



SERMON NOTES

US N°. 98

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Title: Treason against the King

#6 in the Series on the Acts of the Apostles

1. Peter and John are arrested and imprisoned during their sermon to the crowd.
 - a. Resurrection for the 1st Century Jew meant something different than it does to us today; it meant the inauguration of God's kingdom on earth; everything would be transformed with His Kingdom on earth.
 - b. Sadducees and Pharisees
 - i. During the life and times of Jesus, the Pharisees play an important role in their opposition to Jesus and His "re-interpretation" of the oral tradition, "you've heard it said... but I say to you..." We later read in Acts 6:7, "Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith."
 1. "Pharisee" comes from the Hebrew "to separate" and they were zealous for the Law of Moses and saw themselves as the guardians of the oral tradition; they came about during the 2nd Temple period.
 - ii. During the life & times of the early church, the Sadducees take on the principal role of opposition.
 1. Wealthy, aristocrats; influential in politics. The High Priest and his family were Sadducees. Promoted the "status quo."
 2. They only recognized the Torah, the 5 books of Moses, as the inspired word of God; not the prophets, etc.
 3. Opposed the resurrection from the dead; Luke 20:27, 37-40, "Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him... *But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB.'* For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him." Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." But after that they dared not question Him anymore."
 - c. We're told in verse 4 that those who came to believe numbered 5,000.
 - d. We should take note that troubles will come to Christ's servants;
 - i. They may be severe (but not more than His),
 - ii. They will be undeserved; so long as we act out of love (cf. 1 Cor. 13);
 - iii. They are to be expected, we're promised that we will suffer for His name;
 - iv. They are futile; nothing can stop the advance of the Kingdom of God.
2. The court trial

- a. The actors and players in the Sanhedrin.
 - i. Rulers (priests), elders (lay leaders & nobles), and scribes (lawyers & teachers; mostly Pharisees)
 - ii. Annas (High Priest 6-14AD but deposed by the Romans), Caiaphas (son-in-law to Annas, HP from 18-36AD), Annas still carried authority and the title. John may have been another son of Annas who was HP in 36AD. Alexander is unknown.
 - b. The healing and the resurrection hang together as charges. The Sanhedrin was in an awkward position; they could not deny the miracle of the lame man which was tied to the power and authority of Jesus who the apostles claimed rose from the dead.
 - i. It is interesting to note that the Sanhedrin takes no action to disprove the resurrection; if they could have disproven it, why didn't they? If they could have done it, they would have assured the collapse of this new movement.
 - c. This trial shows what companionship with Jesus will mean:
 - i. a distinguished privilege to counted apart;
 - ii. a transforming power to do His will even in the face of intense opposition;
 - iii. a perilous distinction;
 - iv. a high responsibility to preach the word in truth and love; Eph. 4:15, "... *speaking the truth in love...*"
 - d. Apostles had a courage given by the Holy Spirit, whose presentation created wonder among the Sanhedrin at their boldness.
 - i. They were courteous to those across from them (bravery is not brusqueness, bravado or bluster).
 - ii. They were frank in their answers; they spoke to the point.
 - iii. They were faithful to Christ in their testimony and in their character.
 - e. Acts 4:10-11, "... *then you should all know, and all the people of Israel should know, that this man stands here before you completely well through the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth – whom you crucified and whom God raised from death. Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says, 'The stone that you the builders despised turned out to be the most important of all.'*" Jesus is the corner stone; read these passages the way they are meant to be read. When there is a one-line quote from the OT in the NT, they know the context of the verse without having to quote the whole thing. This quote is from Ps.118:22, which is a psalm about celebrating in Jerusalem because they are coming to the Temple of the Lord. God is building His true eschatological temple with Jesus as the corner stone! Rom. 8, the inheritance is the earth, the whole world is God's holy land; not simply heaven.
 - f. The apostles were very clear to state that salvation comes by no other name; what audacity!
 - i. No other religion makes the focus the person; Buddhism without Buddha would work, Islam without Mohammed would work, etc. But Christianity without Jesus is empty.
 - ii. The name of Jesus is to invoke His authority and power, especially in light of the resurrection.
3. Court Recess

- a. The Sanhedrin is perplexed by the apostles, they were just fisherman.
 - i. Jn. 7:15, *"And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How does this Man know letters, having never studied?'"*
 - ii. This is the world's question of Christians, *"what shall we do with these men?"*
 - b. The Sanhedrin is resolved to stop the growth of the Church
 - i. They feared the spread of Christianity; possibly because of what it would mean upon their previous actions in crucifying Jesus Christ.
4. Sentencing
- a. The Sanhedrin charges and threatens the apostles to stop preaching in the name of Jesus. The Sanhedrin commands to speak no more of the resurrected Jesus, which the church cannot deny without eliminating what is central to their identity.
 - i. The Apostles are set up for a contempt of court trial in ch. 5; they were told not to preach... but...
 - b. The apostles highlight that they cannot disobey their conscience in the face of their law.
 - i. An affirmation of the individual's conscience over against the state; the individual claims the freedom to obey what he believes God has commanded. (cf. Rom. 13:1-7)
5. After-party
- a. Pray for greater boldness and receive a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. They rightly interpreted the attacks as upon Christ and not upon them; quote of Ps. 2:1-6. Ps. 2 is about God saying, *"when the nations are raging I have set my King on Zion."*
 - c. Prayer resembles Is. 37:16-20; use of scripture to guide our prayers.
6. The community of believers
- a. This is parallel with Deut. 15 which is the law concerning the Sabbatical year and the remission of debts. This new community of believers is now living as a people whose debts have been forgiven Deut. 15:4, *"The LORD your God will bless you in the land that he is giving you. Not one of your people will be poor ..."* We are to be a forgiveness people.
 - b. Does living as a family like Deut. 15 have something to do with the signs & wonders that we read about in the New Testament? *"With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."*
 - c. They are behaving like the true temple; forgiveness, healing, community, etc. The resurrection of Jesus results in fresh new creation power.
 - d. Introduction of Barnabas, a devout Levite from Cyprus.