

July 17th, 2016
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Acts Men
Sermon #8 Title: All In a Name
Sermon #8 Text: (Acts 4:1-5)

One of the most difficult things for the world to accept is that the church of Jesus Christ is not here to unite the world in peace. As a matter of fact, while it is not the desire of the churches of the Lord to be divisive, every believer who is believing what they ought to believe, every disciple who is following who he ought to follow; the result of his life will be a division in the world.

This last week, one of the candidates for President named a man to be his Vice President who is an unashamed Conservative Christian.

- A man who openly states Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
- A man who believes that the only legitimate marriage is that of a man and a woman.
- A man who believes that Life begins at conception
- A man who believes that the Bible is the Word of God.

Immediately was declared by the other campaign, that he is a man “with some of the most disturbing beliefs” is the most “extreme” and “divisive” and “supports discriminatory policies.”

Now statements like that about Christian men have not just been being made this week, but nearly every week since the events in the book Acts took place.

- Down through the centuries, in every culture, on every continent, the world has hated the fact that Christianity by its very nature is not interested in uniting with the global goals of the world.

2 Corinthians 6:17 – “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”

- But the primary reason that our existence is divisive, is not because we are contrary, but because we are to conform to the one who called us and saved us from this world, the man named Jesus!

As we have been moving through the book of Acts we have seen how those first Christians, were first following the Lord. In chapter 3 we saw how the Lord used a healing, to lead to preaching, that lead to believing of many people.

In our chapter today – Thousands of people have gathered at the Solomon’s porch, at the Temple, and they have been listening to Peter preach a message about Who Jesus is, and What Jesus does.

- And then we see the reaction from the religious leaders here in 4:1-5

In chapter 4 and 5, the tone is set for the ages to come, from then until now about how the Name of Jesus will resonate throughout the world.

3 Things every believer needs to know:

I. The Indignation the Name of Jesus Produces

“And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” – vs 1-2

- when you look at the word for “being grieved.” – Language Dr. Robertson tells us that the word Luke writes here expresses an intense amount of “Indignation.”

- This list of people were indignant that these men were in the Temple of God, teaching and preaching, “in the name of Jesus.”

- There are three men and two groups that are mentioned here.

- The Priests (group) The Sadducees (group) The Captain of the Temple.

- The Captain of the Temple was the Chief Law Enforcement officer over the Temple Security.

- The Priests and the Sadducees were distinct sects that really made up the Sanhedrin, the governing religious body over Israel.

- For Peter and John to be preaching the Resurrected Jesus in the Temple that they governed was an Outright Assault on all they stood for.

- The Priests were the vocal leaders and head gorilla’s that lead the parade to have Jesus crucified.

(Back up in verse 14 and 15, Peter had called them murderers, and in verse 17 – he called them ignorant)

- He called them Messiah Murderers, God Deniers, and Ignorant Men

- (Try telling that to the Supreme Court on their witness stand and see how many of them are endeared to you.)

- The Sadducees were in the same parade, but their primary claim to fame was the theological denial that there was such a thing as Resurrection.

- The Sadducees believed that since the promise of the Resurrection was not found in the law of Moses, that it was not to be taught.

Now throughout the Book of Acts, it is these people that we find over, and over again growing in their anger toward those men and women who proclaimed the name of Jesus.

#1 – Here in verse 2 – they are “grieved” that they taught the people that through Jesus came the resurrection.

- that is arrest number 1

#2 – One chapter later (a few weeks later) in the exact same place – (On Solomon’s porch) in 5:14 – “Believers were added to the Lord.” – In verse 17 “Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, And laid their hands on the Apostles and put them in the common prison.

- That is arrest number 2

#3 – One chapter after that (6) Stephen, one of the deacons was preaching – vs 10 – “And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake, then they suborned men which say we have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God – he was arrested, testified before the

Sanhedrin and preached to them of their guilt and God's grace in the name of Jesus – vs 54 – “When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth . . .” – and then carried him out to stone him.

- That is arrest number 3, and martyr number 1

- (Mind you he was a deacon, not the pastor)

#4 – Chapter 12, the persecution moves from the Jews to the Romans – Herod arrested and killed James

- that's arrest number 4 and martyr number 2

#5 – Same chapter – He arrested Peter

- that's arrest number 5

Before the book of Acts ends, we find an unnumbered amount of arrests, because of the work of Saul who wreaked “havoc” on the churches.

- Two things happened though throughout this book:

- The Church got bigger and the world got madder!

Why? – The Name of Jesus!

- The name of Jesus is the thorn in the side of Satan, and Satan's children!

- vs 17 – “Let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.”

- 5:28 – “Saying, 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.”

- 5:40 – “And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.”

“In describing the Nicene Council in 325 AD - Vance Havner said that not more than a dozen of the 318 delegates had not lost an eye or a hand or did not limp upon a leg shrunk in its sinews by the burning iron of torture.”

- When the Name of Jesus be lifted up, the truth of Him and His name does three things:

A. He Invalidates Men's Religion

- 1.) Mankind has not ever had, nor will they ever have the power to create spiritual, or theological truth – Things are, as God has said they are, not as man wants them to be, and the “Good News of Jesus” – Is the Bad News for Religion.

- a.) Listen to Peter's answer to the Sanhedrin about the person and power of Jesus –

Verse 9-12 - “If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

- It is not the “name of Moses”

- It is not the “name of Abraham”

- to the Jewish leaders, who Jesus is, and what Jesus said, and what Jesus did, Denied and Invalidated Religion as they defined it!

- (Which is the case, not just to invalidate the religion of the Jews, but the religion of anyone! – The issue has never been the issue of “religion” but rather the issue of “TRUTH”

- this is the salvation that is “Under heaven” and given “among men”

- This is not a message aimed at the Jewish race – but rather the Human race.

