

ACTS of GOD #23: Rejoicing to Suffer Shame for His Name

Acts 5:40-42 6/30/2019

Politics, Power Plays, & Public Humiliation (v. 40)

⁴⁰ They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, & then released them.

- The Sanhedrin was moved to have confidence in Gamaliel's suggestion
 - The apostles would be released rather than killed
 - This served the politics of the moment & purposes of these men
 - They were not persuaded to recognize or support, just to wait
- The Sanhedrin was intentional to communicate their authority
 - Summoned the Apostles to the chamber to stand before them
 - Commanded them again to not speak in the name of Jesus
 - Judgment they had previously broken would remain in effect
 - Judgment they had previously broken would have a penalty
- The Sanhedrin subjected the Apostles to suffer a flogging

If there is a dispute between men and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they justify the righteous & condemn the wicked, ² then it shall be if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall then make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of stripes according to his guilt. ³ He may beat him forty times but no more, so that he does not beat him with many more stripes than these & your brother is not degraded in your eyes. -Deuteronomy 25:1-3

- Flogging was a public act of forced submission
 - Communicated authority of the judge & righteousness of accuser
 - recipient forced to lay down in the presence of the judge
 - stripped, lashed on front and back, a standardized 39 times
 - Communicated the guilt & wickedness of the recipient
 - “Not to be degraded in your eyes”, but stigma was there
 - The apostles were being treated like slaves
- The Sanhedrin sent them from their presence back into the community
 - Consider the visible physical state & condition of the Apostles
 - How do you respond when wrongfully injured, persecuted, shamed?
 - pity party, facebook rant, gathering support, stir up public outcry?

Painful Persecution did not dampen the Apostles' Joy (v. 41)

⁴¹ So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name

- The Apostles went on their way rejoicing
 - Rejoicing as they leave the presence of the Council
 - Beaten & Bloody, but not broken in spirit
 - All who witnessed the lashes witness the joy
 - A gracious testimony of who is right & who must repent
 - The meaning of “rejoicing”
 - to delight in the present grace of God
 - We can “consider it joy” because God’s grace is present

- Though dishonored like slaves, the Apostles rejoiced to serve Christ
 - b/c they were shown worthy to be trusted to suffer shame for Jesus
 - b/c they were shown to have received the necessary grace to stand
 - b/c they believed the blessing that Christ promised was sure

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you & persecute you, & falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. -Matthew 5:11-12

- We must endure for the joy set before us, scorning the shame
 - Fiery Ordeals Will Come, But God is faithful
 - Do not be ashamed, Glorify God in the Name of Christ

¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³ but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴ If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶ but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. 1 Peter 4:12-16

Painful Persecution did not hamper the Apostles' Preaching (v. 42)

⁴² And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

- The Gospel Continued to be proclaimed as the Lord commanded
 - They kept right on without ceasing to teach & preach Jesus as Christ
 - They taught believers & gospelized the rest in His Name
 - Still done every day, despite the ruling of the Council
 - Still done publically in the temple in faith conquering fear
 - Still done house to house, with fellowship & evangelism
 - They were faithful to act in the face of actual persecution
 - We rule out engaging at the thought of possible discomfort