

“How to Face Persecution”
Acts 5:17-18

I. God glorified Himself through the apostles by healing a lame man so that the Gospel would be proclaimed (vs. 3:1-4:4).

A. God provided an opportunity for Peter to proclaim the Gospel.

1. Peter confronted the people in their sin (vs. 14-15).
2. Peter explained that faith in Jesus Christ is the basis for salvation (vs. 16-18).
3. Peter exhorted the people to repent of their sin (vs. 19).
4. Peter demonstrated that his appeal was based upon the authority of God’s Word (vs. 20-26).

B. The proclamation of the Gospel produced three results (Acts 4:1-4):

1. Some were disturbed and rejected the message.
2. Others were humbled and received the message.
3. The messengers suffered persecution.

C. Proclaiming the Gospel got the Apostles placed in jail (vs. 4:5-31).

1. Their imprisonment provided another opportunity to share the Gospel.
2. Their imprisonment put the Apostles on their knees.
 - God answered their prayer!

II. The work of God and the Apostle’s response to persecution gives an example for Jesus’ disciples to follow.

A. God’s agenda is spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

B. God, according to His sovereign will, puts His people in place to testify about Jesus Christ.

C. The Apostles viewed their experience through the lens of the Scriptures.

D. The Apostles prayed according to God's will in response to the persecution.

Scripture References and Notes

John 3:36

But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of* John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

John 10:25, 37-38

²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me.

³⁷ If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; ³⁸ but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.”

Hebrews 2:1-4

¹ For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, ³ how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, ⁴ God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

Matthew 10:16-22

¹⁶ “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ But beware of men, for they will hand you over to *the courts* and scourge you in their synagogues; ¹⁸ and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. ²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but *it is* the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. ²¹ “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. ²² You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

Exodus 20:11

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

Psalms 146:6

Who made heaven and earth, The sea and all that is in them; Who keeps faith forever;

Nehemiah 9:6

“You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before You.

Psalms 2:1-12

¹ Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ³ “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!” ⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at

them. ⁵ Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying, ⁶ “But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.” ⁷ “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ⁸ ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession. ⁹ ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’” ¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. ¹¹ Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. ¹² Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Matthew 24:9-13

⁹ “Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. ¹⁰ At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. ¹² Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

2 Timothy 3:1; 12

¹ But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

¹² Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.