- The Fact of the matter is that the Truth of God, Creation, Life, and Death is,

1 – Knowable

2 – Universal

3 – Manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ

- And such a fact renders foolish, anyone’s attempt to inscribe their own religion!

- The FIRST CHURCH Stood here, and would not MOVE!

- (Let it be known, such a stand will always be divisive among people)

B. He Illuminates Men’s Rebellion

- Jesus Resurrection that Peter preached, highlighted the fact that these Rulers were not the Reverent Religionists they portrayed themselves to be – They were out and out Rebels who would not surrender to the Lord.

1.) They said there is no Resurrection

a.) Here are 12 to 20 people who said Jesus was Resurrected – in that first circle that were there.

When the Pharisees demanded that they quit proclaiming this Jesus and that He is alive – Verse 20 – “We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”

2.) They crucified Jesus, now He is alive and through His power, “Healing People”

a.) Here is a walking lame man, a believing people, and living evidence that all Jesus ever said, all He ever promised, and all He provided is true right before their very eyes, and they will not admit it.

(I sometimes cringe when I hear a Christian debate an Atheist, and they center on the subject of the Creation. – That’s a wonderful front to go to battle on, but the unanswerable issue, is the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus)

- men want to point to fossils and dirt and rocks and say God didn’t create this place –

- We point to the man Jesus – dead, buried, resurrected, healing, preaching, and transforming the hearts of men, with a history saturated with witnesses hearts that say Amen and say – Yes He did!

- Jesus illuminates man’s rebellion against God!

John 3:18-19 – “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

- Jesus the Light of the world, exposes the rebellion of men, and their knowledge of that rebellion.

- Paul said, “when they knew God they glorified Him not as God.”

- I heard a disturbing sound bite once from Comedienne Sarah Silverman, who I’m told happens to be Jewish – She said, “They say the Jews crucified Jesus . . . well I would do it again!”

- Do you know what the unbelieving and unrepentant Pharisees, and Sadducees did when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead . . . they tried to kill Lazarus again!

When Jesus was at a food fellowship at the home of Lazarus the Bible says in John 12:9-10 – “Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;”

Listen to me, those who hate the Lord Jesus, and who hate the followers of the Lord Jesus, and those who despise all things Christian . . .

- The problem is not that they don’t have proof – there is proof

- The problem is not that there is no real argument or wisdom – there is sound argument and sound wisdom

- The Problem is flat out, dead legged, bona fide rebellion that absolutely refuses to surrender to Jesus.

C. He Incapacitates Men’s Reasoning

1.) Verse 3 – “they laid hands on them and put them in the hold unto the next day . . .”

2.) Verse 14-17 – read

a.) A miracle hath been done and we cannot deny it . . . but we must stop it!

- It’s almost as though they knew . . .

- Jesus is alive

- Those who turn to Him are being changed

- Those who are broken are being healed

- This MUST Be Stopped!

- From the earthly standpoint – The Salvation Jesus offers is a direct threat to the empires of men, the industries of sins, and the embracing the base nature of men – at to those who embrace and enjoy – it must be stopped!

- From a Spiritual Standpoint – The power behind their throne, Satan himself will do whatever he can to silence the name of Jesus!

II. The Invincibility the Word of Jesus Possesses

“Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.” – vs 5

- But here is the wonderful thing – the Truth of Jesus Christ is an invincible truth!

A. It is Unstoppable – “howbeit many of them which heard the word believed;”

1.) Even when no one is saying the truth – it is still the truth!

2.) Silencing the truth has never yet “Changed” the truth.

Isaiah 55:11 – “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

Adrian Rogers said one time, “The only thing that can defeat an idea, is a better idea, and the only thing that can defeat a better idea is the truth!”

- Now they “heard the Word of the Lord” and “believed” the Word of the Lord –

Romans 10:17 – “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

- It is the Word of God that does the Work of God, and it has no Regard for the noise of men!

B. It is Unlimited – “the number of the men was about five thousand.”

a.) That’s just men!

(1 – that’s not people – there is another word for that – but this is just men – husbands, fathers, and leaders of their families)

These were Jews who followed those leaders – who listened to their rulers, who functioned according to the rules. – But they were honest men – giving an honest listen to the message, and the message went as far as the men were willing to listen.

The message of the gospel will go as far as there are people willing to give it an honest hearing!

- That’s why Jesus said, “he that hath ears to hear let him hear.”

III. The Endurance the Men of Jesus Inspires

- In chapter 5 – after the men had been arrested and imprisoned twice, the angel of the Lord let Peter out of prison the second time, and told him in verse 20 – “Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.”

- Peter could have said – Are you kidding . . . man every time we go out there and preach they throw us in jail!

- Rather, Peter marched himself back to the temple and began all over again.

- So he was arrested again –

- Being interrogated the third time

- The Bible says – “And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, 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. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”

- Those are the men of the book of Acts! – Those are the first Christians in the first churches that the Lord intends for every Christian in every church to be like!

Conclusion: Philippians 2:10-11 – “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

One preacher so eloquently put it this way when he said, “The old . . . churches of Europe, and some of their successors in this country, with scriptural and historical appropriateness chose for their motto a phrase referring to the burning bush— “Nevertheless, it was not consumed” (Exod. 3:2). That is the sentence with which you must conclude every chapter of the history of the church. After every fire of false teaching, of schism, of persecution, of corruption and apostasy, that is the record: “Nevertheless, it was not consumed.”

Listen to what Peter would write years later near the end of his life – 1st Peter 4:16,18 – “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.....Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.