

ACTS of GOD #21: Speaking Truth, Even to the Hardest Hearts

Acts 5:27-32 6/16/2019

¹⁷ So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; ¹⁹ and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. -Ephesians 4:17-19

-Recognizing the World's Walk

-Characterized & Caused by the Hardness of Heart...

- Futility of the world's mind (vain aimlessness due to lack of purpose)
- Darkened in their understanding (Blind to God's eternal purposes)
- Alienated from life in God b/c of their ignorance (Blind to God)
- Having become Callous: Cease feeling pain of conscience/conviction
- Yielding to serve their own sensuality
- Greedily practicing every kind of impurity

-We are charged to no longer walk this way

- Hearts changed to know & walk with the Lord
- Changed Hearts that accept & walk according to His eternal purpose
- Sensitive to the Conviction & Direction of the Spirit

-We are commissioned to speak truth even to the hardest hearts

- Will we faithfully serve the Lord & share truth to a blind, callous world?
- Example of apostles bringing truth to hard hearts that refused Christ

Charges Against the Faithful Apostles

(v.27-28)

²⁷ When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

-Charge #1: You completely refused to abide by our official judgment.

- Strict order by official council ruling to no longer teach in this name
- You have continued to fill Jerusalem to capacity with your teaching
- *Are you willing to defy earthly judgments & authorities to stand firm?

-Charge #2: You intentionally resolve to put his blood on our hands

- You are purposefully conspiring with full, determined resolve
- You desire to lay upon us the guilt of spilling this man's blood
- *Are you willing to endure those desperate to protect their illusions?
- The Hard-hearted are blind to the Handiwork of God
 - They reject as impossible what God obviously reveals
 - God's message & confirming signs are dismissed as Satan's
- The Hard-hearted are blinded by their assumed authority/power
 - They recognize their own position & authority as entitled
- The Hard-hearted are blind to their own hypocrisy
 - They had the predetermined plan to kill Jesus
 - They asked for His blood to be on them & their children

Charges Answered by the Faith-filled Apostles

(v.29-30)

²⁹ But Peter & the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."

- We obeyed the proper authority, the God of our fathers who you deny
- Obedience to God above all is necessary
- Obey: to be persuaded of what comes first
 - Submitting to others to gain approval serves self, not God
 - Submitting to others to avoid reprisals serves self, not God
- The Apostles are persuaded that God must come first.

³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

- We testify to the truth, God raised the one you rejected
- Jesus, whose name you won't say, has been raised by the Father
- Jesus, whom you killed with your own hands, hanging him on a cross
- The apostles do not yield to threat but proclaim the truth to hard hearts

Charging the Accusers with the Truth

(v. 31-32)

³¹ He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, & forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

- Proclaiming the Exalted Jesus Christ
- Raised to the right hand of power
- As Prince and Savior, Ruler and Redeemer
 - To grant repentance to Israel
 - To grant forgiveness of sins
- Bearing witness to this specific message of Resurrection & Redemption
 - The Apostles, in boldness according to the word of truth
 - The Holy Spirit, in power, as God's gift for those who obey
 - obedience: completely persuaded of what comes first
 - Repent & Believe: the Lord Jesus Christ comes first not the self