

Acts 5:27-32—August 11, 2020
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Good morning Tuesday Morning Bible Study friends.

It is so wonderful to have all of you in class.

It is also a wonder that we/I (my apology) can't seem to get through the notes each week...

Soooo, here is my plan.

Next Tuesday August 11, we will pick up where we stopped last Tuesday, August 4. We'll start at Acts 4 verse 11 on the August 4 notes.

With your help, we can study through verse 35. Then we can start the notes beginning on this download for Acts 5:27-32. It is page 2 below.

I will hold off on posting Chapter 6 until we finish Chapters 4 and 5.

Acts may prove to be the longest Bible Study in history, and we're not even studying every verse. Your input and discussion is always appreciated.

God's blessings on you for your patience.

Ted

Acts 5:27-32—August 11, 2020

Acts 5:27-28

27. When they had brought them, they set them before the council. The high priest questioned them, 28. saying, “Didn’t we strictly command you not to teach in this name? Behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man’s blood on us.”

27a. “When they had brought them, they set them before the council”

Luke notes Sadducees among the apostles’ enemies (4:1; 5:17).

Sadducees do not believe in resurrection (23:8)

They oppose the apostles because they are teaching that God has raised Jesus from the dead (3:15; 4:10).

27b. “The high priest questioned them”

Luke earlier identified Annas as the high priest (4:6).

28a. “Didn’t we strictly command you not to teach in this name?”

The Council had ordered Peter and John “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (4:18).

The Council’s primary concern here is the failure of the apostles to submit to its authority.

They have reason to fear anarchy.

28b. “Behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching”

The *first of two charges* that the high priest makes against the apostles.

28c. “and intend to bring this man’s blood on us”

The high priest avoids using Jesus’ name—“this man”—an attempt to belittle Jesus.

The *second charge* that the high priest makes against the apostles is their accusation of blood-guilt in Jesus’ death by the council.

Peter earlier said, “Now, brothers, I know that you did this in ignorance, as did also your rulers” (3:17).

If Council is guilty of murdering Jesus, Jewish law would give Jesus’ family the right to avenge Jesus’ death.

Do you think the High Priest’s remarks and charges reflect his concern with this rule? How so?

Acts 5:29-32

29. But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. 30. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed, hanging him on a tree. 31. God exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. 32. We are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

29a. “But Peter and the apostles answered”

Peter is again speaking for the apostles. Here, Luke groups the apostles with Peter to make it clear that they stand unified before the Council.

29b. “We must obey God rather than men”

To my way of thinking, this verse puts Christians in turmoil over the types of decisions we must make in August 2020...as in the past, and in the years to come. Obviously, I have lots of questions regarding these seven words from Peter. Bear with me please.

Peter’s interest is not in disobeying the Council but in obeying the charge to which God has called him.

The Council is an important authority, but clearly subordinate to God.

Christians have often cited Peter’s response to the high priest when faced with civil authority. There is a tension here that Christians must acknowledge.

In their epistles, Paul (Romans 13:1-2) “in subjection to the higher authorities”
Peter (1 Peter 2:13-14) “subject yourselves to every ordinance of man”

I don’t believe Peter or Paul are saying Christians are to obey every edict of ruling authorities, and here, Peter makes it clear that, when human authority is in conflict with Godly authority, Christians must obey God.

The difficulty for Christians is to determine when civil disobedience is necessary. When is civil disobedience Godliness rather than mere obstinacy?

Calvin dealt with this in detail. He concluded that authorities who practice “rebellious tyranny” are not ordained by God—and, therefore, not entitled to obedience.

Paul gives us a clue when he says, “For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil” (Romans 13:3). That was somewhat oversimplified even in the world in which Paul was living. It is very much not true in our world today, where evil rulers have killed millions. Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein, and Robert Mugabe are just a few of the many truly evil rulers of recent generations.

The Protestant reformers felt it necessary to defy the larger church. Right according to most Protestants and wrong according to most Catholics. YOUR THOUGHTS?

Martin Luther King felt it necessary to defy racial segregation and discrimination, which were practices largely accepted by white churches in the South at that time—and in many white churches in the North. And sadly still persists today in many congregations...SAD!

The majority of Christians today would say that he did the right thing. YOUR THOUGHTS?

30a. “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed, hanging him on a tree”

Note the contrast here. The Council killed Jesus, but God raised him from the dead.

30b. “whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree”

This phrase, “hanging him on a tree,” comes from Deuteronomy 21:22-23, where God told Israel to execute criminals convicted of a capital crime by hanging them on a tree.

By using the phrase, “hanging him on a tree,” do you think Peter therefore equates Jesus’ death to the death of a guilty and accursed person.

Why?

31a. “God exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior”

As noted above, Jesus’ exaltation by God contrasts dramatically with the action of the Council which hung Jesus on a tree.

The Council lifted up Jesus on a cross, but God lifted him up to sit at God’s right hand.

31b. “to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins”

God’s purpose in lifting Jesus up was not that Jesus might take revenge on his tormentors. The purpose all along had to do with forgiveness of sins.

The good news for the Council is that repentance and forgiveness are available to them even though they are guilty of having murdered the messiah.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THESE OBSERVATIONS?

32a. “We are His witnesses of these things”

The apostles have seen the risen Christ, and so meet the standard for legal witnesses to the resurrection.

1. The women at the tomb (Matt. 28:9-10)
2. Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)
3. Two men of Emmaus (Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-32)
4. Peter in Jerusalem (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5)
5. Ten disciples (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-23)
6. Eleven disciples (John 20:24-29; I Cor. 15:5)
7. Seven disciples fishing in Galilee (John 21:1-23)
8. Eleven disciples in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-18)
9. Five hundred persons (presumably in Galilee; I Cor. 15:6)
10. James, the brother of the Lord (I Cor. 15:7)

32b. “and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him”

But the greatest witness to Jesus’ resurrection is the Holy Spirit, who enabled the apostles to speak in many languages at Pentecost (2:4) and to work miracles of healing as a part of their witness to the resurrection (3:1-10; 5:12-16).

I LOVE THIS STORY...IN CASE YOU HAVEN’T NOTICED.