, define truth, design truth, or control truth – He is subject to it, and powerless against.)

Now it is to that background and that group that we can see how the saints responded to the world against them!

II. The Unbending Weapon of the Saints.

Verse 29 – “Then Peter and the other apostles answer . . .”

You can learn a lot right here.

- In the face of formal force, notice these four qualities that every believer must possess.

A. Their Insistence on Loyalty – “we ought to obey God rather than men.”

1.) Governments get their authority from God, and God has never authorized them to forbid obedience and command disobedience.

a.) Peter essentially said – You may be over us, but you are UNDER GOD.

(Now there is a premise that most people ignore, and the ones who do not ignore it, hate it, and that is this . . .

- the only reason a Christian obeys the government is not because the government tells them to, but because the Lord does!

(I have often said, and will continue to say – I don't pay my taxes because I get a letter in the mail – I pay my taxes because I have a Bible on my desk!

- Our Loyalty to the government is only part and parcel to our Loyalty to the Lord.

Now the Real Men of Acts respond this way – IF you forbid what God commands – I'll obey God. If you command what God forbids – I'll obey God.

- God has commanded us to proclaim the truth, you will not demand that we lie. God has told us to proclaim the truth, you will not demand we remain silent.

B. Their Intelligence of History – “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.”

1.) As we previously said, - the things we say are not rooted in theology, they are facts of History.

Many people sit around and discuss the Bible like it is a nice collection of ideas, parables, principles and just a nice set of possible charms to make life better.

a.) These apostles knew and understand that we are dealing with cold, hard, facts! – The Bible is first a history book, which blossoms into a theology book.

C. Their Dependence on Reality – “Him hath God exalted with His right hand . . .”

Here is the truth of the matter – the reality of the issue! Yes God raised Him from the dead . . . but What does that mean, and Why did He do it?

1.) A Prince – that is a positional term – “captain” – “chief leader” – our highest authority!

He is exalted by God's Right Hand – the hand of power – to be the Chief Leader, above the Sanhedrin, above the councils,

above Rome, above the rulers of the world. – our Commander!

2.) A Savior – this is His Practicing Term – it means deliverer

Our Chief Leader is Delivering Us!

God raised Him up to Power you don't have to do things You can't do, and that are in need of yourself!

- He is not the Savior who is Lord, He is the Lord who Saves!

3.) To give Repentance and Forgiveness to Israel.

a.) The Message of Jesus told them He was the Son of God.

b.) The Ministry of Jesus showed them He was the Son of God.

c.) The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus proved He was the Son of God!

Now, Israel and the men before Peter had the chance to Repent – They had the chance to be forgiven! They had the chance to be Saved!

- This is eternal Reality! – God raised Jesus the LORD who Saves so men can believe Him, repent of sin, and be eternally forgiven!

- That is the gospel message! – JESUS IS ALIVE TO SAVE US!

D. Their Confidence in Testimony – “We are witnesses of these things;”

1.) This was not their philosophy, this was what they witnessed.

You, or anyone else will have to call these martyrs liars, to get around them, or go over them.

2.) Such was their confidence that they willingly died for what they said they witnessed.

Now what they saw was not just something that settled in their mind – it became the conviction of their hearts.

Conclusion:

Vs 33 – When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them . . .”

vs 40-42 – “When they called the apostles, and beaten them, the commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

Now here is the issue – the world will not admire us for standing firm, and then let us off the hook. –

- It is not the strength of our witness that the Lord uses – it is the TRUTH of it!