

ACTS of GOD #22: The Work of the Lord Will Stand

Acts 5:33-39 6/23/2019

The Truth of God Has an Impact

(v. 33)

³³ *But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick & intended to kill them.*

- Peter's response to the charges of the Sanhedrin struck a nerve
 - We must obey God rather than man
 - God raised up Jesus, the one you killed with your own hands
 - Jesus is exalted as Ruler & Redeemer
 - God used Peter's Preaching to Reveal the Hearts of His Hearers
 - ¹² *For the word of God is living & active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul & spirit, of both joints & marrow, and able to judge the thoughts & intentions of the heart.*
- Hebrews 4:12**
- Acts 2:37: The Hearers were pierced to the heart & sought relief
 - The truth brought pangs of sorrow that led to repentance
 - Receptive hearts respond to truth: "What must we do?"
 - Acts 5:33: The Hearers were cut to the quick & sought blood
 - The truth brought passionate rage that led to murderous intent
 - Rejecting Hearts refuse the truth: "We must destroy..."
 - Speaking God's truth today will yield similar results
 - Matthew 10:34: "I did not come to bring peace, but a sword."
 - The truth of God will not always be received with joy
 - Fragrance of life to living & stench of death to dying (2Cor 2:15-16)
 - Even when rejected, God's Word does not return void (Isaiah 55:11)

The Elder Gamaliel Offers Counsel

(v. 34-39)

³⁴ *But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.*

- Understanding Gamaliel's Standing
 - He was a Pharisee
 - Different from Sadducees on Resurrection & matters of the Law
 - He was a teacher of the Law
 - Not just a lawyer, but a teacher of lawyers of highest position
 - Saul/Paul learned under Gamaliel
 - He was respected by all the people
 - His pedigree, His performance, His prominence

³⁵ *And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men. ³⁶ For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. But he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed & came to nothing.*

³⁷ *After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away some people after him; he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.*

-Understanding Gamaliel's Warning

- Men of Israel: Don't Be Hasty!
 - Don't let your present anger affect your memory
 - A Practical Argument from their recent history
 - Theudas & Judas rose, were killed, & the followers scattered

³⁸ *So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."*

-Understanding Gamaliel's Counsel

- Gamaliel's counsel is to let them be & wait to see if things fizzle
 - If this decreed plan or work is of men...
 - It will come to nothing or be overthrown
 - If this decreed plan or work is from God...
 - It won't be overthrown or brought to destruction by your ability
 - You may even be found to be fighting against God
- Gamaliel's Counsel is political, passive, and pragmatic
 - But this is not a principle for the church to adopt
 - Man's plans & works don't always come to nothing in the world
 - They won't stand forever but they can cause damage now
 - Heresy of Jehovah's Witness, Mormons, & False Teachers
 - Though off base, He is right about the plans & works of the Lord
 - God's plan will not fail & His work stands forever

The Work of the Lord will stand

- In the apostles and the church
 - There was no fizzle and the Sanhedrin fought God all along
- In the life of the believer
 - Remain in Him and bear much fruit, apart from Him nothing
 - Are you fighting or embracing what the Lord is doing in you?
 - Is the purpose & work of the Lord on display in your life?