

Acts 4:13-22
Obeying God Rather Than Man

Introduction:

Luke continues his account of courageous Christianity of which this fourth chapter of Acts speaks much about. The world authorities will threaten will threaten to punish us if we persist with this teaching of the Resurrection of Christ. F.F Bruce's comments are interesting: "It is particularly striking that neither on this nor any subsequent occasion (so far as our information goes) did the Sanhedrin take any serious action to disprove the apostle's central affirmation – the resurrection of Jesus. Had it seemed possible to refute them on this point, how readily would the Sanhedrin have seized the opportunity! Had they succeeded, how quickly and completely the new movement would have collapsed!"

I. The Church On Trial

A. The Sanhedrin was astonished:

1. By their courage – Eph. 3:12; I Tim. 3:13; I John 2:28 (I John 3:21; 4:1)
2. By uneducated status – (“untrained” - Gk. “idiots” I Cor. 14:23)
3. By their association with Jesus
4. By their healing power – v.14 cf. 3:12

B. Attempt to Silence the Gospel:

1. They resorted to naked authority – v.17
2. They did all they could to give Jesus no press or recognition.

C. The Apostles Defense:

1. Peter and John had not broken any laws and they had already ably defended themselves from the Scriptures – v.11
2. Peter and John did not vacillate – v. 19,20 (Francis Schaffer, “Christian Manifesto” (Rom. 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13-17)

D. Government Limitations:

1. The action of the mid wives – Ex. 1:15-17
2. Daniel's refusal to worship idols – Dan. 6:4-10

II. The Church Acquitted

A. Empty threats and intimidation – I Pet. 3:13-17

B. Four Options Regarding the Church and State:

1. Monastic – John 19:9-11
2. Secular – (America's check's and balances)
3. Cowardly – (Pilate a prime example)
4. Biblical – Eph. 6:1-9 (Calvin's sermon May 11,1550)

C. Peter and John could not recant – (Lloyd-Jones)